



MASSES FOR THE WEEK
December 5—December 11
EACH MASS IS OFFERED FOR
THE INTENTIONS OF EVERYONE
PRESENT AND FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 4:00 p.m. Ree Alario; Jody A. Breaux-Pope; Cammarata Guzardi Gamily; Marlene Morris; Barbara Rush; Gladys & Louis Schwartz; Anna & Joseph Szabo; Captain Houston E. Walker
- 5:30 p.m. Paul & Valerie Bruning; Leona O'Dwyer; Mr. Robert & Miss Mary Ann Flood; Judy & Jonathan Keyes

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 8:00 a.m. Members of St. Patrick's Church (Propopulo)
- 9:30 a.m. Jerry Bagwell; August Baumgartner; Roberta W. Bruley; Francis Castjohn; Jane O. Chatelain; Gerald Constant; Kelsey Favrot; Mary Ferrara; Emilda B. Formusa; Salvatore Gambino; Marie Gaudet; Edwin Jeasonne; Ollie Jeasonne; Joseph Maselli; Norma McClellan; John H. Schroder, Jr.; Louis Touts, Sr.; Jerome J. Triche, Sr.; Helen Vasquez
- 11:00 a.m. Barbara Rush; Gladys & Louis Schwartz; Anna & Joseph Szabo; Captain Houston E. Walker
- 5:30 p.m. Kevin Breland; Raymond R. Cazzola, Jr.; Carol Mallett; Leona O'Dwyer; Hilton & Mary Touts

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Mardery M. Labit; Dr. & Nancy Minyard
- 5:00 p.m. World War II Veterans

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

- 11:30 a.m. Agnes Christina; Edward O'Dwyer
- 12:15 p.m. Paul & Valerie Bruning; Elisabeth Robert

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Stephen Losee; James McNair; Dr. & Nancy Minyard

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 11:30 a.m. Edward O'Dwyer; Elisabeth Robert

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Mary G. Cammarata; Loretta Doussan; Stephen Losee

Mass requests envelopes are available in the vestibule

GREGORIAN LATIN MASS—Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Second Sunday of Advent

Solemn High Mass—First Sunday of the month.

Benediction—Third Sunday after the 9:30 A.M. Mass.

COFFEE AND DOUGHNUTS

Hospitality and friendship in Reynolds Hall, after the Sunday morning Masses.

SUNDAY OFFERING—November 29, 2009

First Collection \$ 8,786

Second Collection* \$ 1,697

* Maintenance and Restoration

THE OFFICIAL DEDICATION CONCERT OF ST. PATRICK'S NEW PATRICK J. MURPHY ORGAN, OP.53

Sunday, December 6, 2009 at 3:00 P.M.

To be performed by concert and recording organist Thomas Murray, the University Organist and Professor of Music at Yale University. All are invited and encourage to attend. There will be a reception in the rectory immediately following the concert.

SACRED CHRISTMAS MUSIC—SARAH JANE MCMAHON

Friday, December 11, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.

St. Patrick's Church

New Orleans soprano, Sarah Jane McMahon, will perform a concert of Sacred Christmas Music from her new album, *Night of Silence*.

The public is invited - Free admission - **Security will be provided.**

For information - www.sarahjanemcmahon.com

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.

The St. Patrick's Chorale, who sing at the 11:00 A.M. Sunday Mass, will perform a service of lessons and carols. This service was first performed at King's College, Cambridge on Christmas Eve 1918. The service will be by candlelight, and accompanied by organ. A collection will be taken to benefit the Music Fund here at St. Patrick's. **Security will be provided.**

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS—DEC. 12 & 13, 2009

Data submitted to the National Religious Retirement Office reveals that the average annual cost of care of women and men religious age 70 and over has more than doubled since 1989. Current statistics put this figure at \$35,977 per person annually, with skilled care reaching nearly \$55,000. Your donation to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides critical support to religious institutes in meeting the escalating costs of elder care. Please pray for all religious and give generously to next week's second collection.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS FOR THE HIGH ALTAR

Envelopes for the annual giving of poinsettias, to be place on the high altar during the Christmas season, are available in the vestibule. The listings will be published in the Christmas bulletin and the midnight Mass program. The final date for submitting a request is **Wednesday, December 16, 2009.**



Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Holy Day of Obligation

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Monday, December 7, 2009

Vigil Mass: 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Masses: 11:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.



The Living Flame of the Sanctuary Light
is for the intentions of Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Ramirez

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL

For the sick of our parish and those who have asked for our prayers especially: Randall Cashio; Mary Ann Ciravolo; Tony Clesi; Colleen Collet; L Darcy; R.J. DeBlanc; R.F. DeBlanc; Al Duroncelet; Bryan Evans; Mimi Finley; John Fulcher; Marie Gattuso; Bob Held; Howard Henriques; Milton J. Hock, Jr.; Karen Ibraheim; Joan Kimball; Belinda Lazaro; Stephen Losee; Mary A. McKay; Sally Ann Main; Maudie Megeson; Lucille Ogden; Beverly Orillion; Karen Paprocki; J.Van Provosty; Tom Roach; Elisabeth Robert; M. Schuss; Joseph M. Sonne; Pierre Stouse; Stephanie Summers

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE END OF ADVENT

Christmas has devoured Advent, gobbled it up with the turkey giblets and the goblets of seasonal ale. Every secularized holiday, of course, tends to lose the context it had in the liturgical year. Across the nation, even in many churches, Easter has hopped across Lent, Halloween has frightened away All Saints, and New Year's has drunk up Epiphany.

More Christmas trees. More Christmas lights. More tinsel, more tassels, more glitter, more glee—until the glut of candies and carols, ornaments and trimmings, has left almost nothing for Christmas Day. For much of America, Christmas itself arrives nearly as an afterthought: not the fulfillment, but only the end, of the long Yule season that has burned without stop since the stores began their Christmas sales.

Of course, even in the liturgical calendar, the season points ahead to Christmas. Advent genuinely is adventual—a time before, a looking forward—and it lacks meaning without Christmas. But maybe Christmas, in turn, lacks meaning without Advent. All those daily readings from Isaiah, filled with visions of things yet to be, a constant barrage of the future tense: And it shall come to pass . . . And there shall come forth . . . A kind of longing pervades the Old Testament selections read in church over the weeks before Christmas—an anxious, almost sorrowful litany of hope only in what has not yet come. Zephaniah. Judges. Malachi. Numbers. I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

What Advent is, really, is a discipline: a way of forming anticipation and channeling it toward its goal. There's a flicker of rose on the third Sunday—Gaudete!, that day's Mass begins: Rejoice!—but then it's back to the dark purple that is the mark of the season in liturgical churches. And what those somber vestments symbolize is the deeply penitential design of Advent. Nothing we can do earns us the gift of Christmas, any more than Lent earns us Easter. But a season of contrition and sacrifice prepares us to understand and feel something about just how great the gift is when at last the day itself arrives.

More than any other holiday, Christmas seems to need its setting in the church year, for without it we have a diminishment of language, a diminishment of culture, and a diminishment of imagination. The Jesse trees and the Advent calendars, St. Martin's Fast and St. Nicholas' Feast, Gaudete Sunday, the childless crèches, the candle wreaths, the vigil of Christmas Eve: They give a shape to the anticipation of the season. They discipline the ideas and emotions that otherwise would shake themselves to pieces, like a flywheel wobbling wilder and wilder till it finally snaps off its axle.

Maybe that's what has happened to Christmas. The ideas and the emotions have all broken free and smashed their way across the fields. From Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's I heard the bells on Christmas Day—Their old, familiar carols play to Irving Berlin's I'm dreaming of a white Christmas—Just like the ones I used to know, there has been for a long time now something oddly backward looking about Christmas music—some nostalgia that insists on substituting its melancholy for the somber contrition and sorrow of forward-looking Advent.

For a similar reason, the memoir of childhood has become the dominant form of Christmas writing. Often beautiful—from Dylan Thomas' "A Child's Christmas in Wales" to Lillian Smith's Memories of a Large Christmas—those stories nonetheless deploy their golden-hued Christmassy emotions only

toward the past: a kind of contrite feeling without the structure of Advent's contrition, all the regret and sense of absence cast back to what has been and never will be again.

On the other hand, there are plenty of Christmas elements that remain forward looking. In many ways, the season has become little except anticipation—anticipation run amuck, like children so sick with expectation that the reality, when at last it arrives, can never be satisfying. This, too, is something broken off from the liturgical year: another group of adventual feelings without the Advent that gave them form, another set of Christmas ideas set loose to run themselves mad.

When I was little I always felt that the days right before Christmas were a time somehow out of time. Christmas Eve, especially, and the arrival of Christmas itself at midnight: The hours moved in ways different from their passage in ordinary time, and the sense of impending completion was somehow like a flavor even to the air we breathed.

I've noticed in recent years, however, that the feeling comes over me more rarely than it used to, and for shorter bits of time. I have to pursue the sense of wonder, the taste in the air, and cling to it self-consciously. Even for me, the endless roar of untethered Christmas anticipation is close to drowning out the disciplined anticipation of Advent. And when Christmas itself arrives, it has begun to seem a day not all that different from any other. Oh, yes, church and home to a big dinner. Presents for the children. A set of decorations. But nothing special, really.

It is this that Advent, rightly kept, would prevent—the thing, in fact, it is designed to halt. Through all the preparatory readings, through all the genealogical Jesse trees, the somber candles on the wreaths, the vigils, and the hymns, Advent keeps Christmas on Christmas Day: a fulfillment, a perfection, of what had gone before. I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh.

*Joseph Bottum
First Things*

IN MEMORY OF—2010 ENVELOPES

Names are now being accepted for the 2010 *In Memory Of* listing on the back of the Sunday Bulletin. Envelope forms, found in the vestibule of the church, should be completed and returned to the rectory office no later than **Friday, January 8, 2010.**

1. To ensure proper spelling, recording, etc., all requests **MUST** be made by completing the designated envelope form.
2. The rectory office will **NOT** be responsible for requests received without the completed envelope form.
3. The United States Postal Service is quite often heavily burdened with the amount of mail. Please do not rely on the USPS to deliver mailed envelopes before the final date: **Friday, January 8, 2010.**
4. During these next **six weeks** completed envelopes can be deposited in any Mass collection basket or hand delivered to the rectory office.

The office staff appreciates your understanding and cooperation in assisting with this annual project.