

The Fourth Sunday of Advent: Praying with Mary



The very essence of prayer is recognizing that God is with us. That is the meaning of one of the Lord's names, one that we hear over and over again in Advent, Emmanuel. The Lord is with Mary. The Lord is with us.

What does it take for us to pause amidst the busyness of this season of preparation—between the shopping and decorating, the family gatherings and holiday parties? Mary's life is dramatically interrupted by the visitation of an angel and a miraculous conception. How do I hear the angelic messenger, that still, small voice of God (1 Kings 19:12) in my days? What does God wish to conceive in me? How does God want to use my flesh to incarnate the living Christ?

As we journey through this Advent and Christmas season, we can seek Mary's intercession, looking to her example of how to welcome the overshadowing Spirit of God. As Mary said yes to the Spirit, I can trust in her to lead me to my own yes.

Here are some possible ways to practice praying with Mary this month.

- Luke 1:26–56 chronicles Mary's encounter with the angel, her visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, and her song, which we call the Magnificat. Read this passage slowly. It's long, so you may want to read just a few verses each day or each week. As you read, notice whether there is a word or a phrase that speaks to you. Ponder it in your heart as you go about your day. Invite the Lord to speak to you through his Word.
- If the Rosary is not already part of your life, consider incorporating it once a week, or maybe try praying a decade a day. As the Joyful Mysteries recall the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, they are perfect for praying through the seasons of Advent and Christmas. As you meditate on each mystery, invite the Spirit to use the experiences of Mary and Joseph and Jesus to shine light on how the Spirit is moving in your life here and now.
- The Angelus is a traditional prayer by which we can connect and reconnect with our ever-present God throughout the day. The Angelus is a brief reflection on the incarnation, recalling Mary's yes to God's invitation to bring Christ into the world. Prayed at 6:00 am, noon (often accompanied by a prayer for peace), and 6:00 pm, the Angelus is a pause in the rhythm of our days in which we can recall Emmanuel, God with us.

How has praying with Mary enhanced your experience of Advent and Christmas?

Taken from www.loyolapress.com

Stewardship Report: Revenue

December 13th:	9,565.00
Faith Direct:	2,702.00
Total Offertory:	12,267.00
Last Year:	11,398.00
Retirement for Religious to date:	2,567.00
Retirement for Religious 2014	2,680.00

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Two Collections on Christmas: There will be two collections on Christmas. The first is the regular offertory collection, and the second collection is our special gift to the Christ Child and to our parish on the Solemnity of His Birth.



Christmas Gift/End of the Year Giving: December 31st marks the end of the 2015 calendar year of charitable contributions for your tax returns this spring. We can credit your annual financial contribution statement to the parish only with gifts received by December 31st. Please plan ahead so that your financial contribution statement will reflect a true spirit of stewardship and of joyfully returning to the Lord the blessings He has bestowed upon you this past year. Please note that we cannot certify contributions made in cash to the collection basket.

Looking Ahead

Marathon to Support the Academy of St. Matthias
Sign up to run and fundraise with us! On March 12, 2016, teachers and friends from all over the country will come to Washington, D.C., to support the Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle! Sign up for the run at <http://runrocknroll.com/dc>.

The St. Matthias Prayer Group meets every Sunday in the Church after the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

Hosting An Event? Friendship Hall is available for rent. For information, please contact Thad Ereme at 301-459-4814 or email tereme@stmatthias.org.



Advent Coin Folders: Please remember to bring back your coins in a sealed envelope. Your gift of change will help us to continue to serve the needy of this community.

Find the Perfect Gift: Do you know somebody—whether a family member, a friend, a coworker or a neighbor—who doesn't have a church home and might be alone this Christmas? Why not invite them to Mass and Christmas dinner? This year, be a credible sign of Jesus' loving presence to someone seeking the Good News in his or her life.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christmas and New Year Holidays

The Father Hughes Center: The parish office will close Wednesday, December 23rd at 12 pm and reopen Monday, December 28th at 8:00 am. The parish office will close Wednesday December 30th at 12 pm and will reopen Monday January 4th at 8:00 am. Thank you in advance for planning ahead for any needs you may have of our staff.

The Academy of Saint Matthias: The school will close at noon on Friday December 18th and will reopen Monday January 4th.

Items of Note

Welcome, Father Canice Enyiaka, who will reside here at St. Matthias for an extended stay. Father Canice is pursuing his doctorate degree at Howard University, and will be on hand to assist with Masses and sacraments. Please extend a warm welcome to Father Canice.

Mass Schedule:

- Thursday, Dec. 24th** Daily Mass at 8:30 am
Family Christmas Vigil at 5:00 pm
Christmas Vigil at 10:00 pm
- Friday, Dec. 25th** Christmas Day Masses at 8:00 am
and 10:30 am
- Thursday, Dec. 31st** Daily Mass at 8:30 am
Vigil Mass at 5:00 pm
- Friday, Jan. 1st** Masses at 8:00 am and 10:00 am



Christmas Giving Tree: Please return unwrapped Christmas Giving Tree gifts **this weekend**. Items may be dropped off in the Church. Thank you for making the season special for those in need!

Wreaths: All decorated wreaths need to be brought to the Church this weekend!

Missals for Sale: Saint Joseph Missals are available for sale in the church vestibule and at the Hughes Center parish office. The cost is \$4.00.

Holy Year of Mercy Pilgrimage to Rome & Holy Land: On April 4-15, 2016, join Father George Schommer, O.P., pastor of Saint Dominic Parish, on a pilgrimage to Rome and the Holy Land. For additional information please contact Father Schommer, at schommer@op.org or Elizabeth Grinder at 1-877-276-7279. The reservation deadline is December 30th, 2015.

Support our School with the Perfect Stocking Stuffer!



Buy your raffle tickets at the Father Hughes Center office. Drawings begin Monday, January 4th, 2016.

Mass Intentions for the Conclusion of Advent; Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

Monday, December 21: Saint Peter Canisius

8:30 am Marian Huber
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Adoration & Blessed Sacrament
7:00 pm - Confessions
8:00 pm - Benediction

Tuesday, December 22:

8:30 am Ed Densmore

Wednesday, December 23: Saint John of Kanty,

8:30 am Richard Kosko (Living - Birthday)

Thursday, December 24:

8:30 am In memory of deceased pastors and associates
who served at St. Matthias the Apostle Parish
5:00 pm Intentions of Fr. Canice's family & friends
10:00 pm Intentions of Father Milt's family & friends

Friday, December 25:

8:00 am In memory of the deceased members of Father
Milt's family
10:30am In memory of our parishioners who died this
year

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Saturday, December 26: Saint Stephen

5:00 pm Carleigh Paolino (Living - Birthday)

Sunday, December 27:

8:00 am Sylvester Ezeani, Jr. (Living—Birthday)
10:30 am Adamma Ugoh
6:00 pm Vincent Charles

Readings for Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

1st Reading: Sirach 3:2-6, 12—14

2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12 –21

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52

Please pray for the sick and homebound in our parish, our neighbors, family, and friends:

Ronnie Davis; William Halbe; Jade Jackson; Jack Jordan; Kay
Kaderabek; John and Joan Kodak; Joe Makowski; Tim
O'Leary; Marion Prout; Madeline White, Eugene Zehner

-For our military, protect them from all harm.

*-For all the faithful departed, especially Lawrence Bartell
Henson, may they rest in peace.*

Names will be placed on our prayer list for 4 weeks. To add a name,
please contact Pat Ford at 301-459-4814 x 201 or email
pford@stmatthias.org

Celebrant Mass Schedule for the Weekend of December 26/27

5:00 pm Father Milt
8:00 am Father Milt
10:30 am Father Canice
6:00 pm Father Garrett Edmunds

