

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20, 2009

Homily Next Week:
Deacon Steve Wodzanowski

Readings for
Sunday, December 27, 2009
FIRST READING: SIRACH 3:2-6,12-14
SECOND READING: COLOSSIANS 3:12-17
GOSPEL: LUKE 2:41-52

Weekend Mass Schedule
Saturday - 5 p.m.
Sunday - 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 5:30 p.m.

Weekday Mass Schedule
Monday - Friday - 7:00 a.m.

Reconciliation
Saturday - 3:30-4:15 p.m. in the Church
or by appointment

Parish Center Hours
Monday-Thursday - 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday - 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Saturday - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

www.stjosephparish.org

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Fax: (206) 329-5698
Parish Receptionist (206) 324-2522

Parish Staff
(206) 329-5981

Pastor

Rev. John Whitney, S.J. x107

Senior Priest in Residence

Rev. Jack O'Leary, S.J. x101

Deacon/Pastoral Associate

Steve Wodzanowski x106

Pastoral Staff:

Dottie Farewell, Pre-K to 8th Faith Form. x112
Dennis Gentele, Facilities x110
Renée Leet, Administrative Assistant x100
Bob McCaffery-Lent, Music & Liturgy x109
Marti McGaughey, Bookkeeper x102
Greg McNabb, Administration x108
Anne Moran, Administrative Assistant x116
Randy Novak, High School Youth x114

St. Joseph School

700 18th Avenue East • (206) 329-3260

Main Office x210
George Hofbauer, Principal x213
Rick Boyle, Academic Vice Principal x215
Sheryl Sperry, Student Vice Principal x218

On the End of Advent

"It is both terrible and comforting to dwell in the inconceivable nearness of God, and to be so loved by God that the first and last gift is infinity and inconceivability itself.

But we have no choice. God is with us."
-Karl Rahner, SJ-

Three weeks ago, when we had just lit the first of the Advent candles, I confessed in this space that I did not think I was ready for Advent, yet. To be able to face the darkness and watch the slow growth of light and hope; to believe, again, that God is coming among us and transforming our world. It seemed too much.

Now, with the last candle glowing and the darkest day of the year just ahead, I am beginning to think that Advent is exactly where I belong. For these days and weeks have fostered my hope and deepened my expectation of the One who is to come, the One whose birth will change everything. Perhaps it was at the reconciliation services, as I sat with a second-grader in her discovery that God's grace embraces everything she is (even when she wants to hit her little brother); or, at the adult service, watching the eleven other Jesuits hold each penitent with the joy and promise of God's love. Perhaps it was sitting in my office, watching the lines of students march back and forth to rehearsal for the Christmas pageant in the church. Perhaps it was planning the music and preaching schedule, arranging the lights and the decorations, listening to the choir rehearse, or just imagining how we might better celebrate, as a community, the day that is so soon upon us. . . . Whatever it was, somewhere Advent happened, and it came to me that I am filled with a Spirit that is gift to me, and awaiting that gift to become fully alive in the world.

I wonder if that is not always how it happens. We think we are unprepared; yet God, who knows us better than we do ourselves, slips into our world and into our heart, and readies the ground for the coming of Christ. I look at myself, I look out at this community and I think, "Ready or not, here God comes." And that makes me very happy—happy that God does not await my perfect preparations, but is with us now, growing and nearing term in us, whether we feel worthy of it or not.

The next week will not give us all the perfect peace to conclude our Advent preparations. It will not be enough time for us to fix the world in anticipation of the coming of the Lord. But it will give us enough time to open our eyes and see what those few candles have revealed: that we are absolutely and unequivocally loved by a God, whose greatest joy was to become what we are, so that the distance between us might become nothing. As Karl Rahner, the great theologian notes, it is both a terrible and comforting reality, to be so loved by a God who is so close.

So, open your eyes this week and allow yourself to see and believe, even if you aren't ready, even if you are afraid. Four lights have been lit for us. We are about to see something wonderful: God is with us!

Yours in the grace and love of Advent,

John D. Whitney, SJ



Calendar

Monday, December 21	Parish Center Closed Sacred Silence, Church, 7 PM
Wednesday, December 23	No Pathfinders VOICE, 7 PM, Social Hall
Thursday, December 24	Parish Center Closes at 12 Noon Christmas Eve Masses, 4, 6 and 10 PM
Friday, December 25	Parish Center Closed Christmas Day Mass, 10 AM
Saturday, December 26	Parish Center Closed
Sunday, December 27	Come to the Quiet ... 5 PM (before Mass)

Note: Daily masses (Monday-Friday) are celebrated in the Arrupe Room at 7 AM and the Blessed Sacrament will be reserved in the Loyola Room (the old rectory chapel) both located in the Parish Center.



Sunday, January 3 Traditional Epiphany Dinner 2 pm - Social Hall

It has been a longstanding tradition at St. Joseph Parish to open the doors of our Social Hall during the Christmas season

for a festive holiday dinner on the Feast of Epiphany. All members of our community are welcome, and invitations are given to our friends and neighbors from **St. Martin de Porres Shelter, Jubilee Women's Center, L'Arche, Noah Sealth,** and the **St. James Family Kitchen**, as well as numerous churches and organizations that serve people who may be homeless or in special need. Usually about 200-250 people attend.

All members of our St. Joseph's community are invited to participate in this wondrous event! *Sign-ups for dinner volunteers (set-up, food preparations, entertainment, cleanup, table hosts) and food donations will take place in the vestibule after mass or you may call Renee at 324-2522 x100 through December 31. Hours count toward school volunteer requirement. Any questions please call Steve Wodzanowski at 965-1646, stevew@stjosephparish.org*

St. Joseph Community extends its prayers and hopes for the following intentions: Grateful that prayers for David and for Rachel have been answered . . . For Lisa and Erin to be better and stronger in health.

Prayer Tree



May peace, love and joy be your gifts at Christmas and your blessings throughout the years to come.

If you are interested in having someone placed on the prayer tree, please contact Renée Leet at 324-2522 or rleet@stjosephparish.org

There will be daily Advent Mass on Thursday, December 24th, at 7 am in the Parish Center.

FYI

The Parish Center office will be closed on Monday, December 21st for church decorating and a staff day.

We will also close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve. If you are in need of assistance, please leave a message at 206-324-2522 and someone will get back to you.

Sustaining Grace

Thank you for sending your pledge in! As of December 15th, 520 parish families have pledged over \$918,000. Thank you for your commitment to the mission of our parish.

All Souls Picture Pick-up

Those who left pictures for our All Souls Day Mass and remembrance through the month of November may now be picked up in the Parish Center during regular business hours.

Communion for the Homebound

Eucharistic Ministers are available to bring Communion to the homebound. Please contact Fr. Jack O'Leary 206-329-5981, ext 101 or Deacon Steve Wodzanowski at 206-965-1646 or stevew@stjosephparish.org if you or someone you know would like to receive the Eucharist.

The Marriage Feast - St. Joseph's Annual Couples Weekend

We have a wonderful choice for a Christmas gift to give to yourself as a married couple. The Annual St. Joseph's Couples Weekend at the LaConner Country Inn, LaConner, WA, February 5-7th. The cost is \$300 for the weekend. We have 25 rooms reserved until December 30th, so register now. To secure a spot, please contact Deacon Steve Wodzanowski at 965-1646 or steveuw@stjosephparish.org. The planning team is: Chris and Sonia Gilman, John Kew and Sarah O'Neil, Jenner and Pat Mathiason and Dave Posthumus and Audrey Kelly.

Children's Faith Formation

The CFF classes will not meet December 20th, 27th or January 3rd. Classes resume January 10th. See you in 2010!

The CFF 3,4, & 5 Classes will be participating in the Epiphany Mass at 9 am on Sunday, January 3rd.

January Family Mass, Dinner and Talent Show, Saturday, January 23rd!

If you have a talent you'd like to share—joke telling, magic, pet tricks, singing or something else—at our next Family Mass & Dinner on January 23rd, please contact Dottie Farewell & Liz McCarthy French at 206-965-1652 or dfarewell@stjosephparish.org for audition times in early January. *ALL* ages and talents are welcome. Practice for your family over Christmas and then show us your talent after the break!

NEW Altar Server Training in January!

All 4th graders and older are invited to become a member of the Altar Serving team. Our next NEW server training will be on Sunday, January 10th immediately following the 11am mass. Meet in the front of the church between the steps and the piano. Contact Dottie Farewell if you have questions or RSVP at 206-965-1652 or dfarewell@stjosephparish.org

Pathfinders & VOICE

There will be **no Pathfinders December 23rd or 30th. Pathfinders will resume January 6th at 6 pm.** See you in 2010!

VOICE will be meeting in the Social Hall on Wednesday, December 23rd to serve dinner to the Men's Shelter.

Begin the New Year with First Friday

If your New Year's resolution includes deepening your faith and connection with fellow parishioners, we invite you to join the First Friday Service. Due to the New Year's holiday, January's *First Friday is being held on January 8th at 6:30 pm in the Parish Center Arrupe Room.* A potluck dinner will immediately follow the service, also being held in the Parish Center. We ask that you bring a food item or beverage to share. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Quinn-Shea at quinn-shea@msn.com or Mary Beth Hribar-Deitz at Marybeth_hribar@yahoo.com.

Seniors on the Go

Change this Date... The First Friday Healing Mass and Luncheon has been moved from January 1st to **Friday, January 8th with Mass at 11:30** and the luncheon following in the Parish Center. Please join us!

👏 Winter Blood Drive

January 4th, Arrupe Room in the Parish Center, 1-7 pm. Please put this date on your new calendar now - it's just three weeks away. While you're considering New Year's resolutions, consider donating blood this year if you've not done it before. Consider donating an additional time during the year if you donate sporadically. Drives are scheduled to accommodate regular donors - every 8 or 9 weeks during the year. All types are needed always. Imagine - Saving A Life!

👏 St. Francis House, St. Vincent de Paul and Tent City 3 Needs Assistance

We have received a number of requests from St. Francis House, St. Vincent de Paul and Tent City 3 who are in desperate need of cold weather items. Sleeping bags, blankets, warm throws, hats, gloves, jackets and sweaters all help to keep the cold at bay. Hand warmers have also been requested. (Chemical hand warmers can be purchased at Costco by the case for a very reasonable price.) Please leave your donation in the vestibule or bring by the Parish Center. Also, please continue your gracious donations of food each Sunday.

👏 A Christmas Carol

Bishop Blanchet High School Performing Arts Department presents *A Christmas Carol*, the musical. Performances are today, December 20th, at 2 pm and 7 pm at The Moore Theater, 1932 2nd Ave. Tickets may be purchased through several venues: www.stgpresents.org or www.Tickets.com. The Paramount and Moore Theater box offices are also selling tickets. For ticket information, call 206-527-7746.

St. Joseph Church ~ Holiday Schedule

Holiday Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve ~ December 24th

4 pm ~ Family Mass

6 pm ~ Mass with Youth Choir

10 pm ~ Lessons and Carols followed by 10:30 pm Mass

Christmas Day ~ December 25th

10 am ~ Christmas Morning Mass

Feast of the Mother of God, Day of Prayer for Peace ~ January 1st

10 am ~ Mass

Epiphany of Christ to the Nations ~ January 2nd & 3rd

5 pm, Saturday ~ Mass

9 am, 11 am & 5:30 pm, Sunday ~ Mass

{The CFF 3,4, & 5 Classes will be participating in the 9 am Mass}

Epiphany Dinner in the Social Hall ~ 2 pm, Sunday, January 3rd

Please contact Steve Wodzanowski at 965-1646 or stevew@stjosephparish.org to help with this annual event.