

Holy Spirit Parish Family

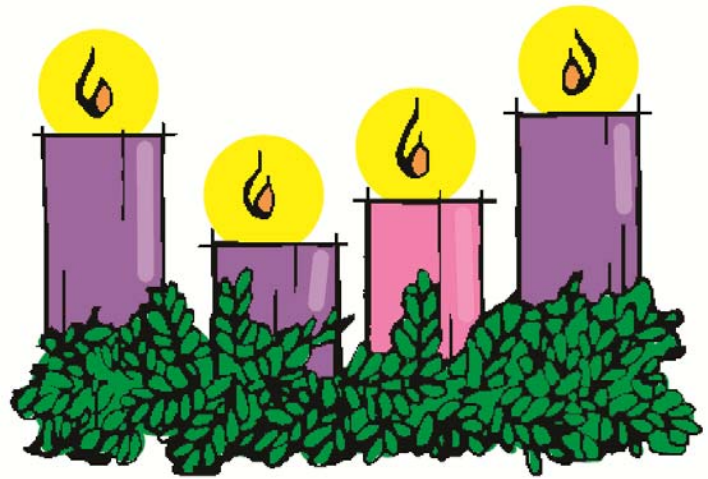
December 23, 2018 — Fourth Sunday of Advent

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

We will have early bulletin deadlines due to the Christmas holidays...

JANUARY 6 deadline is
NOON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

Thank you for helping us to keep this deadline.



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PARISH OFFICE

3130 Parkwood Lane
Maryland Heights, MO 63043
Website: www.holyspiritstl.org
Phone: 314-739-0230
E-mail: parish@holyspiritstl.org
Fax: 314-739-0237

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday
between 8:00am and 5:00pm

PARISH STAFF

Rev. Bob Evans, Pastor.....Ext. 103
revans@holyspiritstl.org
Rev. Jerry Meier, In Residence
.....Ext. 112
jmeier@holyspiritstl.org
Deacon Jim DeNatale
Deacon Scott Kaufman

Donna Eisenbath, Youth Minister
.....314-954-1326
deisenbath@holyspiritstl.org
Kelly Hewitt, Principal.....739-1934
khewitt@holyspiritstl.org
Sharon Kaufman, CRE/Pastoral Assoc.
.....Ext. 110
skaufman@holyspiritstl.org
Joan Maher, Director of Worship.
.....Ext. 107
jmaher@holyspiritstl.org
Karen Rychlewski, Pastoral Associate
.....Ext. 108
krychlewski@holyspiritstl.org
Gregg Sallwasser, Maintenance
Julie Spinner, Parish & PSR Secretary
.....Ext. 101
jspinner@holyspiritstl.org
Mary Welsh, Parish Secretary Ext. 102
mwelsh@holyspiritstl.org

Daily Prayer Connection

.....314-739-0230 ext. 132
Faith in Action, (See Sharon Kaufman)
HandS.....314-739-9796
Stephen Ministry
.....314-739-0230 ext. 130

SCHOOL

(K-8 & PRE-SCHOOL & PREK INFORMATION)

3120 Parkwood Lane
Maryland Heights, MO 63043
Phone: 314-739-1934
Fax: 314-739-7703
Kate Ayres, School Secretary,
kayres@holyspiritstl.org

PARISH ANNEX

3111 Parkwood Lane,
Maryland Heights, MO 63043,
Pre-School, Pre-K.....314-739-5020

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 23

9 & 11 am—Liturgy of the Word for Children, Rm. 105
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Community Rm.

Monday, December 24—Christmas Eve

PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY
4 pm—Christmas Mass, Church
6 pm—Christmas Mass, Church

Tuesday, December 25—Merry Christmas!

PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY
12 am—Midnight Mass, Church
7:30 am—Christmas Mass, Church
9:00 am—Christmas Mass, Church

Wednesday, December 26

PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY
6:30 am—St. Patrick's Casseroles, St. Blaise Rm
9:00 am—Exposition/Benediction, Church
—Senior Exercise, Rigali RM.
7:00 pm—Food Addicts Anonymous, Rigali Rm.
7:30 pm—Teen/Ensemble Choir Practice, Church

Thursday, December 27

PARISH OFFICE HOURS — 9 A.M.—3 P.M.
9:00 am—Senior Exercise, Rigali Rm.
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Rm. 2

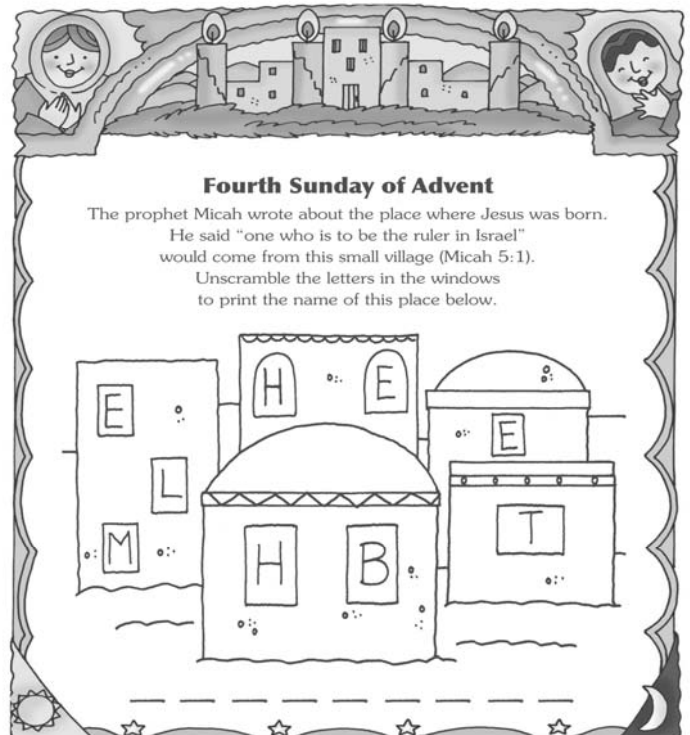
Friday, December 28

PARISH OFFICE HOURS — 9 A.M.—3 P.M.

Sunday, December 30

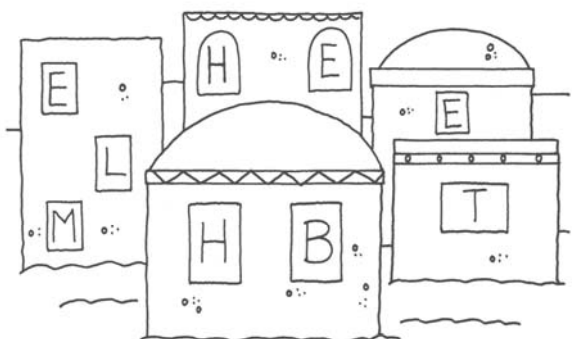
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Community Rm.

God's Word for Children



Fourth Sunday of Advent

The prophet Micah wrote about the place where Jesus was born.
He said "one who is to be the ruler in Israel"
would come from this small village (Micah 5:1).
Unscramble the letters in the windows
to print the name of this place below.



MASS SCHEDULE

Monday thru Wednesday.....6:30am
Thursday and Friday.....8:00am
Holy Days Consult bulletin
Saturday:8:00am and 5:00pm (Vigil)
Sunday: 7:30am, 9:00am, and 11:00am

CONFESSIONS

Saturday 4:00 to 4:45pm or by appointment

EUCCHARISTIC CHAPEL HOURS

Weekdays: 12am to 6am and 9am to 12 midnight.
Saturdays: 12am to 7am
Chapel will close at 7am Saturday until 9am Monday.
Holy Days: Please consult the bulletin.

EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION

Wednesdays after 8 a.m. Mass until Noon (closing with Benediction). Confessions 1st Wednesday.

BAPTISMS

Baptism Class for parents/godparents is normally held on the first Monday of the month at 7 PM in the Church. To register for the meeting and/or to arrange for a baptism, call Karen Rychlewski.

MARRIAGE

Couples planning marriage contact the pastor at least six months in advance.

COMMUNION CALLS

Please call the Parish Office to request Communion if someone is unable to attend Church.

HOSPITAL VISITS

Please notify the Parish Office concerning hospitalization.

REGISTRATION

New parishioners may register at Parish Office or see one of the priests after Mass. New information e.g. address, phone numbers or moving from the parish, please call Parish Office.

BULLETIN INFORMATION

Please submit information for the bulletin by Noon TWO Fridays before publication. Include name, daytime phone number of person submitting information, Commission and group name. Items can be e-mailed to mwelsh@holyspiritstl.org.

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS

Stewardship for December 3-9, 2018

Sunday Envelopes, 243 utilized	\$ 19,586.00
Loose Collection	\$ 563.01
Online Donations, 82 families	\$ 6,772.00
Holy Day	<u>\$ 3,811.00</u>
Total	\$ 30,732.01
Weekly Budget	\$ 20,576.00
Weekly Surplus (shortfall)	\$ 10,156.01

HandS	Parish Improvements
\$ 840.00	\$ 3,318.00

A NOTE FROM FR. BOB

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you!

A Blessed and Merry Christmas to everyone and to your families! May you know the joy of Jesus' presence in your lives and experience the promise of his peace today and always.

As we celebrate the birth of the Christ child, I would like to offer a reflection that I picked up recently from another parish here in St. Louis. As you know, I have the best seat in church and I get to see everything that happens during Mass. I have great empathy for the families of our youngest parishioners. It can be a challenge at times for our little parishioners as they try to attend Mass.

“To the families of our littlest Catholics, welcome to Holy Spirit Catholic Church! May we say to you...Relax! God put the wiggle in your little ones. No need to suppress it. Sit toward the front of church where it's easier to see and hear. Quietly explain the parts of the Mass. Participate in the Mass – Your child learns by imitating you. If you need to leave Mass, feel free to go the Gathering Area. Mass can still be seen and heard there, but we welcome you to return.

“To our parish members...A warm, supportive smile is always greatly appreciated by parents with small, active children.”

Announcing FORMED

We are pleased to announce the availability of FORMED, an online service for accessing thousands of Catholic videos, audios and eBooks On Demand anytime, anywhere! As a member, you will have access to entertaining movies, inspiring audio talks, informative bible studies, and much more. We are providing this resource free of charge to help our parishioners learn and grow in their faith. You will also be able to easily access any featured content that we are promoting within our community from time to time. So please join us.

Also once you have signed up, don't forget to download the free iOS or Android app to put FORMED at your fingertips. We hope you will enjoy this incredible gift and please spread the word to others.

To sign up for FREE, just visit us here: <https://holyspiritstl.formed.org>.

If you are traveling during the holidays may you reach your destination in safety. God bless you all.

You are always in my prayers.

Peace,

Father Bob

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 23

7:30am Gloria Kekeisen
 9:00am For Our Parishioners
 11:00am Bill Haggarty

Monday, December 24

6:30 am Faithful Departed
 4:00 pm Danny Magparangalan
 6:00 pm O'Connor Family

Tuesday, December 25

Midnight For Our Parishioners
 7:30am Glennon F. Audrain
 9:00am Mary Metzger

Wednesday, December 26

6:30am Cory Fisk

Thursday, December 27

8:00am Arturo & Soledad Villadiego

Friday, December 28

8:00am Renee Michelle Lecuru

Saturday, December 29

8:00am Mike Rolfes
 5:00pm Dee Shamel

Sunday, December 30

7:30am Larry Landolt
 9:00am For Our Parishioners
 11:00am Robert Davenport, Sr.

ACTS RETREAT

The next women's retreat is March 21-24, 2019.
 Kerry Caverly, Deb Borgmann,
 and Cathy Fuest are the directors.
 For questions, please contact Kerry, (314) 565-7838

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

In your prayers, please remember all the sick and home-bound parishioners and those who care for them.

Becky Bonner	Steve Hirschmugl	Matt Niedringhaus
Jim Brockmeyer	Kenneth Jordan	Brian Ponder
Phil Brusca	Al Katzler	Mary Ann Rieth
Ed Cody	Frank Kekeisen	John Rizzello
Matthew Cody	Clyde Klump	John Roberson
Lou Difani	Marie Knox	Bill Schneider
Agnes Duisen	Audrey Konopka	Pat Tellmann
Dorothy Faerber	Charles Kraemer	Nanci Van Amburgh
Till Fehrenbacher	Mike Lemp	Gene Weckherlin
Joe Greco	Jerry McGuire	Bill & Joan Weinzirl
Velda Gross	Karen Newcomb	Tom Zemblidge

Sick Relatives and Friends:

Leo Bachinski II	Cameron Meyer	Mark Pearia
Jackie Craven	Christine Meyer	Anthony Pyzdrowski
Shane Katzler	Luke Meyer	Paula & Dave Schneider
Irene Lee	Ron Meyer	Jeanie Steffens
Vito Mangogna	Mike Mitra	Wanda Wade
Gerry McLain	Melinda Oeth	Bonnie Wittman

FROM DEATH TO NEW LIFE

We express our deep sympathy and assurance of our prayers to the family of **Patrick Dannegger**, brother of Ralph (Kim), uncle of Nicholas and Natalie.
 May his soul rest in the Peace of Christ.



MINISTRY SCHEDULE — DEC. 29-30

Dec 29-30	5:00 PM	7:30 AM	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	\$ Counters
Hospitality	M Bovier R & S Ramspott D Klein C Milligan K Shamel	P Klaas 2 Subs Requested R Fetsch F Gallagher J Saputo	L Frein L Pattison K Flood W Schlenk	S Demand J Kinealy Sub Requested P Gruszczynski M Kohl C VanDoren	EARLY B Fiske MA Rieth
Hearing Assist	P Cunningham	J & P Schuette	T & J Myslinski	J Sicking	
Lectors	J Bamert C Duffy	R Lauber F Kekeisen	2 Subs Requested	A Breakfield S Giovannini	
Eucharistic Ministers	P Cody D Hass A Kleitz R & M Bovier J & K McFarling R & N Swantner	L Nolan R & MB Chik W & G Prather	B Backowski D Hachmeister A Lange C & K Caverly R & K Dannegger P & K Farrar	P Abramczyk B Ball B Berardino L Cwiklowski B Dufaux M Feltmann B Flores R & M Keating	LATE M Leib R Slice
Servers	C Brown K Hill M Hill	I Mason J Mason S Mason	C Catlow L Catlow S Flack	N Niemczyk K Poole L Sicking	

PSR NEWS

PSR's Upcoming Schedule

Dec. 25 & Jan. 1 - NO CLASS - Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Jan. 8 - regular classes resume; Community Prayer at 7:50pm led by Grade 4

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN

There will be **NO** Liturgy of the Word for Children on Sunday, December 30. We will resume January 6th.

Wishing everyone a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

SAVE THE DATE: VBS IS BACK!

June 24-28, 2019

9am - 12pm for 3 year olds - Grade 5
& evening program for Grades 6-12.

We will be looking for adults & teens to volunteer.

Watch upcoming bulletins for details or contact

Sharon Kaufman 314-739-0230 or

skaufman@holyspiritstl.org

SCHOOL NEWS

Congratulations to our December 17 Red & Blue winner of \$25; **Michelle Keating**.

Thank you for supporting our school!

Steven the Shepherd has gathered his sheep and headed to Bethlehem. He shared with us the shepherd's encounter with the angels and the celebration that took place. Now we will anxiously await the arrival of Jesus as we celebrate with our families!

We are currently on Christmas Break until January 3, 2019.

Wish List: 3 Bostitch Heavy Duty electric pencil sharpeners, Spot It Card Game, Rubbermaid styles storage totes-any size, Q-tips, Pipe Cleaners, Double-sided tape, Silver duct tape.

Prayers go up blessings come down,
Mrs. Hewitt

RESERVED
PARKING FOR

YOU



*LAST WEEKEND TO
GET YOUR TICKETS*

BEST SPOT IN THE LOT RAFFLE

No need to rush...we will keep your parking spot warm for you!! As a fundraiser for camp next year, the 5th Grade class is raffling off the two church parking spots next to the handicap section for the 4 pm Christmas Eve Mass.

RAFFLE DETAILS:

Prize: Reserved Church Parking Spots
Time: Christmas Eve - 4 pm Mass
Ticket Price: \$2/ticket or 3 tickets/\$5
Drawing to be held: Sunday, December 23rd after the 11 am Mass

Tickets will be available after each weekend Mass now through December 23rd.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

The Nativity of the Lord: December 25

MASS SCHEDULE:

- ◇Monday, December 24: 4:00 and 6:00 pm
- ◇Tuesday, December 25: Midnight Mass,
7:30 and 9:00 am

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph:

December 30 — MASS SCHEDULE:

- ◇Saturday, December 29: 5:00 pm
- ◇Sunday, December 30: 7:30, 9:00 & 11:00 am

Mary, the Holy Mother of God: January 1

MASS SCHEDULE:

- ◇Monday, December 31: 5:00 pm
- ◇Tuesday, January 1: 9:00 am

The Epiphany of the Lord: January 6

MASS SCHEDULE

- ◇Saturday, January 5: 5:00 pm
- ◇Sunday, January 6: 7:30, 9:00, & 11:00 am
- ◇Epiphany Choir Festival 7:00 pm. Sponsored by
the National Association of Pastoral Musicians

The Baptism of the Lord: January 13

MASS SCHEDULE:

- ◇Saturday, January 12: 5:00 pm
- ◇Sunday, January 13: 7:30, 9:00, & 11:00 am

STEPHEN MINISTRY

"But you, O Bethlehem...from you shall come forth...one who is to be ruler in Israel..." ~ Micah 5:2

It is just days before what is meant to be a glorious celebration of the birth of Jesus! For many, it is just that. For some, it is difficult to celebrate. Perhaps it is loneliness...grief...or any emotion that keeps you from being a part of the happiness and gratitude. It may be that Stephen Ministry can be of help. Stephen Ministry is a group of specially selected and trained men and women who have answered the call to serve those who have a difficult time getting through emotions of day to day life struggles. Consider calling the Stephen Ministry, 739-0230, ext. 130, and leave a confidential message. You may find a new 'attitude of gratitude'!

SOCIAL JUSTICE

"We do not have weapons. We believe, however, in the meek and humble strength of prayer. Peace is not simply a protest against war, nor is it a result of negotiations, political compromises or economic bargaining. It is the result of prayer." ~Pope Francis, World Day of Prayer for Peace, Assisi, September 20, 2016

ST. PATRICK'S CASSEROLES

Please bring your St. Patrick Center casseroles to the Resource Center between 6:30 and 9:00 AM this Wednesday, December 26. If you have any questions or concerns, please call or e-mail Mary Beth Schulte at 229-8067 or SpecRelEdu@aol.com. Thanks!



CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Following the 11am Mass TODAY, December 23, we will be decorating our church for Christmas. Please consider joining us. Many hands make light work.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Volunteers for all liturgical ministries are still needed for our Christmas and New Year's Masses. Sign-up sheets are in the vesting sacristy.

SAVE THE DATE!

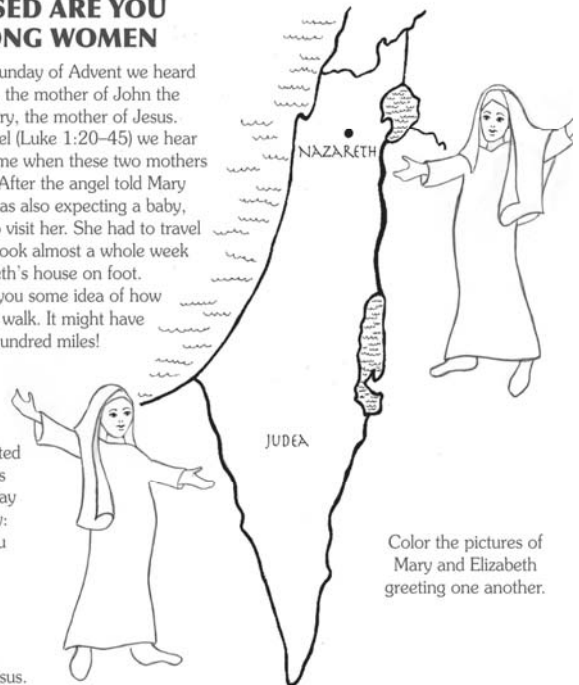
National Pastoral Musicians' Epiphany Choir Festival
Sunday, January 6, 7:00 p
at Holy Spirit
Come hear several parish choirs sing
songs and hymns of the season!



BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN

On the First Sunday of Advent we heard about Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, and Mary, the mother of Jesus. In today's Gospel (Luke 1:20-45) we hear the story of a time when these two mothers came together. After the angel told Mary that Elizabeth was also expecting a baby, Mary decided to visit her. She had to travel a long way—it took almost a whole week to get to Elizabeth's house on foot. The map gives you some idea of how far Mary had to walk. It might have been almost a hundred miles!

Elizabeth greeted Mary with words we still pray today in the Hail Mary: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Elizabeth was talking about Jesus.



Color the pictures of Mary and Elizabeth greeting one another.

Before you go to sleep tonight, pray a Hail Mary. Think about how excited Mary and Elizabeth were when they thought about their babies soon to be born. In two days we will celebrate that great event when God came to us as Jesus and was born as one of us.

YOUTH MINISTRY

FIND US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM! — www.facebook.com/hsyouth & Instagram HS_YOUTH_STL

Youth Pilgrimage to the MARCH FOR LIFE -

Please pray for our young people, and all 2,500+ young people and adults who will be attending with Generation Life from St. Louis as well as our office of youth ministry staff who plan and execute the event.

We can still use your help & support. We've done some fundraisers and brought the cost down for our participants. However, there are still some expenses we could use help with. If you'd like to sponsor us in some way, see some of the options below:

\$135.00 for tee shirts

\$135.00 for Metro Tickets (for the subway)

Gift cards for meals – Subway, Panera, Taco Bell, and McDonald's are all in the food court near our hotel. Papa John's delivers to the hotel. Buy the gift cards from Scrip and the parish benefits as well.

All gifts can be dropped off or mailed to the parish office c/o Holy Spirit Youth. Thank you for your prayers and support.

CONFIRMATION

7th grade–Session 1 date change: Our first session will be held **Wednesday, January 23**, from 6:45-9:00 in the Parish Hall. Parents and young people attend together.

8th grade–Session 12: Holiness IS Possible is Jan. 13, 10:10–12:15 at the Annex. Come celebrate with us! Stir it up

HS YOUTH FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS AND SENIORS ALL ARE WELCOME!

Eat, Pray, Discuss 2.0 –EVERY Thursday evening from 7-9 in the Resource Center. No meeting on December 27 or January 3 for holiday break.

We will be working on our new spring retreat for 7th & 8th grade in December and January. Join us with your ideas. Your input is important.

LUKE 18 TEAMING & planning begins in February. Join us at our January meetings to help prepare. Contact Donna Eisenbath for application.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS for 6th – 8th grades

Next MSM is **Friday, January 25, 7PM** in the Annex. Bring a friend, & be there for the fun!

WE NEED YOU!

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED!!!

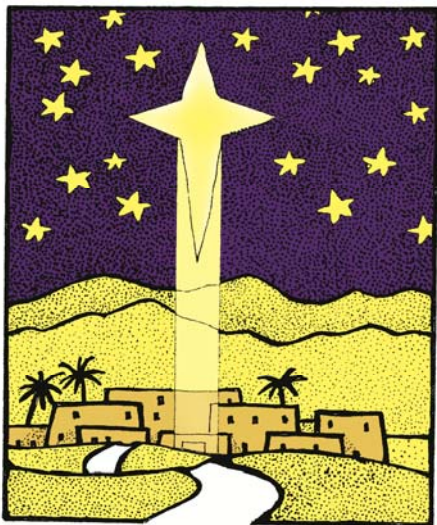
IT DEFINITELY TAKES A VILLAGE. PGC ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: WE ARE PLANNING FOR FALL/SPRING GATHERINGS AND EVENTS, and need you. Ministry is a community effort. We need your help to make all these things possible to our young people. Young adults, parents and empty nesters are all welcome. Our young people benefit from your life of faith and appreciate your help.

Interested? Want to help our teens encounter Jesus through participation in our parish community? Contact Donna Eisenbath.

LUKE 18 in April: We will need 6-8 adults depending on the number of retreatants. At least two are needed to stay Friday-Sunday. The rest are needed Saturday-Sunday. No cost.

Food donations for high school (every Thursday) and middle school (once a month Fridays) meetings: Wanted – soda (cans), chips (individual bags), sweet snacks, pizza (we have access to ovens so we can cook frozen), ice cream, frozen waffles, cheese sticks, etc. We'll eat anything, really!

Interested? Want to help our teens encounter Jesus through participation in our parish community? Contact Donna Eisenbath.



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The Little Ones

Jim Burrows



When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Lk 1:41-42

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MUSIC TRIVIA NIGHT

FUNDRAISER for the graduating class of 2020

Saturday, January 26, 2019

Holy Spirit Gym

Doors Open at 6:30pm – Trivia begins at 7:00pm \$160 per table (max 8 adults)



Cash prizes, raffles, refreshments and more!

Send registration and payment (checks made to **Holy Spirit Catholic School**):

Holy Spirit Catholic School
Attn: John and Maria Weber
3120 Parkwood Lane
Maryland Heights, MO 63043

Registration forms/payment due by
January 18, 2019
Questions? Call Lisa Kelly (691-3918)

Table Contact Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Number attending: _____

AROUND TOWN

DYNAMIC CATHOLIC, *ALIVE!*—VISITATION

We are almost there! Just two days before we celebrate the great birth of our Savior, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. In the Gospel, Mary visits her relative to share the joy she is experiencing as the mother of God. It is appropriate for us to consider those people in our own lives who could use a joyful message right now. Maybe it is a relative who is suffering a serious mental or physical illness. Maybe it is someone mourning the loss of a spouse, a child, or a relative. Maybe it is someone who is struggling to find work or who is having financial problems. Whatever person you determine God is calling you to console, embrace this great task. Christians are people who believe in a God-man who came to earth so that we might experience the fullness of joy and the fullness of life. We are not called to settle for mediocrity or to allow others to settle for it. Do not hesitate to share the joy with those people who need it most during this beautiful time of the year. Like Mary, we have surprising experiences that take us aback (albeit not bearing the Son of God), but let us press on with haste to bring others the Good News of salvation even in our own struggles.

archstl.org/dynamic

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Resolve to make your marriage even better in 2019! Attend a Marriage Encounter weekend and your good marriage will become **even better**. Just ask a couple who has attended the weekend. Apply for the weekend you deserve either on [Jan. 19-20, 2019](#) at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Lawrenceville, IL (no hotel provided); or [Feb 8-10](#) at the Courtyard Marriott in St. Peters, MO. If you would like to apply or get more information, go to <https://stl-wwme.org/schedule.php> or call 314.649.7317.

INVITATION TO SURVIVING DIVORCE

"I'm furious. What can I do with this anger?" "If God is good, why did He allow this divorce?" "Why does it hurt so much?" Find the answers to these questions and more in a new ministry to Catholics who have suffered from divorce: **The Catholic's Divorce Survival Guide**. The 12-week DVD program features Catholic experts who present Church teaching along with lay men and women who share their challenges on the way to true healing. Immaculate Conception Parish – Dardenne is hosting the program beginning January 10, 2019. There is a \$25 fee which will cover all materials needed. (*Scholarships are available for anyone*). Contact Debi at debijo@att.net for more information.

20TH ANNIVERSARY

ST. LOUIS MARIAN CONFERENCE

January 11-12, 2019, Renaissance Hotel

Confirmed speakers are

Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Dr. Gregory Thompson, Peggy Schneier, Fr. Vincent Lampert, Mary Lou McCall, Fr. Tom Sullivan, Bishop Robert Hermann, and Fr. Charles Becker.

For additional information, call 314-401-1707, or visit website: stlmarianconference.net

NAVIGATING WHITE WATER

Mercy Conference & Retreat Center, Jan.13 Feb. 10 Mar. 3 & Apr. 7, 2019, 1:30 - 3:45p.m. Combining Spirituality & Research Based Psychology to Enhance Resilience at Home & at Work.

Facilitated by Dr. Tom Wagner, PhD.

For questions, call 966-4686 or mercycenterstl.org

MARRIAGE ON TAP- SAINT LOUIS

Married couples are invited to an evening out, just call it date night! Be with other couples who care about a good marriage growing better and want to enrich themselves.

Tuesday, January 15, 2019, Pasta House Company - 8231 Delmar Blvd, University City, 63130.

6:00PM dinner, \$20 per person (includes tax & tip) for buffet dinner;

7:00PM is a dynamic talk [This is My Body, Given for You](#) by Fr. Paul Hoelsing, Dean of Seminarians and Director of Human Formation at Kenrick Seminary. You will enjoy his insights on how a "Faithful Priesthood needs the Witness of Faithful Marriage".

RSVP required before Jan. 11,-2019 to:

marriageontapstl@gmail.com

Visit our Facebook page: Marriage On Tap STL

Sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter

VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN OUR SOCIETY

THE ROLE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY

Tuesday evenings in February; 6:30-8:30 PM, FREE

Feb. 5: "Violence in Scripture" and "Violence in American Culture"

Feb 12: "Bullying & Suicide" and "Domestic Violence & Sexual Abuse"

Feb 19: "Transmission of Violence in Families, Peer Groups, & Communities" and "Gun Violence as a Public Health Concern"

Feb 26: "The Nature of Evil" and "Reconciliation & Forgiveness"

Presented by Dr. Barry Hong and Rev. Marc D. Smith

To register: www.ai.edu or 314-256-8804

Aquinas Institute of Theology, 23 S Spring, 63108, 256-8800



4th Sunday of Advent, Cycle C

Micah 5:1-4
Ps 80:2-3,15-16,18-19
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

Monday December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16
Ps 89:2-5,27,29
Luke 1:67-79

Tuesday December 25 Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10
Ps 98:1-6
Hebrews 1:1-6
John 1:1-18

Wednesday December 26 St. Stephen

Acts 6:8-10;7:54-59
Ps 31:3cd-4,6,8,16,17
Matthew 10:17-22

Thursday December 27 St. John

1 John 1:1-4
Ps 97:1-2,5-6,11-12
John 20:1a,2-8

Friday December 28 Holy Innocents

1 John 1:5 -- 2:2
Ps 124:2-5,7b-8
Matthew 2:13-18

Saturday December 29

1 John 2:3-11
Ps 98:1-3,5b-6
Luke 2:22-35

The final Sunday of Advent shows Elizabeth and her unborn son, John, reacting to the nearness of the unborn Christ. We know that Elizabeth immediately understood that Mary was pregnant with the Lord, because the Gospel says she was filled with the Holy Spirit. But how could the fetal John understand? How could he leap for joy while still in the womb?

If it's true that an unborn baby is not a person with a soul until it takes its first breath, as is claimed by many who believe that abortion is okay, how could the unborn John recognize the presence of the unborn Savior?

The faith to recognize the presence of Christ -- in the womb of people's lives, in the Eucharist, in the humanity of unborn children, etc. -- comes from being fully alive in the Holy Spirit, who was given to us fully during our baptisms. However, it takes a humble willingness to let God change our minds about what we think is true in order to be open to God's Spirit teaching us what is indeed true.

John as a fetus was incapable of understanding anything, especially when it happened outside the womb, yet he leapt for joy. This teaches us that we don't need to see God working in the world or solving our personal problems before we can leap for joy. We don't have to understand what God is doing, and we don't even have to know his plans.

The Holy Spirit enlivened the faith of Elizabeth and John through an act of grace that depended on Christ's future activity. For us, our faith is enlivened by the grace God provides in the Sacraments.

The joy that comes from recognizing the presence of Christ is God's Christmas gift to us. It's a joy that's meant to last all year. It's a lifestyle, not a holiday. It comes from a faith that appreciates God for working mercifully in ways that we can see and ways that we cannot see, because we trust in his goodness. Even when we suffer or feel sorrow, we can learn to recognize the presence of Christ.

And then what? Like John, we are called to be heralds of Christ's presence. How? First by sharing our joy with others.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How much is the joy of Christ's Spirit within you affecting your outward life?
2. What will you do this Christmas to become more aware of the Holy Spirit increasing your faith?
3. Give examples of how the Spirit of Christmas is really the Holy Spirit.
4. What activities have helped you get into the Spirit of Christmas? How has this affected your preparations for celebrating Christmas as a holy day?

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FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH — (DECEMBER 30, 2018)

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 — Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 — Col 3:12-21 — Lk 2:41-52

CHURCH NAME AND ADDRESS

Holy Spirit Church #000115
3130 Parkwood Lane
Maryland Heights, MO 63043

TELEPHONE

314 739-0230

CONTACT PERSON

Mary Welsh

EMAIL: mwelsh@holyspiritstl.org

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