

# St. Stephen Catholic Church

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## Second Sunday

### OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 9, 2018

*John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan,  
 proclaiming a baptism of repentance  
 for the forgiveness of sins.*

**Luke 3:3**

Week At A Glance	Schedule of Masses		
<p><b>Sunday, 12/9 Second Sunday of Advent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Coffee &amp; Donuts</li> </ul> <p><b>Monday, 12/10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Office Open, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm</li> <li>• Lector's Practice, Chapel 7 pm</li> <li>• Advent Reconciliation, CTK 7 pm</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday, 12/11</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Office Open, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm</li> </ul> <p><b>Wednesday, 12/12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Office Open, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Advent Reconciliation, 5 pm</li> </ul> <p><b>Thursday, 12/13</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Office Open, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Children's Play Rehearsal, 6 pm</li> <li>• Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday, 12/15</b></p> <p><b>Sunday, 12/16 Third Sunday of Advent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Coffee &amp; Donuts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mon - Fri: 7:30 am</b>                      <b>Saturday: 5 pm</b>  <i>Chapel, Room 1</i>                              <b>Sunday: 9:30 am</b>  <b>Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 pm</b></p>		
	<p>Upcoming Mass Intentions</p>		
	<p>Sat 12/8 5 pm - Doug Prouty †                  Sun 12/9 9:30 am - Lillian Pavlovich †                  Mon 12/10 7:30 am - Phyllis Pauplis †                  Sat 12/15 5 pm - Audrey Ostberg †                  Sun 12/16 9:30 am - Mary Hogan †</p>		
	<p>Ministers Schedule Dec. 15 - 16</p>		
	<b>Mass</b>	<b>Sat. 5 pm</b>	<b>Sun. 9:30 am</b>
	<b>LECTOR</b>	S. Derby	J. Gotelli
	<b>C.L.O.W.</b>		F. Jacobs
	<b>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCCHARIST</b>	D. Derby * S. Kuca M. Milani	M. Mammola * Veamatahau E. Hites
	<b>ALTAR SERVERS</b>	F. McCormick	E. Schichnes
	<b>SACRISTAN</b>		Ah Yee/Patel
	<b>COUNTERS: Dec. 10</b>	P. Walton	J. Brady
	<b>COUNTERS: Dec. 17</b>	M. Peare	C. Ellis

In his November 25<sup>th</sup> Bulletin letter Fr. Paulson quoted Pope Francis's Advent invitation to make space in our lives "to have a little silence" and to "listen to the language of the Lord" and hear it. On this second week of Advent, we'd like to offer a path to that silent reflection through today's gospel and some questions for personal reflection during the coming week.



Advent isn't about visions and great manifestations of divine power. Nor is it about human acts of heroism. Rather, Advent is about the grace of waiting. It's about a pregnant mom readying herself to receive her newborn into her arms. It's about a dad's anticipation and self-questioning: "Will I be (am I) a good father?" It's about each of us searching out what our God wants *for* us and *from* us today and as we go forward in our lives. **Reflect** (1) How do I identify with this very human aspect of Advent? What new insight does it give me about the value of "humdrum" tasks in my daily life? (2) In what respect has my life changed since Advent a year ago (loss, gain, joy, sorrow)? (3) If life forced me to change course in some way, how did I deal with that "interruption"?

**Listen** to Luke 3:1-6 "The word of God came to John in the desert. He proclaimed a baptism for repentant people to obtain forgiveness of sins. It was just as is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: 'Listen to this voice crying out in the desert: prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight.'" **Reflect** (1) Who prepared the way for me to find Jesus? (2) Can I recall a time when I made a conscious effort to "prepare the way of the Lord" in someone's life (spouse/partner, child, student, friend, relative, coworker, etc.)? What form did this "preparing" take?

The words of John the Baptist echo today: "Make straight the way of the Lord. Clear him a straight path." So, the torch is in *my* hands now. Listen to Caryll Houselander (*The Reed of God*), "Sometimes it may seem that there is no purpose in our lives, that going day after day for years to this office or that school or factory is nothing but waste and weariness. But it may be that God has sent us there because, but for us, Christ would not be there. If our being there means that Christ is there, that alone makes it worthwhile." Yes, a smile, a promise of prayer, an encouraging word, a hug, a random act of mercy, performed with love and with faith that Jesus acts through us, can change the course of another person's life. We may never know the effect we had. No matter, God knows. **Reflect** (1) How does Houselander's statement, "God has sent us there because, but for us, Christ would not be there," make a difference in how I might see the routine dailiness of my life during the coming week? (2) How might I turn ordinary encounters into works of mercy and compassion?

Have a joyful, reflective Advent.

*Al Garrotto*

## *Second Sunday of Advent December 9, 2018*

### **First Reading: Baruch 5:1-9**

The setting for today's reading is the time when the Jews were captives in Babylon. The author writes of a bright future when they will return with joy to their homeland. In this passage, Jerusalem is pictured as a mother who puts on her finest clothes and goes to a high hill to see the wonderful sight of her children coming home.

### **Second Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11**

Of all the communities Paul founded, the one at Philippi was especially dear to him. Wherever he was, they sent him moral and financial support to carry on his work. Now confined to a prison cell, Paul writes to them like a proud parent.



#### PARISH STAFF CONTACTS

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Reminder - Lectors **are required** to attend Monday evening practice (7 pm in the Chapel, Rm 1) in order to lector at Masses the following week-end. Mike Milani will be facilitating.

This **Christmas season**, St. Stephen is collaborating with Hillcrest Congregational Church to collect **donations for the homeless** here in our area. We will be accepting donations of socks, knit caps and scarves, gloves and new or gently used men's jackets. A donation box is located in the back of the church.

**There is no coffee & donuts** this Sunday due to the Deacon Advent Reflection Day which is being held in the hall.

Reminder! **We are suspending the use of the Cup** during Communion until the flu season is over. Only one Minister of Communion will be needed to assist the Presider. The minister with the asterisk by their name is asked to step forward.

### Upcoming Christmas Concerts!

The CCOP Music Ministry will offer **"We Wait For the Star"**, Dec. 14

7:30 pm at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr., Pleasanton. Free-will offering.



**"Mystery and Joy: A Christmas Miracle"**, a concert of medieval and renaissance music, will be held Dec. 22, 8 pm at St. Mary Magdalen Parish, 2005 Berryman St., Berkeley. Tickets range \$15 - \$35. The evening begins with a pre-concert talk by John Prescott at 7:30 pm. For more information, call 510-526-4811.

### Parish Stewardship Dec. 1/2

Regular collection	\$ 4621.49
Maintenance	\$ 10.00
Flowers	\$ 479.00

Thank you!

Our **Advent Reconciliation Service** will be held on Wednesday, December 12 at 5:00pm here at St. Stephen. There will be an opportunity for prayer, reflection and individual confession.

Our **Children's Christmas Play** is scheduled for December 24 at the Christmas Vigil Mass at 5:00pm. Children of all ages are encouraged to participate. Rehearsals will be held here at St. Stephen in the Church on Thursday evenings; December 13 and December 20 at 6:00pm. For more information, contact Annette Roux.

Due to the holidays, the **deadline for our December 23 bulletin** is December 13. Please send any bulletin updates to Chris Lang before that date.



**SIMBANG GABI:** The Filipino Society of CTK invites you to join in the celebration of "Simbang Gabi", a nine-day novena in preparation for the birth of Jesus, at Christ the King Church from December 15th to the 23rd. Mass begins at 6:30 p.m. every night (**except** Sunday, Dec. 16, and Sunday, Dec. 23, when mass begins at 6 p.m.). Light refreshments in the parish hall will be served after each mass. Then join us for a nice celebration and dinner after the conclusion of mass on the 23rd. For additional information, please contact Imelda Santos (623-7340) or Maritess Baula (899-9078).

There will be a **2nd collection** next weekend for those affected by the **Paradise and Chico fire**. Your generous gift is needed and appreciated. There are no envelopes for this collection, so just drop your checks or cash in the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection which will happen right after the regular collection.

How is your Advent going? Are you giving yourself a chance to see the presence of the Lord? Advent is a time to renew and deepen



our relationship with God. It is a time of patient waiting; an opportunity to spend more time in prayer, more time with God. As you would look forward to spending time with a loved one, you should look forward to spending time with God each day during Advent. Instead of just going through the motions during this season why not celebrate Advent with your heart? If Advent is only a time of consumerism and buying gifts for people that they don't really need or want, then it is flying in the face of what Jesus is all about. Christmas is being promoted by the secular world because stores make money out of it. But there is only one gift at Christmas, and that gift is Jesus. Advent is a time for a new commitment to follow Jesus, to deepen our hope in his return. God is always willing to give, but it is up to you to unwrap God's gift to you. Many people do not like Christmas because their wishes for happiness are not fulfilled and many are delighted when Christmas is over. It is a time of year when many people are lonely or depressed and try to fill up that loneliness with things. They do not realize that nothing in this world will fill that longing because that longing is God. Only he will fill our emptiness. That longing will not be fulfilled by anything found under the tree on Christmas morning but only by the Jesus whom you will meet in the Eucharist on Christmas Day. Together we can prepare a way for the Lord.

Annette Roux, Pastoral Associate, Ret.

**Pick up your 2019 envelope boxes** from the back of the



Church. If you cannot find your box or would like to start using envelopes, please talk to Chris Lang. **We have extra boxes** for those who have not received envelopes in the past, but would like to start using them.

**Mission Statement: To Live and to Love in Christ**