



## Mass Intentions

### Sat., November 26

Rv 22:1-7; Ps 95:1-7ab; Lk 21:34-36

4 pm ... †Leo & †Doris Moreau by their family

### Sun., November 27

#### First Sunday of Advent

Is 2:1-5; Ps 122:1-9; Rom 13:11-14; Mt 24:37-44

7:30 am ... †Mary Marszal by Richard Bienvenue

9:30 am ... †Edward Bolton by Diane Bolton

5 pm ... Our Parish Family

### Mon., November 28

Is 4:2-6; Ps 122:1-9; Mt 8:5-11

12 pm ... †René Mons by his family

### Tue., November 29

Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24

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

### Wed., November 30

#### Saint Andrew

Rom 10:9-18; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 4:18-22

12 pm ... †Vicki Wolf by Lillian LaRoche

### Thur., December 1

Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

8:30 am ... †René Mons by his family

### Fri., December 2

Is 29:17-24; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Mt 9:27-31

6 pm ... †Joseph Handy by Gregory Handy

6:45 pm ... Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

### Sat., December 3

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-6; Mt 9:35 — 10:1, 5a, 6-8

4 pm ... †Leo & †Doris Moreau by Elaine Plourde

### Sun., December 4

#### Second Sunday of Advent

Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

7:30 am ... †Agnes Smet (40th Anniv.) by Cynthia Hobbs

9:30 am ... †Luke Dambach (7th Anniv.) by Christine & Jack Dambach

5 pm ... Our Parish Family

## Weekly Collection

### Weekend of November 20, 2016

Regular Offertory

\$7,988.00 Make-Up Offertory

394.00 Loose Offertory

777.00 Online Parish Giving

375.00 Total

\$9,534.00

Stewardship \$ 129.00



### Food Pantry

#### Saint Raphael

**Food Pantry** On Monday, Nov. 14, the food pantry served 17 families and gave out 29 bags

of groceries and served 17 families and gave out 26 bags on Nov. 21. We need fruit, peanut butter, and cereal. We can always use brown paper bags, too. Thank you!



### Christmas 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

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Sun., November 27

9:15 am ... Religious Education—Parish Hall

### Mon., November 28

6:30—8 pm ... Youth Ministry

7—8 pm ... Food Pantry

### Tue., November 29

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

### Sat., December 3

9 am—4 pm ... Christmas Fair—Parish Hall

### Sun., December 4

9:15 am ... Religious Education—Parish Hall

10:45 am ... St. Nicholas visit—Parish Hall



### Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas

Booklets by Bishop Robert Morneau, are available in the nook for \$2.



**Blessed Sacrament Parish** invites you to join us for a Christmas Special at **LaSalette Shrine** in Attleboro, MA on **Sunday, December 4, 2016**. Trip

Includes: \* Motor Coach  
Transportation \* Concert with Father Pat \* Life size Manger scene including Clopper the donkey

\*Famous International Creche Museum  
25,000 Christmas Lights. Cost \$20.00  
Per Person or \$45.00 for Family w/ Children. Dinner on your own in Cafeteria or bring a lunch if you wish.  
Call: Claire Dachowski at 210-2272 for reservations ASAP. Bus will leave from Blessed Sacrament Church at 12:15pm

**Sanctuary candle** The sanctuary candle burns this week for our parish family.

Please join us on **Saturday, Dec. 3 from 9 am — 4 pm**. We will have more than a dozen vendors, as well as several crafters for you to peruse and shop!

### We have an App!

Download our free app for info and updates. Enter "Saint Raphael Parish" to find us in the app store.



### Book Discussion Group

Please join the book discussion group as it completes its examination of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. We'll be reading *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines. We'll meet on **Thursday, Dec. 15**, upstairs in the church conference room. Books will be available at the parish office for \$9.00. Please join us! Please come early to enjoy some refreshments!



**Saint Raphael Parish** will celebrate its annual candlelight **Advent Concert of Music and Reflection** on **Sunday, Dec. 11 at 2pm**. We will have a variety of musical selections from various groups and individuals, interspersed with reflective readings related to the Advent season. Parishioners and members of the wider community are invited to attend. Come and **bring your friends** to this beautiful tradition of Saint Raphael. All welcome!

## Get into your Advent camo, and become a 'Christmas insurgent'

As Catholics at the **beginning of Advent**, a season of joyful expectation, we might do ourselves a favor if we stepped back from the 2016 presidential campaign and election and focused instead on the **person and mission of Jesus Christ**. Not only would our blood pressure come back to reasonable levels, but we would might discover some new ways to begin a national dialogue rooted in recognition of our shared values, mutual goals and common responsibilities.

It won't be easy, but it is necessary. Meanwhile, as we prepare for the celebration of Christmas 2016, perhaps we can amuse ourselves – and do some good – by **becoming "Christmas insurgents."** Insurgents are rebels, usually against duly constituted governmental authority. That's not what we're talking about. Here, we are rebelling against an excessive secularism by reclaiming a Christian holyday for Christian purposes. Many features of contemporary life seek to minimize and marginalize the religious nature of Christmas – even as commercial and media activities seek to profit from it.

We don't have to get as exorcised as political diehards, and we need not be religious zealots. We simply can endeavor to **promote the religious dimension of Christmas**, the feast of the Nativity of the God-Man, the Incarnate Son of the Living God. We do not have to be intense. That would defeat the point of having a little fun with it. We just have to be pleasant, gregarious, concise and clear. So, recognizing that I'm using terms playfully but intentionally, here are a few from Father Jerome's *Handbook of Christmas Insurgency Tactics* (not yet published!):

When people wish you a "Happy Holiday," ask, "Oh, thanks! **Which one?**" or simply respond, "Oh, thanks. I pray my Christmas is blessed – and blessings to you too!" And when people coo about Christmas being a time for the children remind them that we are all children of God who need the truth of "**Emmanuel, God with us**" in Christ Jesus.

How often we hear people repeat the line "Christmas is for children." Obviously there is truth in that sentiment. **But we might ask which children? Under what conditions?** A Christmas insurgent should observe that many of the unborn are aborted before they ever celebrate a Christmas. And an effective Christmas insurgent, if a conversation develops, will know how to demonstrate how and why a "fetus" is, in fact, simply a child *in utero*. In a different vein, one might observe that yes, Christmas is for children, but it will



be difficult for some children – including the many in **refugee camps** in Europe and the Middle East or even **under siege** in parts of Iraq and Syria. Asking "I wonder if there is something specific we could do about that?" can prompt a search for ways to help – and one excellent way is through the **Catholic Near East Welfare Society**.

When people observe that Christmas is overly commercialized, say, "True enough! But isn't it great that **we can go to Mass or services whenever we want** – and, boy, these days, I want!" Another response is to say, "Yes, it is heavy on buying and selling. But people are **trying to find gifts for those they love**. Isn't it interesting that the shepherds brought the gift of their presence to the stable, and the three kings brought gold, frankincense and myrrh. It reminds me, anyway, that **I should have something beautiful to give to the Lord too**. What are you doing?"

When local radio stations saturate the airwaves with an excess of secular Christmas music, call them when they want input and **ask for a beloved carol or hymn**. Get friends and neighbors to call too. The station managers will be befuddled by the surge in demand for traditional, religious music.

Now that we have completed the **Jubilee Year of Mercy**, we should be ready to apply its lessons and insights. One lovely way to develop mercy as an essential part of a lifestyle is to use Advent as a time to repair damaged relationships and friendships. Adding "**I'm sorry,**" "**Let's try to begin again**" or "**You know what? You were right,**" to a casual "Merry Christmas" can transform an awkward or hostile moment into an opportunity for renewal and reconciliation.

When somebody asks you what you want for Christmas, what would happen if enough of us said, "You know, I'd love it if **somebody donated to FILL IN THE CHARITY OR CAUSE in my name!**" Right here at Saint Raphael, our **development fund**, which supports capital projects and new initiatives; our **general fund**, which underwrites our daily operations; or **food**

**pantry and hope chest**, which supports those in need can always use help. They provide opportunities to do good – and have the satisfaction of an enduring Christmas gift and memory ... without more stuff!

Sometimes people like to receive "their" gift when a contribution in their name is made to a **specific cause** – new vestments, the annual altar server scholarship or outing, our religious education and youth ministry programs. When my mom died back in 1985, some Jewish friends, who knew of my interests, had a tree planted in her name in Israel. It gladdens my heart that "my mom's tree" is helping build up the homeland of the Jewish people and the land of our Lord himself. Perhaps, in some small way, the "greening" of the Holy Land will help Jews and Arabs come to the peace that God desires for us all.

When the **schlock and schmaltz** of the pre-Christmas season get too much, subtly shift the conversation to mention how much your **Advent wreath or calendar** means at home, how they help lead to a **prayerful and joyous reflection on the coming of Christ**, and how they enable a meaningful encounter with the Lord, source of redemption and salvation.

Be sure to supply yourself with plenty of prayer through regular Mass attendance and spiritual reading. Saint Raphael makes available every Advent handy little booklets that take the reader through this entire holy season to the great feast of the Lord's Nativity. If readers want to use their own resources, the Prophet Isaiah in the Bible offers much.

We live in a world where insurgents are usually men and women of violence. Often they have a crass disregard for the sacred character of each human life. But there can be other kinds of insurgency. Being a "**Christmas insurgent**" is a demanding job, but it's gratifying – it helps us win actual grace if we undertake it for the right reasons and do so joyfully and respectfully and it provides us with a satisfaction that no amount of tinsel can rival. A Christmas insurgent is an evangelizer who walks bravely into the claws of commercialism, frenzy and entitlement with the assurance of **Joseph's faith** and the beauty of **Mary's humility** ready to greet the Divine Infant! A blessed Advent!

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