



## Mass Intentions for the Week

### Saturday, 5 December

3:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

4 pm ... †Dot, †Ray, & †Roger Larochele by Lil Larochele

### Sunday, 6 December

#### Second Sunday of Advent

7:30 am ... †Geraldine Kornichuck by P. Jerome

9:30 am ... Our Parish Family

4:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

5 pm ... †Deceased members of the Byrne & Walsh families by Eileen Byrne

### Monday, 7 December

#### Saint Ambrose

12 pm ... †Eileen Narkey by Teresa Greene

6:30 pm ... Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass

### Tuesday, 8 December Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.

12 pm ... Fr. Ryan T. Sliwa (living) by P. Jerome

### Wednesday, 9 December

12 pm ... †Cecile D. Moore by Roberta Banfield

### Thursday, 10 December

8:30 am ... †Fr. Bob Couto (1st Anniv.) by Kerri Stanley

### Friday, 11 December

#### Saint Damasus I

5:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

6 pm ... †Romain & †Louise Marcoux by Diane Gallant

### Saturday, 12 December

3:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

4 pm ... †Charles Richard by Simone Richard

### Sunday, 13 December Gaudete Sunday-Third Sunday of Advent

7:30 am ... Our Parish Family

9:30 am ... †Lucille M. Kelley by the Kelley Family

4:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

5 pm ... †Barbara L. Parkhurst by Virginia Kelly



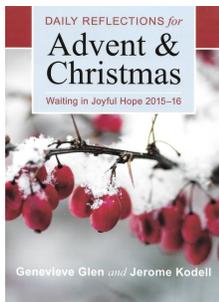
**The Angels are here!** Our Christmas Angel Tree appeal has begun. You will find angels hung on the tree located at the back of the church. We appreciate your assistance in helping to make Christmas brighter for those in need. Please return items as soon as you can and leave them under the tree. Thank you for your support!



**Seeking Christmas Choir Singers.** Do you like to sing? Would you like to sing in our choir for the Christmas Eve



Vigil Mass? Practice is Thursday night from 7:30-8:45pm, with a warm-up prior to 9:30 a.m. Mass Sunday. Please contact Susan Papinsick at [spapinsick@comcast.net](mailto:spapinsick@comcast.net) for more info or come to a rehearsal and check us out.



**Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas** Booklets are available in the nook for \$20.



**Sanctuary candle** The sanctuary candle burns this week for †Dot, †Ray and †Roger Larochele by Lillian Larochele.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Sunday, 6 December

10:30 am ... Coffee & Donuts—Parish Hall (St. Nicholas visits!)

### Monday, 7 December

6:30—8 pm ... Youth Ministry/Gr. 6-12—Parish Hall

7—8 pm ... Food Pantry

### Tuesday, 8 December

12:30 pm ... Parish Nurse—Church Conf Room

7 pm ... Advent Evening of Music & Reflection

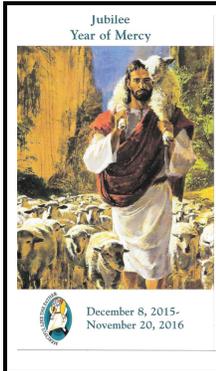
### Thursday, 9 December

6 pm ... Knights of Columbus Mtg—Parish Hall

6:15 pm ... Hand Bell Choir Practice

7 pm ... Knit & Crochet group—Church Conf Room

7:30 pm ... Choir Practice

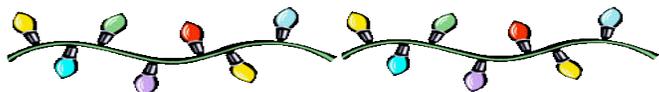


**Prayer Cards** Please help yourself to a Year of Mercy prayer card, located in the basket at the door of the church, as we begin the Year of Mercy on the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Dec. 8. **Dec. 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. is a holy of obligation. Vigil Mass on Mon., 6.30 pm; Tues., 12**



### Poinsettias in memory of loved ones

Donations for poinsettias will be accepted in the names of deceased loved ones and friends. A \$20 donation per poinsettia is recommended. Please write the names to be included along with the donation and send your offering to the parish office or drop it in the collection basket. Those who receive offertory envelopes will find floral donation envelopes in your recent package as well. Special thanks to those who donate flowers, as we ask you to maintain your generous Christmas giving to maintain parish services during the winter months.



## Advent is a time to prepare treasures of the heart for Christmas gifts



I've always loved the Christmas song, "**Silver Bells**," composed by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans, and sung by **Bob Hope and Marilyn Maxwell** (top photo) in the film

*The Lemon Drop Kid* (1951). The first recording, on Decca Records, however, was in October of 1950, just in time for the holiday season, with **Bing Crosby and Carol Richards** (bottom photo). Since then, the song has been recorded by any number of artists. The lyrics certainly are timely: "*City sidewalk, busy sidewalks / Dressed in holiday style. / In the air there's / A feeling of Christmas. / Children laughing, people passing, / Meeting smile after smile, / And on every street corner you'll hear: / Silver bells, silver bells, / It's Christmas time in the city. / Ring-a-ling, hear them ring, / Soon it will be Christmas Day.*" **Christmas shopping** for many of us is **one of the more onerous tasks** of the holiday season, but that's not the way the song depicts shopping. It's a busy but delightful responsibility and opportunity. It's a pity so many become frazzled and frustrated.

Can you imagine **Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar**, the three kings who visited the Divine Infant, at his birth fussing, fulminating and freaking out because they couldn't find the right **gold, frankincense and myrrh**?

Choosing and selecting a gift should be a special, even sacred moment in our celebrations. We ought to be **resolute, careful and discerning** as we choose just the right gift for the people who matter to us, but time, cost and crowds often push us into picking presents just to get the deed done.

In the spirit of the ubiquitous gift guides published in newspapers and on line, here's *The Pastor's Gift Guide for Harried Parishioners*, 2015 edition:

Consider providing **an adventure or cultural experience** for your loved ones. Maybe it might be a burger, a beer and a trip to a **Red Sox game**, or perhaps a visit to the **Currier Museum of Art** here in Manchester and lunch in its Winter Garden courtyard.

**Strawberry Banke**, a colonial restoration of historic homes in Portsmouth, offers some fascinating opportunities. If you want to travel, New

England abounds in such adventures and cultural experiences. One of the best features of such a gift is the time you will invest in someone you care about and the creation of shared memories. I remember one time, back in the early 1980s, when **I gave my mom such an adventure**. It was a trip to the home of **William Cullen Bryant**, the early American



poet and newspaper editor. We ended up having a wonderful ride, visit to a famous New England historic and literary, a great supper at an old country inn and, best of all, we had stories to swap long after we returned home.

Another kind of gift that can be especially meaningful to someone is a **creative one**, something the giver has made. Those with some skill in the **woodshop** can turn out some amazing homemade gifts: boxes for treasures, trays for keepsakes, ornaments and frames, dollhouses, cheeseboards, furniture and toys. When it comes to **knitting needles and crochet hooks**, people with such talents can create some wonderful gifts for every type of occasion. A few years back, my eldest niece, Jamie, gave me the coziest afghan, which remains something much appreciated especially at this time of year. Sometimes, our skills are with words and designs. For a number of years, when I first entered the abbey at Saint

Anselm, I wrote a **special Christmas poem** for great-nieces and nephews, often making them characters in the work. I'm happy to say they were received with some real enthusiasm. A **hand-painted design, painting, sketch or portrait** becomes far more than a gift for a particular occasion; it becomes an heirloom to be safeguarded through time. A friend of **Father Mathias, O.S.B.**, now serving as prior at the abbey, gave him a parchment which she had done in calligraphy and illuminated. That passage, the prologue from the Rule of Saint Benedict, he received when he was ordained, and it remains one of the loveliest artworks in the monastery.

The one thing most of us have in very short

supply is time, and **time can be the best of gifts**. When I was a youngster in Catholic school, the sisters made sure to encourage us to make **spiritual bouquets** on gift-giving occasions. These are promises the giver makes to pray in a certain way for a set period of time for a particular individual, and the document expressing such a commitment is usually presented in a creative fashion: paper flowers in a vase, snowflakes on a tree or rolled logs in a truck. Such a gift manifests a

**real commitment** to the other. Not only will one spend time in prayer for and thought about the loved one, but the outpouring of the heart to God in prayer, of course, has inestimable value. Closely related to the spiritual bouquet is

what some folks call **the love or the time bouquet**. Here, the giver promises to spend different amounts of time for various purposes with the loved one. For example, I could promise to visit a nursing home for four weeks or take someone on a shopping excursion several times in the course of year. Here, we build into our gift some personal "face" time, as well as the possibility of sharing a meal or a cup of hot chocolate. By making a specific gesture, recorded in or on the gift, there is a **definite commitment** from me to the recipient.

"Silver Bells" includes the verse, "*City street lights, / Even stop lights, / Blink a bright red and green, / As the shoppers rush home / With their treasures.*" Our gifts are meant to be treasures not because they are costly, rare, luxurious or technologically sophisticated but because **they embody our respect and affection for another**. Really, it is the family bonds, the friendships or the relationships that are to be treasured, and investing some creativity, skill, prayer, commitment and time into that relationship can be among the most satisfying things we do as we **prepare during Advent** for the coming feast of the Savior's birth at Christmas.

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# December 6, 2015

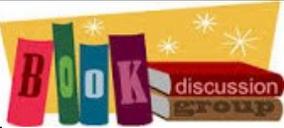
## Readings for the week of December 6, 2015

**Monday:** Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 5:17-26  
**Tuesday:** Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38  
**Wednesday:** Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30  
**Thursday:** Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9-13ab; Mt 11:11-15  
**Friday:** Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19  
**Saturday:** Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Jdt 13:18bcde, 19; Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47, or any readings from the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nos. 707-712



### CLOCK IS TICKING, PLEASE STEP FORWARD AGAIN

We had planned to terminate active participation in the campaign this past week, but, again, an **anonymous donor** emerged who promises to **MATCH** any additional contributions we receive through the end of the calendar year. To date, we have raised **\$18,786**, with an additional **\$1,250** which will be matched, raising our total to **\$21,286**. Please help us reach our \$30,000 goal and consider donating towards this cause. Your contribution now will be matched! Thank you to everyone who contributed to date!



### Book Discussion Group—Please join

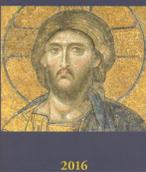
the Book Discussion Group in commemorating the 500th birthday of Saint Teresa of Avila, the first woman to become a Doctor of the Church. We'll be reading St. Teresa's masterwork *The Interior Castle*, a beautiful treatment of the soul's journey to union with God. Copies are available at the parish office for \$15. We'll meet **Thursday, Dec. 17, at 7 pm** in the conference room at the back of the church. Please come early to enjoy some refreshments!



### First-time visitor? welcome!

Cards on the table at the entry invite you to fill out contact information should you want to register. We'd love to have you! Cards may be placed in the collection basket during Mass.

COMPANION MISSAL



### SUNDAY'S WORD YEAR C

Lectors, Year C Companion Missals are available for you to pick up in the sacristy. Thank you for all you do!



**Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!** There is still time for you to dedicate a new hymnal in memory or in honor of a loved one. Each \$20 donation covers

book purchase and a printed dedication inside the cover. Order forms can be found at the back of the church and are also available on our website, [www.saint-raphael-parish.com](http://www.saint-raphael-parish.com).

## Weekly Collection

November 29, 2015

Regular Offertory	\$ 3,002.00
Make-Up Offertory	1,231.00
Loose Offertory	526.00
Online Parish Giving	110.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,869.00</b>
Stewardship	\$ 57.00
All Saints Day	\$ 25.00
Food Pantry	\$ 20.00

*"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinth 9:7*



### Saint Raphael Food Pantry

On Monday, November 30, the food pantry served **22** families and gave out **37** bags of groceries. Be sure to LIKE us on our new Facebook

Page—**Saint Raphael Food Pantry / Hope Chest** to get news and updates!

Thank you to **John Connor; and the Knights of Columbus;** for donating canned items from their Special Olympic event on Nov. 28, and to **Gary Lorusso** for the fresh apple for our food pantry.



### Nursing Home and Homebound greetings

Please remember our SRP parishioners and friends in nursing homes or homebound by sending them a holiday greeting card. Pamphlets with names and addresses are in the

Information Nook at the main entrance. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.



Thank you to those serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Please keep them in your prayers, especially:

<b>BYRON BOISVERT</b>	<b>NICHOLAS DOHERTY</b>
<b>KENNETH BREUDER</b>	<b>DANIELLE WELLS</b>
<b>PHILIP BREUDER</b>	<b>JUSTIN WEBB</b>
<b>CAPT. MIKE BUTLER</b>	<b>SGT. JASON MATEO</b>

If you have a member serving and would like to add his or her name to our list, please let us know!

## Second Sunday of Advent

# *Come, meet Saint Nicholas!*



He will visit Saint Raphael Parish on Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015. That's his feast day, and he's making a special stop after the 9.30 a.m. Mass just to visit us!

You and your children are invited to meet the patron saint of Christmas – and tell him whether you've

been naughty or nice! Photos welcome!



**SAINT *R*APHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH**

103 WALKER STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03102

TEL. 603.623.2604; [WWW.SAINT-RAPHAEL-PARISH.COM](http://WWW.SAINT-RAPHAEL-PARISH.COM)