

Christi simus, non nostri

We belong to Christ, not ourselves

# ST COLUMBAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Parish of the  
Archdiocese of Seattle



## St. Columban Church

506 First St. S | Yelm, WA 98597

**Sunday Mass:** 10:30 AM

(See inside for special **Christmas Mass** Schedule)

Saturday 5:00 PM

**Daily Mass** 9:00 AM (Tuesday-Friday, Except First Fridays)

**Eucharistic Adoration** First Fridays 6:30 PM

**Confessions** Saturday 3:30-4:30 PM

**Anointing of the Sick** By request

**Baptism & Wedding Preparation**

Contact the Parish Office

**Parish Office Hours at St. Columban** Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday by appointment

## St. Peter Mission

149 Keithahn St S | Tenino, WA 98589

**Sunday Mass** 8:00 AM | First Friday Mass 9:00 AM

**Christmas Mass** Sat Dec 24: 5:00 PM

**Confessions** Sunday 7:30-7:45 AM

**Anointing of the Sick** By request

### Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Providing emergency assistance for those in need.

## December 18, 2022

## 4th Sunday of Advent

**Entrance Antiphon:** *Drop down dew from above you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One. Let the earth be opened and bring a forth a Savior.*

**1st Reading:** Isaiah 7:10-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** *Let the Lord enter, he is King of glory.*

**2nd Reading:** Romans 1:1-7

**Gospel Acclamation:** *The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.*

**Gospel:** Matthew 1:18-24

**Communion Antiphon:** *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name will be called Emmanuel.*

### A PRAYER FOR THE Fourth Sunday of Advent

Jesus, you are constantly coming to your people,  
even when we fail to see you.  
In each and every moment that we are blessed  
to recognize you here and now,  
give us the courage to leap with joy at your coming.  
Amen.



www.archtoronto.org

[www.saintcolumbanyelm.org](http://www.saintcolumbanyelm.org)

360-458-3031

[parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org)

## Parish Staff

360-458-3031

**Fr. Brian Thompson** Priest Administrator  
[frthompson@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:frthompson@saintcolumbanyelm.org) Ext. 6

**Jennifer Langham** PA for Admin, Liturgy, and Music  
[jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org) Ext. 1

**Holly Dodd** PA for Admin, Bookkeeping, & Records  
[holly@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:holly@saintcolumbanyelm.org) Ext. 4

**Gabriela Makinster** Elementary & Adult Faith Formation  
[gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org) *habla Español* Ext. 2

**Chad Lucero** Youth Ministry  
[chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org) Ext. 3

**Steve Slater** St. Columban Maintenance  
[steven@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:steven@saintcolumbanyelm.org)

**Gilberto Espino** St. Peter Maintenance

### St. Columban Parish Pastoral Council

Judith Cusick (Chairperson), Sheila Johnson, Jerome Didier, Joseph Judge, Dennis Stumpf

### St. Peter Advisory Commission

Sherry Bachmann (Chairperson), Marilyn Ritter, Bernie Schwarz, Bob Bacon, Diane Weston  
[stpeteradvisory@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:stpeteradvisory@saintcolumbanyelm.org)

### St. Columban Parish Finance Council

Joseph Judge (St Columban)  
 Mari Evans (St Peter)

## Weekly Calendar & Mass Intentions

### MONDAY December 19

Rosary Prayer Group 7:00PM Church

### TUESDAY December 20

Mass 9:00 AM + *In Memory of: Randall Walker RIP* Church

Choir Practice 6:00PM Church

Advent Chori Practice 6:30PM-7:45PM Church

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day 6:30PM

Midnight Mass 7:15PM

RCIA 6:30PM RE Building

Spanish Prayer Group 6:30PM Parish Hall

### WEDNESDAY December 21 **St. Peter Canisius, Priest & Dr.**

Mass 9:00 AM + *In Memory of: Dave Metzinger RIP* Church

### THURSDAY December 22

Mass + *In Memory of: Bill & Emma White RIP* Church

St Peter Bible Study 10:00 AM St. Peter

Sunday Scripture Study 6:30 PM Small Hall

### FRIDAY December 23 **St. John of Canty, Priest**

Mass 9:00 AM + *In Memory of: Larry Schmidt RIP* Church

Homeschool Enrichment 10:00 AM RE Building

Vespers 6:30PM Church

### SATURDAY December 24 **Christmas Eve**

Christmas Eve 5:00 PM St. Peter

Children's Mass 7:30PM Church

*Caroling starts 30 minutes prior to Mass*

### SUNDAY December 25 **Christmas Day**

Midnight Mass 12:00 AM Church

*Caroling starts 30 minutes prior to Mass*

Christmas Day 9:00 AM Church

*Caroling starts 30 minutes prior to Mass*

**Plan Ahead!** No Confessions Dec 24, 25, or 31. No Daily Mass Dec 27-30

## Financial Stewardship

### Week of December 4, 2022

Ordinary Income	St Columban	St Peter
Weekly Goal	\$5,800.00	\$1,000.00
Collection (Cash & Envelopes)	\$3,835.00	\$786.00
Online Giving	\$1,501.06	\$431.30
Net	(\$463.94)	\$217.30
Special Funds		
St Vincent DePaul	\$314.41	\$0.00
Sacramentals (Candles, Beeswax tapers, Salt)	\$11.00	\$15.50
Flowers	\$367.00	\$40.00
Building Fund	\$461.63	\$0.00
Mass Intentions	\$0.00	\$0.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> Collection (name)	\$0.00	\$0.00

**DECORATE**  
the Church

**St. Peter Mission (Tenino)**  
 Sunday December 18 (Today!)  
*Following the 8AM Mass*

**St. Columban**  
 Thursday December 22  
 starting at 9:30AM  
*Lunch will be provided*

All volunteers are welcome!  
**Children must be supervised at all times.**

# A Word from Father Thompson



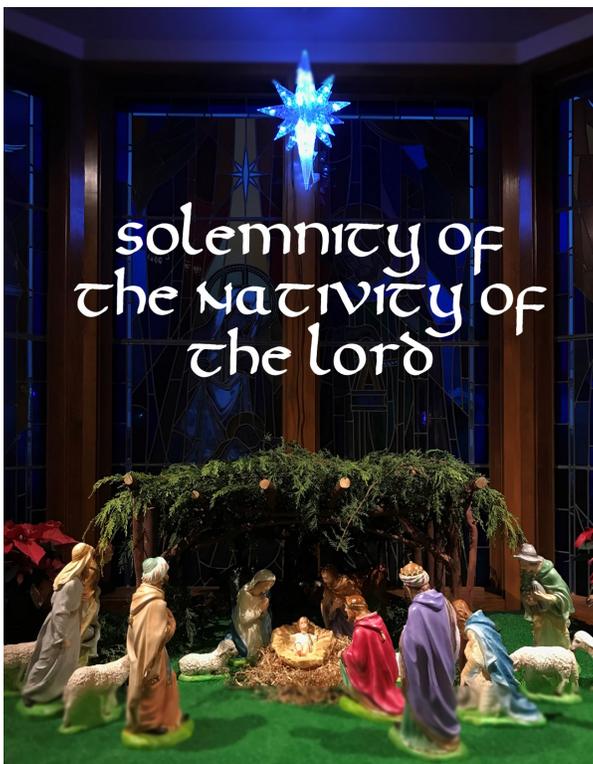
The upcoming Solemnity of Christmas gives us an occasion to welcome visitors to our families as well as others who are looking for a place to worship God on that great holiday. It is incumbent on us, in Christian charity, to make sure we exercise the virtue of hospitality to these visitors to our parish. While the obviously most important way to do this is to provide the most reverent, solemn, and prayerful atmosphere of worship for God that we are able: truth and beauty are the most attractive things we possess as Christians at worship. However, we should also attend to the more mundane aspects of providing a welcoming community as well during the next few days and weeks (well, we should always do this, actually, but at Christmas it is even more crucial).

Greet people warmly at the door, help them find seats (ideally up front so they can appreciate the beauty of the Mass), maybe offer them a missal or help them if they are perhaps unfamiliar with the Mass (you would be surprised at how many non-Catholics or lapsed Catholics come to Christmas Mass); of course, at the same time, don't smother someone who clearly wants simply to pray or to observe quietly. Prudence! Also, for the love of all that is good and holy in the World, graciously and happily cede your preferred pew or seat for our guests if they take them. Love our guests. (Also, be patient and charitable in the parking lot). Etc. You get the idea: Christian love, and common decency.

Again, you and I all know that Mass is not a social event and is by no means about us or our feelings; it is about giving God due worship and praise, joining to the eternal sacrificial liturgy of Christ in communion with the Church in all times and places. This is true: 90% of our task is to worship well, but the "softer" 10% of providing an experience of loving welcome for visitors and strangers is important in its own way, as it can serve as a doorway through which those who do not yet understand what we do here might come to encounter God again or for the first time.

In Christ,

*Father Thompson*



## Christmas Mass Times

(Holy Day of Obligation)

**Saturday,  
December 24**

**Christmas Eve  
Vigil Mass**

5:00 PM St. Peter Tenino

**Christmas Eve  
Children's Mass**

7:30 PM St. Columban

**Sunday,  
December 25**

**Midnight Mass**

*Mass During the Night*  
12:00 AM St. Columban

**Christmas Day**

*Mass During the Day*  
9:00 AM St. Columban

*Join us for Caroling 30 minutes prior to each Mass*

# Remember in Your Prayers

Loving God, we join with others of your people here asking you to hold in Your hands all of our homebound brothers and sisters and those who have asked for our prayers:

## The Sick and Homebound

Jessica Nash, Robert Fisher, Mary Taylor, John Gallwas, Dan Kavanaugh

## The Deceased

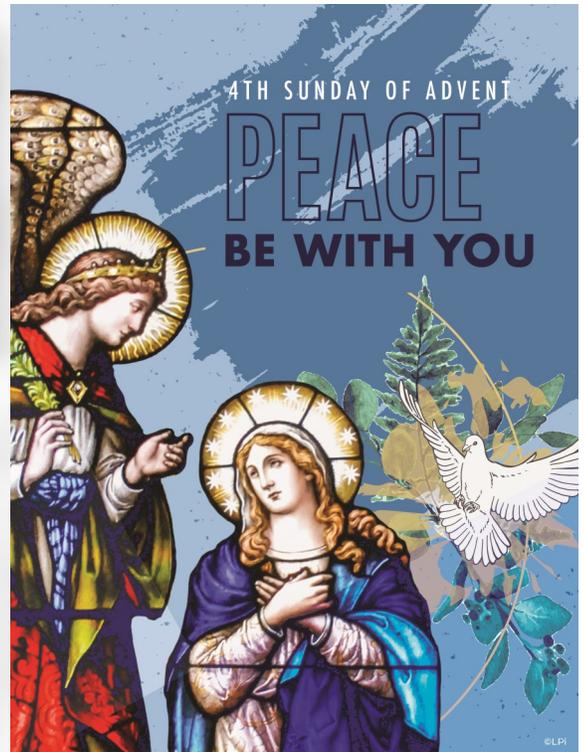
Paul Hennigan, Gregory Steckler

## Extraordinary Intentions

+ All those in harm's way, for the people of Ukraine  
+ All the souls in purgatory, especially those who have no one to pray for them.

*To add a name to this list or request a Mass Intention please contact the parish office. All submissions must have permission from the named individual or an authorized family member for privacy purposes.*

St. Columban Prayer Chain: *Confidential and private prayer chain. To join contact the parish office.*



# Elementary Faith Formation

Need some ideas to help celebrate Advent and anticipate Christmas with your family? The website *Catchat* has some fun videos and activities to inspire creativity and to celebrate the season with your kids. Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/advent4thsunday>. A link will be posted on the Parish FB page.

Gaby Makinster 360-458-3031 x2  
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org



## Faith Formation: Grades K-12

All K-5 classes meet before Mass from 9AM-10:15AM on Sundays.

- Dec 18th NO Class
- Dec 25th NO Class
- Jan 1st NO Class
- Jan 8th Class
- Jan 15th NO Class/MLK



Lo, sons are a heritage from the Lord,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
are the sons of one's youth.  
Happy is the man who has  
his quiver full of them!  
He shall not be put to shame  
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.  
Behold, children are a gift of the LORD,  
The fruit of the womb is a reward.

Psalm 127:3

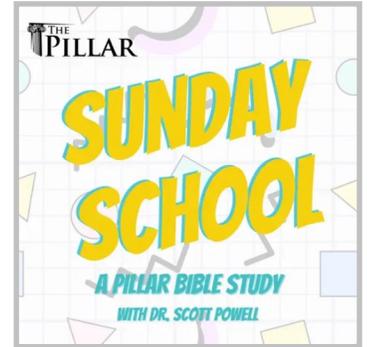
# RCIA & Adult Faith Formation



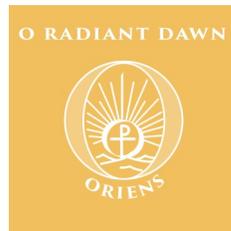
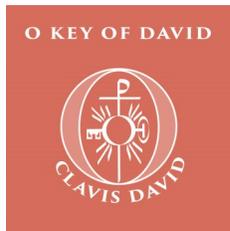
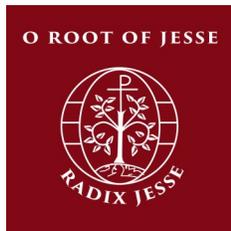
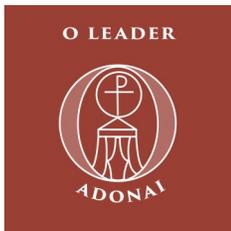
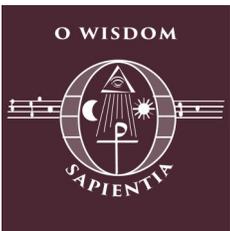
RCIA is open to all adult learners and those seeking the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and/or Confirmation.

There will be no classes on Tuesday Dec 20 and Tuesday Dec 27.

**Podcast Recommendation** If you are able to, listen to the podcast *Sunday School: A Pillar Bible Study with Dr. Scott Powell*. New episodes are posted every Sunday. They do an excellent job of showing us how the New Testament fulfills the Old in regards to the birth of Jesus. During this advent season special episodes examine Elizabeth & Zechariah (First Sunday of Advent) and Joseph & Mary (Second Sunday). Go to <https://www.pillaratholic.com/podcasts/> or search for it on your favorite podcasting app. A link will be posted on the Parish FB page.



**Did you know?** The “O” Antiphons accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present hopes as well. Their repeated use of the imperative “Come!” embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah. These antiphons form the basis of the verses of the Advent hymn *O Come O Come Emmanuel*.



## Youth Ministry & Confirmation

Classes resume January 8: Sunday Scripture Study meets 9:15-10AM. Confirmation classes meet after Mass 11:45-1:00PM. Same dates as Elementary Faith Formation. All Confirmation students must sign-in for Sunday Mass; sign-in sheet is posted in the Narthex. POC: Chad Lucero [chad@saintcolumbnayelm.org](mailto:chad@saintcolumbnayelm.org)



### Our Values



- 1 Our primary identity is as beloved sons and beloved daughters of God, no matter what.** You are here because God wanted you here. Willing our existence, God create each of us out of love to love and for love.
- 2 We glorify God by striving to fully live our state in live.** God gave us families and communities where we learn our faith, pray for each other’s needs, and build virtue together as members of his Church, the Body of Christ.
- 3 As pilgrims on a journey together we are always on mission.** We attend Holy Mass and receive the sacraments to better endure the trials of life, train us to be of service to one another, and to prepare us for eternal life in Heaven.

### Parishioner Help Needed

We need volunteers to help provide food for our teens on monthly YM Saturdays. We are anticipating needing food for roughly 15 people and meals will need to be prepared and dropped off by 11 am on the date you sign up for. Sharing a meal together is an important part of building fellowship within this ministry! Please consider signing up. Next date is January 21.

# Parish Ministries & Events



Please contact Jennifer at the Parish Office for more information about events and to connect with our various parish groups: 360-458-3031 x1 [jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org)



## Altar Society

Meets every Thursday after Daily Mass to clean the church.



## Daughters of Mary

St. Columban Catholic Church Yelm, WA

### Monthly Meeting

Jan. 10, 10:00 AM  
RE Bldg.

[daughtersofmary@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:daughtersofmary@saintcolumbanyelm.org)

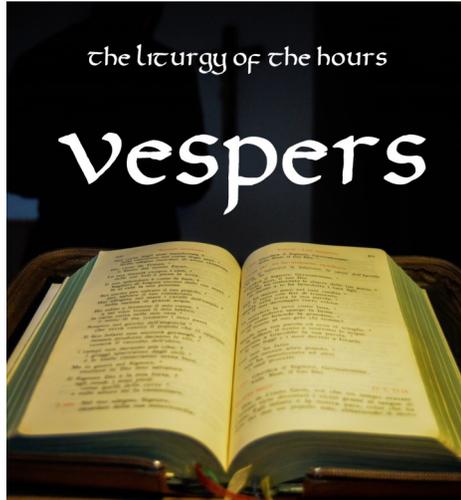


## St. Peter's Circle

St. Peter Mission Tenino  
Meets Bi-monthly

### Next Meeting

January 10 9:30 AM



Join us for Evening Prayer this Friday  
December 23  
6:00 PM in the Church.

*Thank you for all who have joined us this Advent*

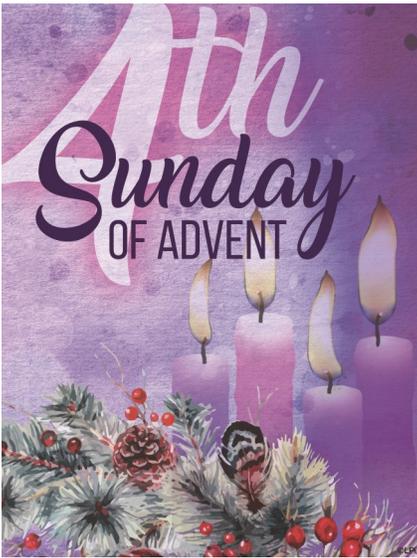


## Society of St. Vincent de Paul

To request assistance please leave a voicemail  
(360) 458-1904

### Monthly Conference Meeting

January 19, 7:00 PM  
Parish Hall



## Knights of Columbus

### Next Council Meeting

Wednesday Dec. 21  
5:30 PM Vespers in the Church  
6:00 PM Hall

*Charity + Unity + Fraternity + Patriotism*

## BE A KNIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

- LIVE YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH-
- PROTECT YOUR FAMILY-
- INSPIRE OTHERS-
- FREE ONE-YEAR ONLINE MEMBERSHIP
- GO TO: [KofC.org/join](http://KofC.org/join)  
CODE: BLESSEDMCGIVNEY

[kofc17152@saintcolumbanyelm.org](mailto:kofc17152@saintcolumbanyelm.org)



## FLOCKNOTE

WE LOVE HAVING YOU AS

a part of our Flock!

TEXT

SAINTCOLUMBANYELM

TO 84576



OR CONNECT WITH US ONLINE AT:

[saintcolumbanyelm.flocknote.com](http://saintcolumbanyelm.flocknote.com)

Text STOP to 84576 to stop txt notifications at any time. Text HELP for help. There is no charge for this service, but your carrier message and data rates may apply. View full privacy policy & terms at [flocknote.com/txt](http://flocknote.com/txt).

## Winter Clothes Closet

Hours of Operation: Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:00 PM Parish Hall

*Free winter clothes to anyone in need, no questions asked!*

Clothing donations may be made before or after Mass, during hours of operation, or by contacting the Parish Office.

# FORMED<sup>®</sup> The Catholic Faith. On Demand.

Our parish pays for a subscription to FORMED.org, a streaming service, allowing you to register for FREE:

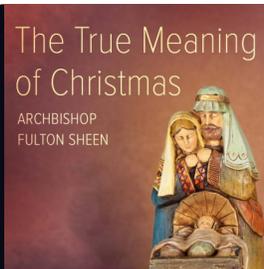
1. Visit [formed.org/signup](http://formed.org/signup)
2. Enter our parish zip or name
3. Enter your name and email



**The Story of the Nativity: The Truth of Christmas**  
Enjoy this fast-paced, thought-provoking look at the true story of the Nativity as we enter into the joyful season of Advent. Christmas is so much more than a humdrum story we've heard since childhood. Join top scholars, speakers, and authors as they explain the gravity of Christ's miraculous birth.

**The True Meaning of Christmas by Fulton Sheen**  
This presentation combines recordings of Fulton Sheen's timeless reflections on the meaning of Christmas, mixed with Gregorian chant and seasonal music. It is sure to become a family favorite!

An offering from the AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE and ignatius press



## Advent/Christmas Memories



# THIS WEEK ON **FORMED**

## Week of December 18, 2022



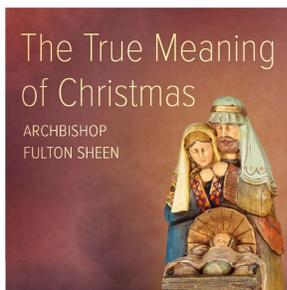
### **Christmas in Rome: A Celebration of the Nativity**

Nowhere celebrates the birth of the Savior like Rome. This Christmas, marvel at the Holy City's festive celebration of the coming of the child Jesus.



### **The Story of the Nativity: The Truth of Christmas**

Enjoy this fast-paced, thought-provoking look at the true story of the Nativity as we enter into the joyful season of Advent. Christmas is so much more than a humdrum story we've heard since childhood. Join top scholars, speakers, and authors as they explain the gravity of Christ's miraculous birth.



### **The True Meaning of Christmas by Fulton Sheen**

This presentation combines recordings of Fulton Sheen's timeless reflections on the meaning of Christmas, mixed with Gregorian chant and seasonal music. It is sure to become a family favorite!

Our parish has a FORMED subscription.  
Visit [signup.formed.org](http://signup.formed.org) and select our parish name.

Christ, the Ultimate Gift

December 18, 2022

4th Sunday of Advent

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

At Home with

Faith

All these days of Advent have been preparing us for a very important purpose: receiving Jesus, the ultimate gift. Continue to provide your family, and yourself, moments of peace so that we can receive the ultimate gift.



In these final days of Advent, we face many distractions. So much to do before the celebration of Christmas and only a week left.

In this time, we can benefit from Archbishop Etienne's reminder that, to receive a gift, our hands need to be free and our hearts need to be open. Jesus comes to us poor and humble. To receive him, we need to create a space of openness in our hearts and minds.

**Isaiah 7:10-14**

The virgin shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel.

**Psalms 24**

Let the Lord enter, he is king of glory.

**Romans 1:1-17**

Through Jesus, we received grace and faith.

**Matthew 1:18-24**

Joseph believed and took Mary as his wife.

## Read

Take time to read and reflect on the Scriptures for this day.

**Don't have access to a Bible?**

Visit [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings) or download an app such as *Laudate* or *iBreviary* to access the Mass readings.

# At Home with Faith

## Talk

Here are some reflection questions to help you have **Great Conversations** with the whole family.

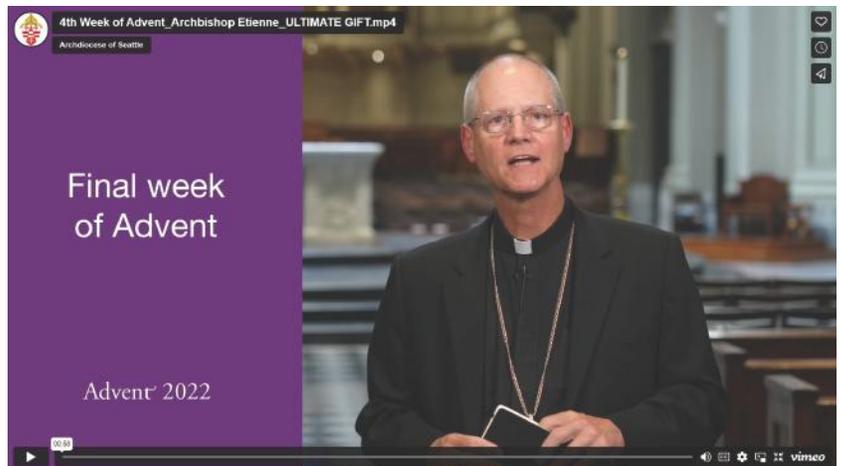
Take a moment to watch Archbishop Etienne's video reflection. Then, pause in prayer. What's most important in our lives? What is the ultimate gift we wish to receive?

Then, follow Archbishop Etienne's advice. Take time to create openings in our lives for Jesus to enter. Put the first things first. Be at peace with the reality that we can't do it all. Jesus is the ultimate gift, and he can resolve all our unmet needs, provided we create space for him to enter our lives.

Find more Advent prayer resources at <https://archseattle.org/Advent/>



Photo: Adobe Stock



**Check out Archbishop Etienne's reflection about Jesus, the ultimate gift,** along with other resources on Archdiocese of Seattle's [Advent: the Ultimate Gift](https://archseattle.org/Advent/) webpage.

**Video reflection on "The Ultimate Gift"**  
<https://archseattle.org/Advent/>

Check out the Office of Marriage and Family Life's resources for [Managing Technology and Making Space for God](https://www.athomewithfaith.org) in our homes.

**For more resources, visit us online at:**

<https://www.athomewithfaith.org>

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# 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SUNDAY **DECEMBER 18, 2022**

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# SAVE



“She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

MATTHEW 1:21

# SUNDAY'S READINGS

## FIRST READING:

Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign:  
the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,  
and shall name him Emmanuel. (Is 7:3-4)

## PSALM:

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory. (Ps 24)

## SECOND READING:

The gospel about his Son, descended from David  
according to the flesh,  
but established as Son of God in power. (Rom 1:15)

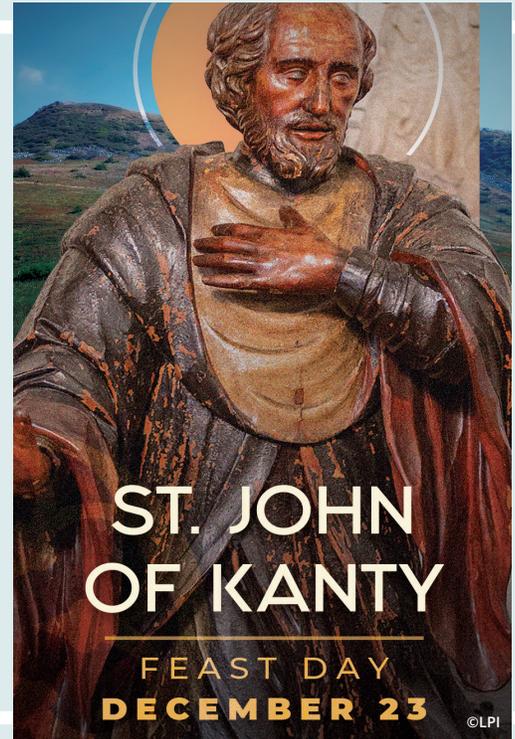
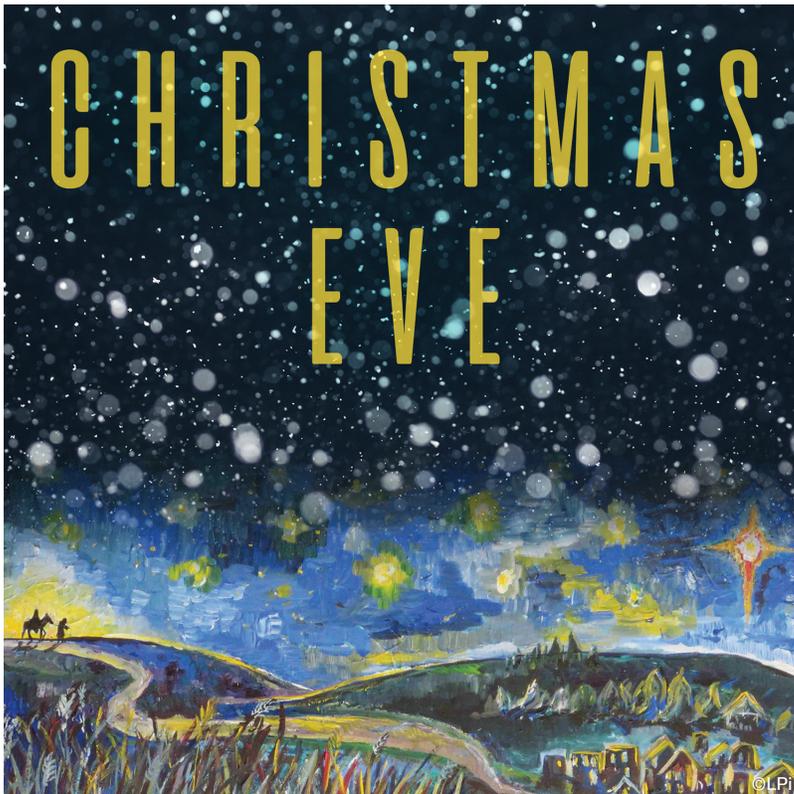
## GOSPEL:

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,  
"Joseph, son of David,  
do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.  
For it is through the Holy Spirit  
that this child has been conceived in her. (Mt 1:20)

*Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.  
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International  
Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.*

## OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 18, 2022

Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent  
Wednesday: St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church  
Friday: St. John of Kanty, Priest  
Saturday: Christmas Eve  
Next Sunday: The Nativity of the Lord



## Saint of the Week

Saint John, sometimes called John Cantius, was born in the Polish town of Kanty in 1390. Not much is recorded about his early life, however, he was a bright young man who did well in his studies at the university in Krakow. He earned his doctorate in philosophy and went on to be ordained and earn a doctorate in theology as well.

He began teaching at the university immediately following the conferring of his doctorate in philosophy. Unfortunately, his popularity worked against him, and he was dismissed from his post on false charges. Saint John was reassigned to a post as a parish priest in the town of Olkusz, Bohemia. His parishioners did not receive him with open arms, and he was unsettled in his new position. But John did not give up, his honest care for the people of his parish eventually endeared him to them.

After a time, he was invited back to the university and he returned to teaching, filling leadership roles in the philosophy and theological areas until the end of his long life. Saint John deeply cared for the poor, giving everything but only what he needed to survive away. He lived an aesthetic life but was such an engaging man that he often dined with nobility. Saint John of Kanty died on December 24, 1473. He was canonized in 1767, by Pope Clement XIII. In 1998, a new religious community chose the saint for their patron and the Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius, was formed in Chicago, Illinois.

## ST. JOSEPH THE STEWARD

St. Joseph is one of the greatest examples of stewardship we have in the Gospels. Here is a man who understands care and reverence for the property of God, a man chosen to be steward over the very life and breath of God's Son and Spouse.

Joseph was mindful. He recognized what belonged to God. When he understood that Mary was to be the mother of God, he was not jealous or bitter. He did not presume to claim ownership over her.

Joseph was prayerful. He accepted the opportunity to be in relationship with God, even if it was in a radical and unexpected way. How many of us would trust a crazy dream we have where an angel tells us our fiancée is carrying the Son of God? Well, those of us who are already profoundly connected to God through prayer. Joseph was open to receiving God, and so he was open to the truth in a way many of us would not have been.

Joseph was gracious. Even before he had full understanding of the situation, he was unwilling to expose Mary to shame. He did not give himself over to feelings of betrayal.

Joseph was committed. He persevered. The Lord had no shortage of strange and even dangerous-sounding tasks for Joseph, but he submitted to each one.

Joseph was accountable. When he awoke from his dream, "he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took his wife into his home."

Joseph was a man entrusted with many gifts, and he gave of them wisely. Let us pray that we have the grace to follow in his example.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

## WHAT IS THE HISPANIC ADVENT CUSTOM OF "LAS POSADAS"?

"Posada" is the Spanish word for inn or lodging. "Las Posadas" refers to a traditional Advent custom in preparation for the birth of Jesus, beginning on December 16. For nine successive evenings, groups reenact the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem.

Two children dress as Mary and Joseph, sometimes with Mary riding on an actual donkey. They are usually accompanied by children dressed as angels and shepherds along with the Wise Men. Adults accompany them as they process to designated homes where they sing Christmas songs and request lodging. Part of the group enters the home and becomes the chorus that responds to the request for lodging. In the beginning the request is rebuffed. They move to several more homes where the ritual is repeated. Eventually, at the last home, their need is recognized, and they all enter the home where a party ensues.

This is repeated in different neighborhoods and homes each of the nine days.

While this custom teaches children an important aspect of the Christmas story, it also emphasizes the need for hospitality to strangers and the continual need we all have to make room for Jesus in our "posada." As we struggle to arrive at a fair and just immigration policy, it would be good to recall the fact that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were also immigrants looking for a hospitable place to dwell.



# LIVE THE LITURGY

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

“God is with us.” This is the one constant in the unpredictability of life. The particulars of our lives can change, not only instantly but dramatically. People experiencing a time of peace can easily find themselves at war. Times of prosperity can rapidly become times of want. Our vision for the future can be destroyed, and our securities placed in jeopardy. These final days of Advent allow us to make final preparations. The true safety and security we seek can only come from God. The rest, harmony, and peacefulness we desire are found in God alone. How do we know this to be true? God Himself gave us a sign: Emmanuel, God with us. Do not be afraid, and do not be unbelieving. Hold fast to what God has done in giving us His only begotten Son. We do not have to anxiously attempt to control life’s unpredictability. All we need to do is make sure that our hearts are in the proper place and seeking the right things!



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## 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## GOSPEL MEDITATION

### ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

An entire town is wiped out by fire, a tornado rips through several neighborhoods, a bomb claims a maternity hospital and a sudden heart attack takes the life of a soul mate. Life is unpredictable and dramatic. Many buy into the sad illusion that the securities and familiarities we see around us today will remain forever: our homes, our friends, our spouses, our churches, and even our health. We are stunned and shaken by a sudden change, finding ourselves bewildered, mortified, and even embittered. We do not like change, especially change driven by sources beyond our control. Are there any guarantees in life? We often live as if our lives come with lifetime warranties. When they break, they can be fixed or replaced. Such is not the case. Many things are irreplaceable and unable to be fixed. During life's inevitable chaos, God says: "Do not be afraid." Seriously? How can one not be afraid when things are falling apart?

Fear is normal and it has a purpose. It is unrealistic, and somewhat unhealthy, to strive to live without any fear. Fear teaches us lessons and can be



a catalyst to discovering more profound things. What we do with fear and how we understand it is critical. Fear can either cripple us or move us forward. God does not want fear to cripple us. If we look around at all that can change in our lives and consider what we might have to do, we can easily wallow in the mire of self-misery. Or we can step up to the challenge, as Mary did, and do what needs doing! We can stand tall, as did Joseph, and do the right and just thing! What gives us this courage? Faith.

God is with us. This is the focus of our Advent preparations. We need to be reminded that we are not in this alone. God not only made us and loves us, but God keeps us! In the person of Jesus Christ, God is the sign we need to persevere! Do not be afraid and do not be unbelieving! Hold fast to what God has done in giving us His only begotten Son. We do not have to anxiously attempt to control life's unpredictability. God has blessed us with the birth of His Son. Trust that He is with us and will not abandon us, even in death.

*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,*

which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. - Mt 1:23-24

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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# Kids Corner

READ THE  
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An angel told Joseph to marry Mary because her baby was through the Holy Spirit of God. They would name the baby Jesus because he would save his people from their sins. God called you by name, too. Before you were born, he could tell you how many hairs would be on your head. He knew how long your feet would be. He knew all the good things you would do for his people.

## PRAYER

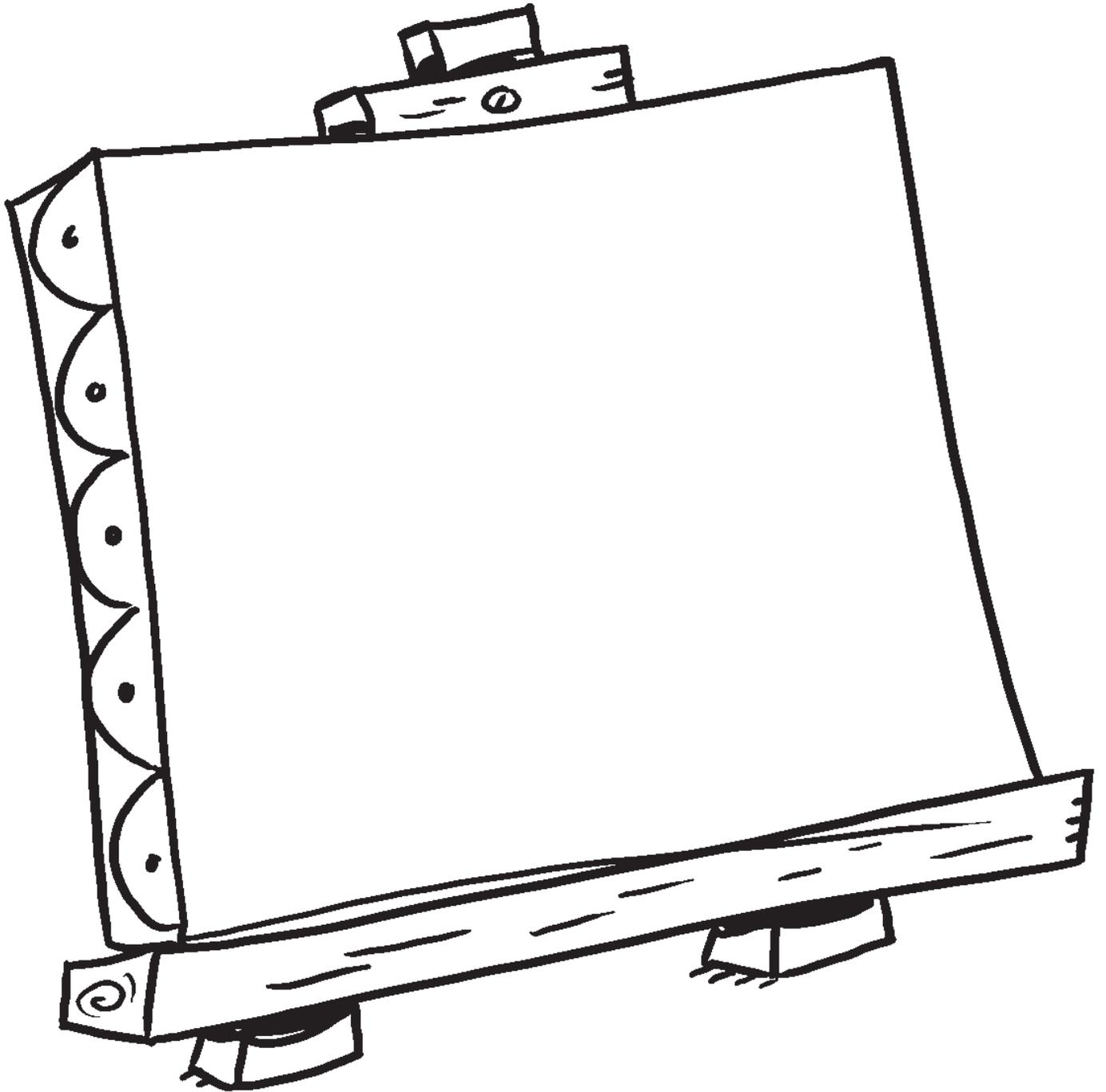
I am proud that I am your child, Father God.

## MISSION FOR THE WEEK

I will thank my parents for having me and taking good care of me.

# Puzzle

Draw a picture of yourself when you were a baby.





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