Prepare the way of the Lord.

MARK 1:3





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THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 10, 2023

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

The Mass of Anticipation for 2nd Sunday of Advent 4:00PM Gordon & Jeanne Scott—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

Second Sunday of Advent

7:30 AM Norman & Ann Perkins—Memorial

9:00AM Irene Sullivan & Kathleen Aurgemma—Memorial

10:30AM Margaret B. Devlin—48th Anniversary 5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

Advent Weekday: St. Damacus I, Pope

7:30AM Theresa Pearson—16th Anniversary

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

7:30AM Hak-Jin Pyun—Memorial

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

7:30AM Eleanor M. Skenyon—Memorial

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church 7:30AM Marybeth Redmen—Memorial

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

Advent Weekday

7:30AM Joe & Rose Faherty—Memorial

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

Advent Weekday

8:30AM Albert Edward Hyde—Memorial

The Mass of Anticipation for 3rd Sunday of Advent
4:00PM Kate Bedard—14th Anniversary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Third Sunday of Advent

7:30AM Michael & Ellen Brady—22nd Anniversary

9:00AM Dr. Edwin Madden—Memorial 10:30AM Janet Fayle—15th Anniversary

5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy



Mercy Musings



Dear Parishioners:

We begin a new Church Year with the Season of Advent upon us. It is a time of preparation for Christmas as we remember the First Coming of the Son of God. We also prepare in anticipation for the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux says: "We know that the coming of the Lord is threefold. The first coming was in flesh and weakness, the middle coming is in spirit and power, and the final coming will be in glory and majesty."

St. Bernard explains that The First Coming was Jesus' birth at Bethlehem. The Second Coming is the Spiritual coming to each believer. And the Third Coming is Jesus coming again at the world's end.

This "middle" coming is Jesus' arrival into our own lives. The Church often explains this through sacraments. the particularly through Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. It is not a "physical" coming but a spiritual one, where Christ comes to dwell within our souls. Each Advent, we are challenged to prepare for all three comings of Christ, celebrating his birth and preparing our hearts to receive him now and at the end of time.

As we begin the new Church Year, we can look back over the last year at his coming. Each year, we submit the *Status Animarum* report to the Bishop. This "State of Souls" is a report on our parish's spiritual and sacramental life. All parishes submit this report, and then the Bishop submits one final report of the entire diocese to the Holy Father in Rome.

The Status animarum at Our Lady of Mercy Parish reports that we are a parish of 1,812 families with just about 600 actively supporting the parish. We had twenty-seven baptisms, sixty-one children made First Communion, and fifty-four young adults were Confirmed.. There were just five weddings. Sadly, we had fiftyone parishioners who died and for whom we celebrated funerals.

Included in the bulletin this week is a copy of the Annual Financial Report that was approved by the Parish Finance Council, Parish Trustees, and the Parish Auditors. The report indicates we are financially viable and on good fiscal ground.

However, it reports a \$45,000 decrease in our weekly budget collection last year. This is attributed to the death of a few very generous parishioners and a decline in support by many families since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our expenses are up due increased utilities, the insurance, and supplies costs. Also, our diocesan assessment increased by \$10,000. However, the subsidy to the school was reduced by \$28,000 due to an of twenty-six increase new students enrolled at OLM School.

Our 'State of the Souls" and Annual Financial Report highlight the facts and figures of parish life, both the spiritual and the fiscal. There is a decline in the spiritual life and the financial support of our parish since the pandemic. Many Catholics in general and many OLM parishioners in particular have

not returned to the regular practice of the faith.

In a recent Wall Street Journal article, Lockdown Turned to Boycott in Our House: Once interrupted, the habits of religious worship can be hard to re-establish, the paper's deputy features editorial editor. Matthew Hennesey, comments on the effect of the pandemic lockdown his family's on attendance at Sunday Mass.

He writes about his 17-year-old daughter, who has Down syndrome. She now refuses to go to Sunday Mass. He explains that during the lockdown when public Mass was stopped during the pandemic, his family did what many did: watch the livestream Sunday Mass.

However, transitioning back to regular attendance at Sunday Mass has been a challenge or, as he described it, a "spiritual disaster" for his family. His experience is very common among our Catholic families across the country. He comments: "Attendance at my parish has since rebounded modestly. It isn't anywhere near pre-pandemic levels."

As we begin this new church year in this Advent, may it be a time of hopeful, joyful, and prayerful renewal for our parish family. Pray those who have drifted away from parish life may return. If you know them, invite them to come back to Sunday Mass. Prepare the way for the coming of Christ. Do good. Be well. God Bless.

Father Healey

946 Our Lady of Mercy—3



OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH EAST GREENWICH, RHODE ISLAND CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SCHEDULE

LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

Advent Confessions 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Four Priests Available

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

Advent Confessions 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Two Priests Available Mass of Anticipation at 4:00 PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 Sunday Masses at 7:30 AM

9:00 AM & 10:30 AM

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS EVE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Children's Choir Concert 3:30 PM Vigil Mass of Christmas at 4:00 PM

CHRISTMAS NIGHT MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

Christmas Concert with OLM Choir & Orchestra at 11:30 PM Mass of Christmas Night at 12:00 AM

CHRISTMAS DAY MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

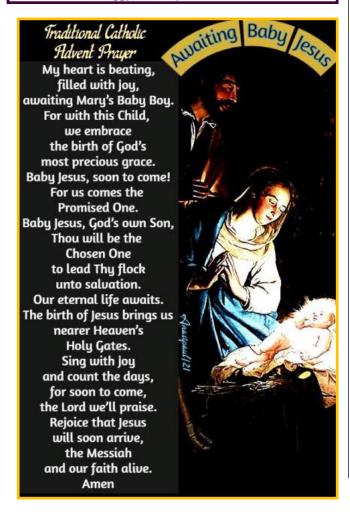
Christmas Day Masses at 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM & 10:30 AM

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF IESUS, MARY AND IOSEPH SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

Confessions at 3:00 PM Mass of Anticipation at 4:00 PM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31 Sunday Masses at 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM & 5:00 PM

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD* MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024 Mass at 8:30 AM *not a holy day of obligation

Happy and Holy Christmas!



Weekly Collection

December 3, 2023

Weekly	\$11,656.00			
EFT	\$3,943.00			
	Total=\$15,599.00			
Outreach	\$1,435.00			
Building and Grounds	\$2,763.00			
Annual Collection (To Date)	\$109,859.00			
<u>December 4, 2022</u>				
Weekly	\$15,333.00			



Leave a Legacy of Faith for the next Generation! Remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.

Second Collections

This Week: Retired Religious Collection



Thank you for your contribution - big and small!



In your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed especially Gordon Scott and Nancy Mooney Gretchner who have died.



First Communion Class Schedule

Sunday, January 7

2024 Confirmation Class Schedule

Sunday, December 10 Sunday, December 17 Sunday, January 21

For questions and more information please contact Mr. Jeremy Long, Director of Faith Formation at 884-4968 or email at faithformation@olmparish.org



- <u>OLM Food Pantry</u> is always in need of food items and paper goods for the members of our local community. Please place all donated items in the box in the vestibule of Church or the box on the porch of Mercy House. <u>All food items should be unexpired and non-perishable</u>. We also are in need of paper goods (paper towels, napkins). Thank you for your support.
- <u>OLM Bereavement Group</u>: Our next meeting is on <u>Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 4:00pm</u> in Mercy House. All those adults experiencing sorrow, grief or loneliness are most welcome to attend for prayer and discussion.
- For more information, please contact the OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 401-884-4410 or via email at outreach@olmparish.org



Calendar

- •<u>Tuesday, December 12:</u> Weekly School Mass at 8:15am
- •<u>Thursday, December 14</u>: First Trimester Report Cards go home! Beloved Meeting at 2:30pm
- Friday, December 15: OLM School Christmas
 Pageant

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Our Lady of Mercy Parish invites you to join our active Prayer Chain. The power of prayer is tremendous and many successful results have been reported back. Anyone wishing to join the Prayer Chain as a caller, or simply as one who prays for others and their intentions, please call Mary Hart at 884-5629 or email directly to 2hart@cox.net. If you know someone in need of prayers due to illness, infirmity, surgery, hospitalization or any serious reason please call us!

The power of prayer at work!

Our Lady of Guadalupe

EACH DECEMBER 12 the Catholic Church honors Our Lady of Guadalupe. The feast recalls the day in 1531 when the Mexican peasant Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, having seen a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Tepeyac, yet having been rebuffed by the local bishop, obeyed Mary's command to pluck the roses that were impossibly growing in the rocky land during December. Bundling the flowers within his outer garment, Juan Diego returned to the bishop and opened his tilma to show the miracle of the roses. Then, to the wonderment of them both, the roses falling to the floor revealed an imprint of Our Lady on the very garment that bore the miraculous flowers.

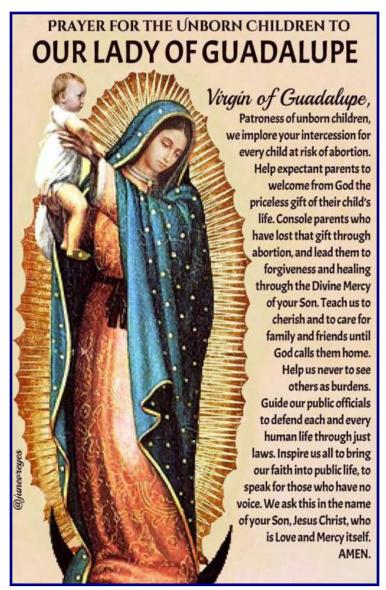
Devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe has spread throughout Mexico, Latin America, North America, and the world. Her image adorns churches, homes, meeting rooms, places of business, cars, and clothes. The tilma itself remains on display at a basilica in Mexico City, where it is the object of intense devotion. Although the date is not a holyday of obligation on the Church's calendar, it is practically observed that way among the Hispanic population.

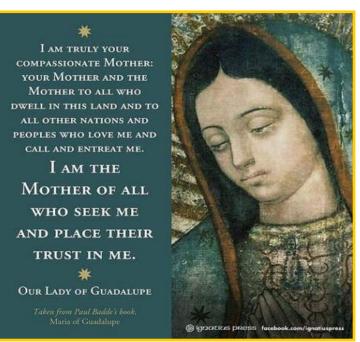
Ceremonies in parishes typically include a Mass, a serenade of devotional music addressed to the Virgin, a theatrical presentation of the story of Juan Diego, and the lively dancing of matachines to the loud accompaniment of drums, all honoring the ower and love of Mary, especially her concern for the poor and the lowly.

In years when December 12 falls on a Sunday, the Mass is that of the Third Sunday of Advent, but it is still appropriate for those devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe to include music, devotions, petitions, and preaching that commemorate this important day.

Bulletin Inserts for the Liturgical Life of the Parish: Mary, the Saints, and Angels © 2020 Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications. All rights reserved. Written by Paul Turner.

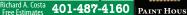






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