

DECEMBER 13, 2009

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH
ST. JOHN, TEXAS

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD CHURCH
MORAVIA, TEXAS

DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS



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MASS SCHEDULE

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday	Dec. 12	6:00 P.M.	Ludwig & Adela Dittrich	St. John
Sunday	Dec. 13	9:30 A.M.	Henry & Julia Olsovsky & Rebecca Patterson	Moravia

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday	Dec. 19	6:00 P.M.	Julius & Annie Holub Drozd	Moravia
Sunday	Dec. 20	9:30 A.M.	August Kubos	St. John

Nativity of the Lord

Thursday	Dec. 24	5:00 P.M.	Parish Family	Moravia
Friday	Dec. 25	9:30 A.M.	Parish Family	St. John

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Saturday	Dec. 26	6:00 P.M.	Thelma & Ann Spies & Alfred Becan	St John
Sunday	Dec. 27	9:30 A.M.	Clarence Haas	Moravia

THE WORD OF GOD

Third Sunday of Advent

Readings: Zephaniah 3:14-18a (Ps) Isaiah 12:2-6 Philippians 4:4-7 Luke 3:10-18

Rejoice in the Lord always! Great in our midst is the Holy One of Israel, a mighty savior. It is he whom John foretold; it is he who will baptize in the Holy Spirit.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings: Micah 5:1-4a, Psalm 80:2-3,15-16,18-19 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45

From Bethlehem shall come one who will rule Israel. Born of Mary, the servant of the Lord, he will protect and save us, offering himself once and for all in doing the Father's will.

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Readings: (Midnight) Isaiah 9:1-6 Psalm 96:1-3,11-13 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14

Darkness is scattered for God's grace has been revealed in the birth of the Messiah.

(Dawn) Isaiah 62:11-12 Psalm 97:1,6,11-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:15-20

Out of love for us, God became flesh, for our Savior has appeared. Light dawns for us all!

(Day) Isaiah 52:7-10 Psalm 98:1-6 Hebrews 1:1-6 John 1:1-18 or 1:1-5,9-14

God has spoken to us through his Son, the Word made flesh. Thus has salvation been revealed to all the nations.

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Readings: Sirach 3:2-7,12-14 Psalm 128:1-5 Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 Luke 2:41-52 or 1 Samuel 1:20-22,24-28 Psalm 84:2-3,5-6,9-10 1 John 3:1-2,21-24 Luke 2:41-52

Family life is rooted in the unconditional love of God as witnessed by the Holy Family. Option: Hannah and Elkanah offer their son, Samuel, to God in the Lord's temple. Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple. He returns to Nazareth, obedient to them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Today we celebrate the third Sunday of Advent. Pretty practical advice from John the Baptist in this week's Gospel: if you have two cloaks, share one, if you have food, do the same, be honest, don't cheat; don't lie about others.

Practical advice is the kind of thing elders would dole out to children and grandchildren. Be polite, wait your turn; say "thank you"; wash your hands before meals; take a walk; have regular check-ups. You know the routine.

While the simple practical advice of our elders was meant to situate us in a wholesome life that was respectful of self and others, the practical advice of John the Baptist has a great end in mind. The actions he promotes are directed toward the coming kingdom of God. John's vision takes in the whole world and extends beyond his moment in time. He is foreseeing a day when God's justice will reign supreme. He is asking his listeners to begin now to make that justice happen.

The kind things we do at this time of year are to be more than simple acts of charity. Donating food, bringing gifts for the poor, contributing to agencies that help those in need are all good things. But if we see our actions for what they can be - giving from what has been given to us to the many who have less - we then begin to understand our place in the kingdom of God. If we have more than someone else, it is always incumbent on us to share. That is the practical advice that John lays out for his listeners as preparation for the coming of the Messiah. And just to make it clear, John adds that this Messiah is coming with his winnowing fan to separate wheat from chaff. God's justice will not be denied.

PERPETUAL ADORATION

Perpetual adoration at Sacred Heart will continue through Christmas & New Year's Holidays. If you will be unable to fulfill your regular adoration hour, please find a replacement or call your hourly captain. For questions, please call Charlene Bradbury 798-3224.

AREA PENANCE SERVICES:

Moulton - Monday, December 14, 5:30 p.m.
Yoakum - Tuesday, December 15, 5:30 p.m.
Hallettsville - Thursday, December 17, 5:30 p.m.
Shiner - Friday, December 18, 5:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Sacred Heart:

Friday, December 18, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 19, 4:00-5:15 p.m.
Tuesday, December 22, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 23, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

St. Mary's: Saturday, December 19, 10:00 a.m.
Moravia: Saturday, December 19, 5:00-5:45 p.m.
St. John: Monday, December 21, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Sacred Heart: Christmas Eve - 4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., & Midnight. Christmas Day - 8:05 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
St. Mary's: Christmas Eve – Midnight. Christmas Day - 9:15 a.m.
Moravia: Christmas Eve - 5:00 p.m.
St. John: Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m.

The Youth ConneXion

December 13: Youth meet in Sacred Heart Church at 5:00 p.m. Firefall at 6:00 p.m.
Youth Christmas Party: January 10, Youth House (8-12 Graders).
Music Practice: Mondays, 6:00 pm, Youth House.

PRO LIFE CORNER

“Lord Jesus, as we celebrate your birth we proclaim the right of every child to be born. As we pray for peace on earth we proclaim peace to children in the womb. May our Christmas gift be a Culture of Life, for you are Lord forever.”Fr. Frank Pavone

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Christmas flower donations in memory of loved ones can be given to Dorothy Olsovsky for Ascension Church or Joyce Janda for St. John Christmas flowers

ST. JOHN CRIB

The crib in St. John Church will be put up after 9:30 a.m. mass on Sunday, December 20. THERE WILL BE A BAPTISM FIRST, so come to the Rectory for coffee/juice/cookies and get organized to set it up.

ALTAR SERVER SCHEDULE

Saturday, Dec. 12 - 6:00 p.m. - St. John - James Lofland, April & Clayton Brossmann
Sunday, Dec. 13 - 9:30 a.m. - Moravia - Caleb & Jared Krischke, Logan Eckhardt

Saturday, Dec. 19 - 6:00 p.m. - Moravia - James Lofland, April & Clayton Brossmann
Sunday, Dec. 20 - 9:30 a.m. - St. John - Caleb & Jared Krischke, Logan Eckhardt

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day - Volunteers

Saturday, Dec. 26 - 6:00 p.m. - St. John - Caitlyn Deem, Ashley & Joshua Becan
Sunday, Dec. 27 - 9:30 a.m. - Moravia - Blaine & Hayden Besetzny, Seth Eckhardt

MEMORIALS

Ascension Building Fund – In memory of A.C. Ivy by Ben & Deloris Smolik \$20
St. John Cemetery Fund – In memory of Jimmy Sanchez by Sharon Janak \$20

Next Bulletin: December 27th, 2009
Bulletin Deadline: 12:00 p.m. on Monday, December 21st, 2009



Merry
Christmas!

The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” — LK 2:10-12

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

December 2009

One Minute Meditations

Mary's faith

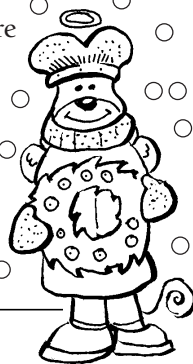
Like us, Mary got confused by God's instructions. When the angel appeared and told her of her role in God's plan, she was "greatly troubled" and confused enough to ask, "How can this be ...?" (Luke 1:29, 34). Even the full explanation was too enormous for her to completely understand. It was Mary's great faith in God that caused her to say, "Yes," to whatever he asked.

The Advent wait

We spend Advent waiting for something wonderful to happen. Yet in our impatience to get to that something wonderful, we can forget that the wait can be wonderful, too. Try taking it one week at a time and wait, hope, prepare, and rejoice at the miracle of Christ's birth.

A Catholic difference

As Catholics, we are never alone in our efforts. We are members of the Church, the body of Christ, and together we make a real difference.



Celebrate Christmas like the first one

Celebrating Christmas can be anything but peaceful. Between the extra spending, shopping, and holiday activities leading up to Christmas, we may be more stressed at this time than at any other time of year.

Yet Jesus certainly doesn't want it that way. He spent his first day on Earth in a manger. His first outfit was little more than wrappings of cloth and his first gifts weren't entertaining. Why not learn from the first Christmas how to truly celebrate his birth?

Surround yourself with family. Jesus spent that first night in the company of his parents. Their gifts to him were simple: love and attention. Celebrate Christ's birth with family or invite

others who would otherwise celebrate alone.

Praise God like the angels. "And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God" (Luke 2:13). There is an abundance of amazing Christmas hymns and carols to sing out praise. Renew the tradition of caroling in your neighborhood or host a caroling party by inviting family and friends to share their joy through song.

Give gifts from the heart. The Magi "opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matt. 2:11). What gifts can you offer from your treasure of talents? Remember, gifts from the heart are more valuable than anything you can find in a store.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe Mary was born without Original Sin?

The *Catechism* teaches that God gave Mary all the gifts necessary for her to become mother of our Savior. In fact, when the angel Gabriel addressed Mary as "full of grace" in Luke 1:28, he meant that Mary had the special divine



help necessary for the task ahead.

While we are cleansed of original sin at Baptism, Pope Pius IX infallibly affirmed that Mary's role in Jesus' work was so crucial that it kept her from original sin at the outset.

Give gifts of love this Christmas

Jesus came to us out of love. He suffered and died on the Cross out of love. During Advent and Christmas, why not find ways to share Jesus' gift of love with others? "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you" (John 15:12).

Look for the lonely. Christmas can be a sad time for those who are alone. Gifts of love can be as simple as baking Christmas cookies, sending a card with a personal note, or offering to share a Christmas meal.



Reach out to the suffering. Many people are struggling financially this year. Even if you are one of them, consider calling your parish office or Catholic Charities (800-919-9338) to find out how you can help someone who is worse off. That's a great gift of love.

Offer time. This is one of the most precious ways to show you care. Spending time with someone else - even when you may not have it to spare - is a gift of love that will not be forgotten.

from Scripture **Luke 2:41-52, Living in the world**

In this reading, the Holy Family went to Jerusalem during the year Jesus was twelve. In those days, a Hebrew boy became a man around the age of twelve and was recognized in a ceremony we know as a Bar Mitzvah. At this point a Jewish boy would begin formal education in the Torah and Hebrew Scriptures.

This was an important time in Jesus' life. This reading said that Jesus stayed behind to talk with the scholars and teachers, and told his parents he was



doing his Father's work. He had become aware of his duties to his Father in Heaven, yet he remained mindful of his responsibilities to his parents on Earth and obediently left with them.

Christians live in the world, in neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. Jesus demonstrated his respect for his ties to his family, yet he continued to pursue his place in God's plan of salvation.

The lesson for us is that we don't have to retire from the world to be holy. Instead, we have to find ways to live a holy life in the world.

Q & A What are the origins of some of the carols we sing?

Some of the most popular Christmas hymns date back two hundred years or more.

Silent Night – Written as a poem in 1816 by Austrian priest Joseph Mohr,



it came in handy two years later when his church organ broke. Mohr gave the poem to his friend Franz Xavier Gruber who wrote the melody in time to be played on a guitar for Midnight Mass.

O Little Town of Bethlehem – Rector Phillips Brooks of Philadelphia wrote it in the late 1800s after he had visited the Holy Land. He was inspired by the view of Bethlehem from the hills of Palestine.

O Holy Night – The words were written by Placide Cappeau de Roquemaure, a wine seller, in 1847 when the parish priest asked him to write a poem for Christmas.

O Come All Ye Faithful – Englishman John Wade is credited with writing this hymn in Latin in 1744. One hundred years later, it was translated into English by an Anglican minister, Frederick Oakeley. Since then, it has been translated into 76 languages.

Feasts & Celebrations

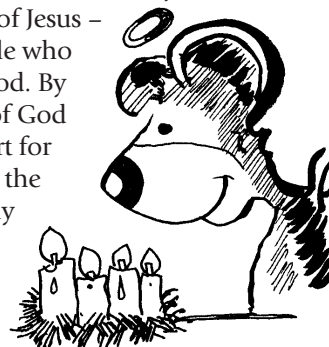
December 8 – Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the day we celebrate that Mary was conceived in St. Anne's womb without original sin.

December 12th - Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531). The Blessed Mother appeared to St. Juan Diego in Mexico. She asked him to tell the bishop to build a chapel for her, and had him carry roses in his tilma (cape) as a sign. When he emptied his tilma before the bishop, it retained the image of the Blessed Mother.

December 26 – St. Stephen (1st

century). A deacon of the early Church, St. Stephen angered the Jewish authorities by preaching that the Israelites consistently rejected God's chosen messengers. He was stoned to death and became the first martyr.

Dec. 27 – The Holy Family (1st century). On this feast day, we celebrate the family of Jesus – three people who lived for God. By their love of God and support for each other, the Holy Family is a model for all Christian families.



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