



Advent: Why do We Wait?

What is the message of Advent?
Why are we waiting?

Advent is a season of preparation: we shop for gifts, plan parties, and decorate our homes for the coming of

Christmas. Sometimes it is easy to forget the real mission of Advent: preparing our hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ. We are bombarded by commercial messages in which the reason for Christmas—Emmanuel, “God with us”—is absent or overlooked. However, the rituals and practices of our Catholic liturgies during this season can join us together with the People of God. United, we can offer messages of challenge and hope and express our desire for God's presence in our midst.

Advent blends penitence, preparedness, and joy. We are called to consider our lives and to repent—or turn around—from those things that keep us from God. In this way, we repent and prepare for the Second Coming of the Lord. This theme of preparedness permeates the liturgies of Advent. Lastly, we are called to be joyful as we get ready to celebrate the incarnation of our Savior in Bethlehem.

We wait for the coming of Christ in human history at Bethlehem, in our hearts each day, and at the end of time. The readings of Advent direct us to be prepared as we “do not know the hour or the day” of Christ's coming. But it is the present to which we should give our attention. Christ comes to us each day in word and sacrament, in prayer and grace, and through the people in his Church. Can we try to be aware of his presence and power within our lives? Can we be open to his call and let him work through us in the world?

What is the message of Advent? For what are we waiting? Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus! Help us to know you, love you, and serve you. Increase our faith. Help us understand. Let us be your eyes, ears, and hands on earth. Let us show your love. Come!

Taken from www.onlineministries.creighton.edu



A Great Holiday Stocking Stuffer: The Academy Annual Lottery

Please support our school by purchasing raffle tickets for \$10 each. The weekly drawing begins January 4, 2016, and ends August 29, 2016. The weekly winner receives \$300 and the seller receives \$50. Tickets may be purchased in the school office or in the Hughes Center parish office. A ticket makes a great stocking stuffer!

Stewardship Report: Revenue

November 22nd:	9,611.00
Faith Direct:	2,350.00
Total Offertory:	11,961.00
Last Year:	9,956.00

November 29th:	9,075.00
Faith Direct:	2,350.00
Total Offertory:	11,425.00
Last Year:	10,715.00

Thanksgiving Day for 2015:	4,092.00
Thanksgiving Day for 2014:	4,430.00

**Please complete and return your
Take the Next Step Pledge Offertory
Renewal Card!**

Thank you for your generosity.

Building and Maintenance Fund: Our second collection **this weekend** is for our regular Building and Maintenance Fund. As always, we thank you for your generosity.

Retirement Fund for Religious: Our second collection **next weekend** is for the continuing care of our elderly religious. Share your gratitude for the senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who made a positive difference in so many lives. Please give generously to next week's collection.

School News:

- 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 next school fundraiser is a family dinner night December 8th at Texas Road House in Bowie. All are welcome!
- The Academy will hold an Open House on Thursday, December 10th from 5:00-7:00 pm, followed by a Christmas concert at 7:00 pm. in the Church. All are welcome.

Looking Ahead

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: Our annual Christmas Appeal for our Poor Box began with the appearance of the Advent Coin Folders. Please take a coin folder home and prepare a special gift for the Christ Child on Christmas Day. God bless you for your generosity!

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Holy Day of Obligation: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mass Schedule



Monday, December 7th: Confessions at 7:00 pm
Vigil Mass at 7:30 pm
(No Adoration or
Benediction)
Tuesday, December 8th: Masses at 7:00 am,
9:30 am (School Mass), 12:00 pm, 7:30 pm

Items of Note

Two-Way Immersion Early Childhood Program:



Starting in the Fall of 2016, the Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle will offer a two-way immersion Spanish-English program for PreK-4 and Kindergarten. The instruction in all subject areas will be 50% in English and 50% in Spanish. For additional information and applications for the new program, contact Mrs. Vivian Richards, Director of Admissions, at 301-577-9412 x 215.

Christmas Giving Tree: The Christmas Giving Tree is decorated with ornaments bearing the names of organizations and requested gifts. Please take an ornament and return it along with the unwrapped gift by Sunday, December 20th. Items may be dropped off in the Church or Hughes Center. Thank you for making the season special for those in need!



Christmas Dinner for Those in Need: If you know of someone who cannot get out and would like a Christmas dinner delivered to them on Christmas Day, contact the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at 202-526-8300, ext. 111, by Friday, December 11th.



Calling all Teens! The Saint Matthias Teen Youth Group will hold its next meeting on Sunday, December 13th from 12 pm to 2:30 pm in the Hughes Center. Refreshments will be provided! For more information, contact Le-Marie Thompson at 301-452-2258 or Arlene Taylor at 301-459-5549.

Ushers Meeting: On Sunday December 13th a brief mandatory meeting of all ushers will take place immediately following the 10:30 am Mass.

Jesus's Manger

Do not be concerned if you see white slips of paper in the manger. Rejoice, because each strip represents an act of kindness and mercy that students are performing daily. The goal is to better prepare for Christ's birth and make sure His cradle is soft.

Mass Intentions for the Second Week of Advent

Monday, December 7: Saint Ambrose, Bishop

8:30 am Peter O'Neill (6th Anniversary of Death)

7:00 pm - 7:30 pm Confessions

7:30 pm Vigil Mass

Adoration and Benediction are cancelled for the evening.

Tuesday, December 8: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:00 am Helen Hritz

Wed., December 9: Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin

8:30 am James M. Saunders

Thursday, December 10:

8:30 am Innocent Akwue

Friday, December 11: Saint Damasus I, Pope

8:30 am Patricia Agboli

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe

5:00 pm Paredes/Manlapaz Family

Sunday, December 13:

8:00 am Jeff George (Living - Birthday)

10:30 am Rebecca Udejiofor

6:00 pm Robert Taylor

Readings for the Second Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-18a

2nd Reading: Philippians 4: 4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

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

Margie Baker; Muriel Brown; ; Ronnie Davis; Francis Greenfield; Jade Jackson; Jack Jordan; Kay Kaderabek; John and Joan Kodak; Joe Makowski;; Tim O'Leary; Marion Prout; Pablo Rocha; Jayce Richardson; Marian Thomas; Kevin Tagoalem; Jinny Wallerstedt; Madeline White; Sam Zanin

*-For our military, protect them from all harm.
-For all the faithful departed, may they rest in peace.*

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

Father Milt's December letter was mailed to you last week, along with an envelope designated for *Christmas Flowers*. Please complete the back of the envelope in memory of, or in honor of, your loved ones. Envelopes may be placed in the collection basket or sent to the parish office. For your convenience, a *Christmas Offering* envelope was also included in the mailing.

Celebrant Mass Schedule for the Weekend of December 12/13



5:00 pm Msgr. Balbago

8:00 am Father Milt

10:30 am Father Edmunds

6:00 pm Father Ford