

Third Sunday of Advent—Gaudete Sunday



Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, 12 December

3:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

4 pm ... †Charles Richard by Simone Richard

Sunday, 13 December

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

Monday, 14 December

Saint John of the Cross

12 pm ... †Louise Marcoux (17th Anniv.) by Diane Gallant

Tuesday, 15 December

12 pm ... †The deceased members of the Kaminski family by Teresa Greene.

Wednesday, 16 December

12 pm ... †Charles Robert Clark Jr., by Anne Clark

Thursday, 17 December

8:30 am ... †Mary Simone (22nd Anniv.) by Kerri Stanley

Friday, 18 December

5:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

6 pm ... †William & †Phyllis Wisneski by Teresa Greene

Saturday, 19 December

3:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

4 pm ... Our Parish Family

Sunday, 20 December

Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:30 am ... †Eileen Audet by Kathleen Albert

9:30 am ... †Aline & †Aristide Turgeon by Sharon & Eric Houle

4:30 pm ... Confession & Reconciliation

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



The Angels are here! Thank you to those who have donated to our Christmas Angel Tree appeal. **Please return your gifts by Sun., Dec. 20.** You may drop them at the rectory or leave them under the tree located by the main entrance of the church. Thank you for your support!



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.



Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas
Booklets are available in the



The Knights of Columbus of the Arthur J. O'Neil Council #25112 will host coffee and doughnuts following Sunday's 9:30 am Mass Dec. 13. Jim Finn, Chris Sweeney and others will be on hand to provide information about the K of C and answer any questions.



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.



Sanctuary candle The sanctuary candle burns this week for †Fred & †Mary Raymond by Lucille Baldoumas.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, 13 December

10:30 am ... Coffee & Doughnuts—Parish Hall (K of C hosting)

Monday, 14 December

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

7—8 pm ... Food Pantry

Tuesday, 15 December

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

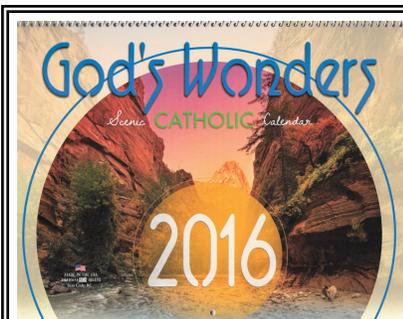
7 pm ... Advent Penance Service

Thursday, 16 December

6:15 pm ... Hand Bell Choir Practice

7 pm ... Book discussion group—Church Conf Room

7:30 pm ... Choir Practice



Our thanks, once again, to Kevin Marchand of Durning, Bykowski & Young Funeral Home, Manchester, for providing our 2015 calendars. Please help yourself to a calendar from the box in the

nook. Charlie would be proud of you!



Advent Penance Service—Please join us on **Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 7:15 pm** for our annual penance service. This 15 minutes later than first announced. Monks from Saint Anselm Abbey will be available to hear confessions. This is a wonderful opportunity to prepare for the feast of Christmas!

Advent is all about the coming of the Kingdom of God and holiness



I have a **confession** to make: I once poked fun of a saint. Back in my graduate school days, as a layman, I worked as a residence counselor in an Irish university setting. At that time, most **Irish universities** provided precious few housing opportunities, so most undergraduates and graduate students had to find accommodation in “bed-sits,” apartments that challenged the faint of heart, or private homes. Some religious organizations, however, operated hostels for students, and I found a spot at **Nullamore**, a beautiful old Guinness family estate in the Dartry section of Dublin.

The hostel was run by a group called **Opus Dei**, about which I knew nothing at the time. I discovered that Opus Dei (the Work of God) is a world-wide conservative Catholic organization, with lay members and clerical priests, that was founded in 1928 by a Spanish priest named **Jose Maria Escrivá de Belaguer y Albas** (1902-1975). My time there was enjoyable, and I found members filled with good will and convicted faith.

In the years since, Opus Dei was made famous by the fiction (and fantasy) of New Hampshire novelist Dan Brown, author of *The Davinci Code*. Subject to some heavy criticism because of alleged secrecy and elitism, Opus Dei, now with **more than 90,000 members** some 80 countries, does much good seeking the sanctification of both ordinary people and some of society’s movers and shakers. It was Msgr. Escrivá’s belief that **conversion of heart** by the leaders of a society could help stimulate a transformation of our world.

Escrivá’s writings included the popular works *The Way*, *The Furrow* and *Christ is Passing By*. They are filled with short, pithy invocations, injunctions and interjections designed to stimulate thought, prayer and reflection. In my youthful “wisdom,” however, I thought they were rather trite, altogether too unsophisticated for a college graduate like myself. How could all these economists, government officials, academics, business executives, bankers, physicians and researchers take it so seriously, I



wondered. Moreover, I thought the presence of a **particular holy card** of Msgr. Escrivá just about everywhere in the house was ridiculous.

My own sensibilities were formed at Saint Anselm under

Benedictine influence. The sober, restrained approach to Catholic life – intense, not showy – appealed to me. If a monk wanted to read, he turned to the Fathers of the Church, major theologians, papal or conciliar teachings, the saints, or, always, Sacred Scripture. **Two- and three-line maxims** from Msgr.

Escrivá? Come on! Yet Escrivá kept showing up.

Once I went into the Catholic chapel at **Trinity College Dublin**, hardly a place where I expected the ubiquitous holy card, and there he was looking me straight in the eye on a nearby seat! Back in the U.S., within weeks of my return, some of my buds from St. A’s decided to get together in Boston. I made the three-hour trek from North Adams east, and arriving at the **apartment of one**

of the guys, I asked if I could change and clean up before we headed out. No problem, said he, use my room and the bathroom next to it. Neatly tucked into the bedroom’s dresser, on the mirror, who should be looking at me? Yup, Msgr. Escrivá!

Well, time passed and several decades later, I myself was a Benedictine monk at Saint Anselm. Msgr. Escrivá had been **canonized in 2002** as a bona fide, real, honest-to-goodness saint and technology arrived in the age of **tweets on Twitter**. Those are the 140-character messages, all short and pithy, that politicians, celebrities and even institutions put out sometimes on a daily basis. Our college uses it, the parish secretary uses it, most of my students use it and The Saint Anselm Crier, the student newspaper which I serve as faculty adviser, uses it. Oh, and who else? **Pope Francis on @pontifex!**

All this left me in a **somewhat conflicted state of mind**. I certainly realized I had

undervalued Escrivá, missed the mark on Benedictine spirituality and underappreciated the impact on evangelizing of very short thoughts expressed in maxims. One of my former editors at The Crier, **Mike O’Loughlin**, a reporter for The Boston Globe, has just come out with his first book, *The Tweetable Pope* (Harper-Collins, 2015) on that that very topic. So it all came together earlier this week.

Msgr. Escrivá’s book *The Way* appeared in the sacristy. How it got there is anybody’s guess, but apparently Saint Josemaria is everywhere. I leafed through it, and I happened upon a maxim that declared how fortunate we are to be working to build up the **Kingdom of God** rather than some earthly kingdom. And then it struck me!

Thank you, Josemaria, and thank you, John the Baptist! In reflecting on the gospel of the day, and John’s preaching of the Kingdom of God, I realized the Baptist just might be the world’s first “tweeter.” John’s words along the banks of the River Jordan are **simple, direct and short**. Repent! Believe! Behold the Messiah! He does not speak like the Old Testament prophets, with long exhortations, harsh denunciations and elaborate visions. John is as punchy as any tweet.

What John lacks in Twitter technology, he makes up for in rhetorical conviction. And Josemaria’s use of nuggets of the gospel suits today’s short attention spans well. Even more important, how blessed we really are to be called to the Kingdom and to labor for that domain of Christ. Much as we love **our own nation**, we all know how many problems we face and how much we must overcome. Christ, the source of all that is good, holy, noble, beautiful, true, free, life-giving and fulfilling in our world, reminds us that our real home is on high.

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December 13, 2015

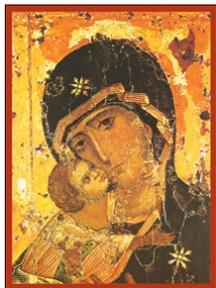
Readings for the week of December 13, 2015

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9; Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23; Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 7:18b-23
Thursday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17
Friday: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25
Saturday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45
Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18



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 **\$1,300** which will be matched, raising our total to **\$21,336**. 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!

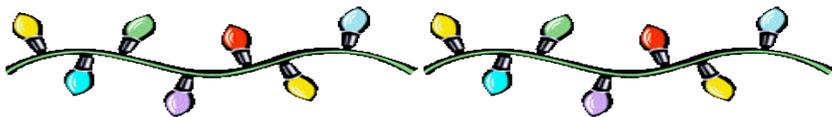


... *Mercy, Come Down...* We want to again thank Susan Papinsick, SRP Choir, Lyle Hamel, Aksara, Benjamin O'Brien, Christopher's Soul, The Saint Anselm College Chamber Music Ensemble, The Saint Anselm College Choir, String & Silver Trio, as well as our readers and all those who helped behind-the-scenes at our Advent Evening of Music & Mediation on Tuesday, Dec. 8. Photos can be found on our Facebook page.



Christmas Concert!

Please join us for Saint Benedict Academy's annual Christmas concert on Tuesday, December 15 at



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

BYRON BOISVERT
KENNETH BREUDER
PHILIP BREUDER
CAPT. MIKE BUTLER

NICHOLAS DOHERTY
DANIELLE WELLS
JUSTIN WEBB
SGT. JASON MATEO

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



Weekly Collection

December 6, 2015

Regular Offertory	\$ 2,038.00
Make-Up Offertory	1,444.00
Loose Offertory	1,043.75
Online Parish Giving	355.00
Total	\$ 4,880.75

All Saints Day	\$ 10.00
Immaculate Conception	\$ 783.00
Immaculate Conception Loose	434.50
Total Immaculate Conception	\$ 1,217.50
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

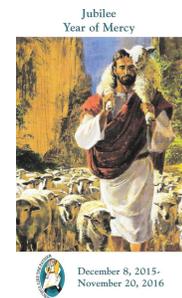


Saint Raphael Food Pantry

On Monday, December 7, the food pantry served **23** families and gave out **39** 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 **Lea Francoeur and her coworkers** for their recent donation to our food pantry.



The Year of Mercy has begun.

Please help yourself to a **Year of Mercy prayer card**, located in the basket at the door of the church.

December 8, 2015-
November 20, 2016



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.

Christmas and New Year Mass Schedule



Christmas: Nativity of the Lord—Thursday, Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at 4 pm; Friday, Dec. 25
Christmas Day Masses at 8 am and 10 am.
Mary Mother of God Vigil—Thursday, Dec. 31
Mary Mother of God—Mass at 6 pm; Friday, Jan. 1,
2016 Mass at 10 am.

SAINT *R*APHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH

UT IN OMNIBUS GLORIFICETUR DEUS – THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED

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ESTABLISHED IN 1888 - NEW ENGLAND'S FIRST BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION