

3rd Sunday
OF ADVENT





**Mass Intentions
for the Week**

Saturday, December 11th, Vigil of the Lord's Day

4:00 p.m. - William, Stella & William C. Candella,
req. by family

Sunday, December 12th, Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. - Norma Bailey, req. by Mary Florenzano

Monday, December 13th, Saint Lucy

8:00 a.m. - Lucy Proto Sasso, req. by Frank R. Proto
& family

Tuesday, December 14th, St. John of the Cross

8:00 a.m. -

Wednesday, December 15th, Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. - NO MASS

Thursday, December 16th, Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. -

Friday, December 17th, Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. - Joseph Mastriano & Jeffery Ponzio, req.
by Agnellino family

Saturday, December 18th, Vigil of the Lord's Day

4:00 p.m. - Lucia & Dominic Migliaro, req. by
daughter Carmel Suntino Trapanotto & grandson
Raymond Suntino

Sunday, December 19th, Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. - Stephen Christopher Sanseverino, req. by
mom & dad

Sanctuary Lamp
Sunday, December 12, 2021
In Memory of
Lucy Proto Sasso

In remembrance of those who died,
Giuseppe Diglio, Michael Caprio &
Vincent Consiglio
May they rest in peace.

Weekend of December 5, 2021

Weekly Collection \$1742.00
Monthly Collection \$1092.00
Online Collection \$190.00

Two Collection This Week
Weekly Collection
Retired Religious

One Collections Next Week
Weekly Collection

**Third Sunday of Advent
December 12, 2021**

Today's Scriptures repeatedly echo with sounds of joy and gladness in the divine presence, in rescue and redemption accomplished. The prophet Zephaniah proclaims to Judah that despite her many infidelities, God will "renew in [her] his love." In the responsorial psalm, Isaiah announces that Judah can live "confident and unafraid" because God remains always in her midst. St. Paul calls the Philippian community to "Rejoice in the Lord" because the Gospel, the Good News of salvation in Christ, continues the spread.

In the Gospel, however, Luke brings a note of repentance into this symphony of joy. By the time Luke wrote his Gospel account, fifty or more years after the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, Christian's no longer expected Christ's imminent return. Hence Luke reminds his hearers that while Christ has begun God's final rule on earth, they must live each day fully aware of this reality, looking forward to the unknown day of its completion.

Thus, Luke often emphasizes the demands of daily Christian living. A few verses before today's Gospel, Luke presents John the Baptist preaching a baptism of repentance. In the Bible, repentance means a radical conversion of one's entire way of life. It demands turning away from sin and all that leads to it, while turning toward God in heart and action. Therefore, the Baptist calls tax collectors and soldiers to cease their common acts of dishonesty and oppression.

Rejoicing in salvation that has already come in Christ is praiseworthy, Luke seems to say. But, he adds, the powerful presence of our saving God in Christ calls for response in daily life and action. Such response is true repentance, made possible because our saving God is already with us in Christ. For this we can truly rejoice!

Readings for the week of December 12, 2021

Sunday: Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 [6];
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18
Monday: Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Matthew 21:23-27
Tuesday: Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13; Matthew 21:28-32
Wednesday: Isaiah 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25; Luke
7:18b-23
Thursday: Isaiah 54:1-10; Luke 7:24-30
Friday: Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17
Saturday: Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

Pastoral Reflection



One of the songs that we hear during this season of the year is Andy William's rendition of "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" wherein we are exhorted to "be of good cheer, to be of joy." With the lighting of the Pink Candle on our Advent Wreath and the wearing of Rose-Colored Vestments, today we celebrate "*Gaudete* Sunday," meaning "Rejoice Sunday" because the Lord is near.

But we wonder with the roller coaster ride that we have experienced this year and one half with the coronavirus and with the recent tragic and horrific shootings in our country the one by a teenager at Oxford High School in Michigan, or the driver of an SUV in Waukesha, Michigan who plowed through spectators while they were watching a Christmas Parade or even closer to home at Hamden High School where there was not only a stabbing but also threats of violence in our New Haven Schools that cause these school to go on lockdown or to be closed for several days. With such sad and tragic news, we ask ourselves, "How can we possibly 'be of good cheer?'"

With so much violence in our world today, it seems that we cannot watch the news on TV or read the newspapers without the reporting of some sort of violence in the form of innocent blood being shed, or someone or group of people being kidnapped and held against their will and for ransom as in the case if the missionaries in Haiti or some group of people fleeing their homeland seeking refuge and safety, as in the situation in Afghanistan. With so much sadness and pain in our world; it is hard for us to "be of good cheer." With the recent events of violence, we question and wonder in our minds, how could such violent acts happen just weeks before Christmas, just weeks before we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace? Certainly, I don't have the answer.

We grieve together for the loss of those who are suffering, be they in our own country or in other countries. As human beings, we are all diminished in some way or another by every act of violence that is committed against another person. Because of the common humanity we share, St. Paul tells us, "When one part of the body suffers, meaning when one person suffers, we all suffer." We continue to look for answers in order that we might make some sort of sense of all the violence that has happened and is happening in our world today. But, it is at such times as these wherein we instinctively turn to one another in loving support and to our God in prayer, where we search for and we find consolation, hope, and the strength and courage to go on. It is such time as these that we need Christmas and its celebration all the more. As the song goes, "We need a little Christmas, right his very minute..."

With all the secularism and commercialism of Christmas, it is easy for us to lose the true meaning of Christmas, because the celebration of Christmas is not just about decorated trees, lights and presents. Rather, the true meaning of and joy of Christmas is that "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son that whoever believes in him may not die but may have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him."

The "Joy of Christmas, the Good News" is that in the taking on of human flesh, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the only Son of God, unites himself to our humanity, becoming one of us taking upon himself all the things that we suffer and endure in life except sin. As a line from the Christmas Carol "Mary's Boy Child" reminds us, "And man will live forevermore, because of Christmas Day."

Jesus embraces our every human experience with all its joys, sorrows and sufferings in order that we and it may be lifted up. In a world riddled with spots of darkness and sadness, the coming of Jesus into our world is that ray of hope, that ray of light to let us know that God has not abandoned us; we are not alone as we walk this path of life because in our joys and sorrows, God walks with us. "A people living in darkness have seen a great light. On those who inhabit a land overshadowed by death, light has arisen." This is our hope; this is our faith that Jesus Christ has overcome the world.

To quote from an article that was sent to me, "Christmas may not be as 'merry' as other years, but more now than ever, we need His heavenly peace." Please Lord; send all of us your heavenly peace. As St. Paul writes in his Letter to the Philippians, "Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions of gratitude. Then God's own peace which surpasses all understanding will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:5-7).

As we draw near to the celebration of the Prince of Peace, may we know the nearness of the Lord, who dismiss all anxiety from our minds and grants us his unfailing gift of peace.

Happy "Gaudete Sunday," "Rejoice Sunday."

Fr. Roy

MASS BOOK

**The Mass Book for 2022 is now open
Masses can be booked from
Jan 1, 2022 thru June 30, 2022.**

Come to the rectory from 9:00am – 12:30 p.m.
Monday thru Friday, or call the Rectory at 203-562-7178 to book your masses.

All Masses must be paid in full at the time of booking.



*From the Twitter Account of
Pope Francis*

In this Season of Advent, let us ask the Lord, through the fatherly intercession of Saint Joseph, to remain always like sentinels in the night, attentive to see the light of Christ in our poorest brothers and sisters.

‘Giving Tree’

2021

Our Annual Advent Giving Tree is already up. We will be collecting gifts cards of no more than \$25.00 for the residents of Leeway.

We ask that you return your gifts cards with the person’s name on each gift card and place them with the ‘ornament’. This will enable easy distribution. All gifts cards need to be dropped off at the church no later than Sunday, December 19.

If you have any questions please contact the rectory at 203-562-7178.



Question of the Week

How can I spread the joy in my family, my neighborhood, my world?

FOOD BANK – Each week there is a box in the rectory entrance to receive donations of non-perishable foods that are brought to various non-profit agencies and families in need in the New Haven area. **(PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE OPEN AND EXPIRED FOOD)**. Your donation of these items are appreciated greatly by those who receive them. Please consider bringing one or two non-perishable items per month as a way of fulfilling the Corporal Work of Mercy, **To Feed the Hungry.**

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Let us remember our loved ones with a memorial of flowers as we beautify our church this Christmas.

In memory of:

(Please print names clearly)

By: _____

Amt. Enclosed _____

A donation of \$10.00 per name is requested in order to be listed in a post Christmas bulletin. Please return the completed form and place it in any Saturday and/or Sunday collection with the offering or use the envelope in your packet. Thank you.



**St. Michael Church
2021**



**CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 19th
9:30 a.m.**

**Vigil Solemnity of Christmas
Friday, December 24th
4:00 p.m. Christmas Vigil Mass**

**Saturday, December 25th
Solemnity of Christmas
9:30 a.m. Mass**



The Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete Sunday December 12, 2021

What is special about the Third Sunday of Advent?

For much of the Church's history, this Sunday had a special name: "Gaudete" Sunday. The traditions surrounding this Sunday go back as far as the fourth or fifth century, as does the season of Advent itself. Advent, our preparation for Christmas, was originally a forty-day penitential season like Lent. In fact, since it used to begin on November 12 (just after the Memorial of St. Martin of Tours), it was called "St. Martin's Lent." "Gaudete Sunday" was the Advent counterpart to "Laetare Sunday," which marks the midpoint in Lent.

On Gaudete Sunday, the season of Advent shifts its focus. For the first two weeks of Advent, the focus can be summed up in the phrase, "The Lord is coming." But beginning with Gaudete Sunday, the summary might be, "The Lord is near." This shift is marked by a lighter mood and a heightened sense of joyous anticipation. Liturgically, the colors lighten as well. The priest usually wears rose-colored vestments, a hue seen only on Gaudete Sunday and Laetare Sunday. On this day, we light the third candle of the Advent wreath, which is also rose-colored, or if you prefer, pink.

The word "Gaudete" is Latin for "Rejoice." In times when the focus of our anticipation is often on the negative and fearful, this celebration is a reminder that God who loves us is still in charge and that we await his coming not with fear, but with tremendous joy.

Pope Francis's Birthday



On Friday, December 17, Pope Francis celebrates his 85th birthday!