



St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI www.stvincentferrer.net

DECEMBER 8, 2024 † SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

From The Pastor

Christmas is a mystery that deserves a time of meaningful preparation. Advent is the period of preparation. The challenge is to look past the immediate activity of a holiday and consider the meaning and movements of what Christmas is and what it means. Christmas, by itself, celebrates the birth of Jesus with all the trimmings and trappings of the holiday, is a big event. It deserves the religious and cultural attention it is given.

On a larger scale, Advent calls us to look beyond the temporal to the eternal. The Incarnation of God born in the flesh through the Virgin Mary is a stunning reality that changes everything we know about the heavens and the earth. Longing for a Messiah to break the chains of oppression, poverty, and Roman occupation to liberate a nation is one thing, but to recognize an eternal Messiah enters a whole new realm.

In the Incarnation, heaven comes to earth. Emmanuel proclaims, 'God is with us.' This is more than a social cultural event that brings joy and unity to families and social gatherings. The infinite invisible God has come to earth to unite all peoples and nations as one in the redemptive work of salvation. It is on this level that I invite you to prepare for and ponder the reality of Christmas.

Consider the contrast of how St. Luke introduces John the Baptist. Luke intentionally begins the reading by setting the historical time, place, and people who hold worldly power. Tiberias Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod, Phillip, Lysanias, Annas and Caiphas all hold positions of worldly and religious power. We are familiar with these names and we know the roles they play as the gospel unfolds. The power they hold is temporal, worldly, and passing.

Introducing John the Baptist, Luke moves from the temporal world to the spiritual and the eternal. As a nobody living in the desert, 'the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah.' John is a man of God, seeking God, who proclaims the work of God in the coming of the Savior. John cries out in the coming of Jesus an eternal and unending salvation that reaches both within and beyond the world.

Infinite and eternal are words of religious and spiritual meaning. They can be used in science, quantum physics and such things, but most commonly refer to God. Words can only fail in any attempt to define and describe God. Divine love is

infinite. God is eternal and unchanging. Infinity and eternal reality are beyond the human mind. We are limited to adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing as well as higher theories of mathematics. Infinity is endless, without measure, an undefinable quantity.

The eternal, infinite God enters the world in the coming of Christ. We must ponder this mystery. Redemptive salvation is not a reality initiated from within the created world. God, the Infinite Divine One, entered our world at the birth of Jesus.

Consider the images used by John. They are biblical, poetic, and spiritual. They convey images of transformation only God can accomplish. They are images of restoration, healing, and liberation. Valleys will be filled, mountains will be made low, winding roads made straight, and rough ways smooth. These are spiritual images stirring the imagination to the things of God.

It is in this frame that John proclaims a baptism of repentance. John is calling us to see beyond the sin, hate, and disorder of the world to perceive the limitless power of God in the One who is to come. To repent is to change your mind, to see things in a new way, to become awake to Life within your life. Repentance is like putting an old picture in a new frame. In a new frame, an old picture will reveal a whole new view and insight into its beauty and meaning.

This is the invitation and the work of Advent. The Advent season all but demands we look beyond the temporal and the worldly to see the spiritual and the eternal. The new light Jesus brings into the world serves as a new frame to see the life we are given in the Infinite God come to earth. This deserves our attention and our pondering lest we remain earth bound in the doubts, fears, and disordered realities that constantly constrain us.

God is infinite, immeasurable, and without limit. God is limitless love. This love is real, present, and active in the world. It is active and present in you and in me. That is why we must prepare, peeling back layers of distraction, busyness, preoccupations, judgements, fears, and sin to see the reality of God that surrounds and abides in us. Let the light of Christ shine anew in you as you ponder the birth of Jesus. Reframe your mind, heart, soul, emotions, and manner of life in the gift God gives in the Lord Jesus. The infinite and eternal God has come to live in you so you can bring God to others.

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm
in Chapel



Live Streaming of Mass
Monday thru Thursday 8:00am
and Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays
8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on
Thursdays following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

CONTACT INFORMATION

ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday
9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm,
Friday 9am to Noon, Closed Saturday & Sunday

Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

248-398-1743 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720



MONDAY, December 9, 2024 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FEAST DAY

8:00am Mass: Tom, Kevin, & Tommy Brown† req. by Family

TUESDAY, December 10, 2024

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req. by Mom

WEDNESDAY, December 11, 2024

8:00am Mass: Dianne Karolski† req. by Tom Karolski

THURSDAY, December 12, 2024

8:00am Mass: John Skorna† req. by Jean Vidosh

SATURDAY, December 14, 2024

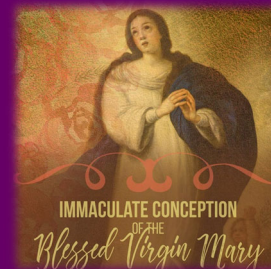
4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Rimgaudas Svoba (27th R.A.) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

Regis Welsh† req. by Helen Kapolka

SUNDAY, December 15, 2024

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Dianne Karolski† req. by Tom Karolski
Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family
Edda Marchesi† req. by K of C Ladies Auxiliary

December
Month
of




READINGS FOR THE WEEK

December 8, 2024

Sunday: Bar 5:1-9/Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6 (3)/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6
Monday: Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
Tuesday: Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13/Mt 18:12-14
Wednesday: Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30
Thursday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47
Friday: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19
Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Next Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 (6)/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18

Evangelical Charity

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH - 6:30PM
IN CHURCH



**Monday, December 9th
Immaculate Conception
Feast Day Mass
8:00am**

(Holy Day obligation is suspended)

"Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing!"

December 8th is one of our feasts celebrating Mary - the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. From the beginnings of the Church, spiritual writers and theologians have acknowledged the innocence and holiness of Mary. St. Irenaeus called her the "new Eve." Both faced with the pure freedom to accept or reject God, Mary began with work of redemption with her yes to Christ! The Church began to celebrate the feast of Mary's conception in the early Middle Ages. In 1854, Pope Pius IX infallibly declared that Mary was free of original sin from the first moment of her conception. On this feast day, we celebrate the beauty and goodness of Our Lady!

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

If you will be requesting a Mass Intention on the weekends of December 21/22, December 28/29 or any of the three Christmas Masses and would like it to appear in the bulletin, please call the Parish Office with your request by December 9th.

To have names of deceased loved ones included in the bulletin dedicated to Christmas, memorial flower envelopes must be returned by Monday, December 9th.



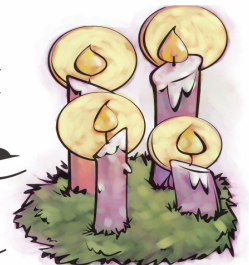

**STAY AWAKE,
THE KING IS COMING!**

December 16th - 6:30pm

Join us for a celebration of Scripture and music foretelling the coming Messiah featuring young people in our Faith Formation Program and the St. Vincent Ferrer choir. Light refreshments to follow.



Advent Penance Service



With Individual Absolution

Wednesday

December 18th - 7:00pm



**Third Sunday of Advent
Lighting the Candle of Joy**

**Saturday, December 14, 2024
4:00pm Mass: Jennifer Ballantine**

**Sunday, December 15, 2024
9:00am Mass: Frank & Nina Virga**



Our Lady of Guadalupe December 12th

When Mary appeared to Juan Diego as Our Lady of Guadalupe, she had encouraging words for him. "Am I not here, I who am your mother?" In the image on Juan Diego's tilma (tunic), Mary identifies herself with the Aztec people. She has their hair and features, their symbolic maternity dress. She incorporated their important symbols of the sun, moon, and stars. Today's Mass includes two Gospel options. Both are familiar passages from the Gospel of Luke - the Annunciation and the Visitation. Both are equally relevant to today's feast because Mary's yes to Christ isn't only to care for him but to come to us. Our Lady of Guadalupe is pregnant. The image bears witness to Mary's yes to conceive the Savior of the World. But even in her pregnancy, she goes to care for Elizabeth. Now Mother to all the world, Mary comes to the aid of her children, reminding them of her presence among them.

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Some Interesting Facts about the Tilma

The tilma, a type of cape worn by Aztec men is made from cactus fiber which deteriorates in 5 years and now is over 500 years old.

The symbols on the tilma are representative of the Aztec culture.

The ribbon means that she is pregnant.

In Mary's eyes, which seem lifelike, the image of Juan Diego can be seen.

The roses on the tilma were native to Castile, Spain not Mexico, and it was not the time of year for roses to grow.

The images are not painted; there are no brushstrokes.

The stars on the tilma are exactly where they would have appeared on December 12, 1531.

The stars and flowers when viewed as musical notes on a staff produce a harmonious melody.

The tilma survived a bomb explosion in the basilica.

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS ANNUAL COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND - DEC. 14/15

The annual collection taken to provide for our Religious Brothers and Sisters in their retirement years will be taken next weekend. Envelopes for this collection are at the church entrances.

**Please make checks payable to
St. Vincent Ferrer Church.**

Prayer **REQUESTS**

...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.
...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.
...respect for life from conception to natural death
...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.
...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.
...the respect for life from conception to natural death
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.

Lord Jesus,

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

Our Lady of Loreto December 10th

Our Lady of Loreto, a third Marian feast in one week's time, was added to the Roman calendar by Pope Francis in 2019. This feast memorializes the Holy House of Loreto, which is believed to be the birthplace of Mary and where the Annunciation took place.

How this house from Nazareth ended up in Loreto, Italy in the 13th century is a very interesting legend. It may be one of the reasons Mary is patroness of pilots.

WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

LAS POSADAS

Question: What is the Hispanic Advent custom of “Las Posadas”?

Answer: “Posada” is the Spanish word for inn or lodging. “Las Posadas” refers to a traditional Advent custom in preparation for the birth of Jesus, beginning on December 16. For nine successive evenings, groups reenact the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem.

Two children dress as Mary and Joseph, sometimes with Mary riding on an actual donkey. They are usually accompanied by children dressed as angels and shepherds along with the Wise Men. Adults accompany them as they process to designated homes where they sing Christmas songs and request lodging. Part of the group enters the home and becomes the chorus that responds to the request for lodging. In the beginning the request is rebuffed. They move to several more homes where the ritual is repeated. Eventually, at the last home, their need is recognized, and they all enter the home where a party ensues. This is repeated in different neighborhoods and homes each of the nine days.

While this custom teaches children an important aspect of the Christmas story, it also emphasizes the need for hospitality to strangers and the continual need we all have to make room for Jesus in our “posada.” As we struggle to arrive at a fair and just immigration policy, it would be good to recall the fact that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were also immigrants looking for a hospitable place to dwell.

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SIGN UP TO HOST THE TRAVELING VOCATIONS CHALICE

Please commit to hosting the Traveling Vocations Chalice for one week. Prayers come with the chalice. Sign up sheets are at the table outside the chapel wall near the Herbert door entrance.



CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: Who does the first and second readings during Mass?

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Answer: The Lector

Women’s Sacred Journey

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH 9:00AM

**FAITH FORMATION OFFICE
SVF SCHOOL BLDG.**



All women in our Family of Parishes are invited to join other women to pray and reflect on Scripture passages. The gathering is every other Saturday. No registration or fee required.

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

First Reading: Bar 5:1-9

The prophet Baruch offers the Israelites in Babylonian exile a vision of hope in which their broken relationship with God will be fully restored. Is there a broken relationship you could help heal this Advent season?

Second Reading: Phil 1:4-6, 8-11

Paul prays with joy over the partnership he experiences with the believers in Phillipi. What relationships in your life bring you joy?

Gospel: Lk 3:1-6

Luke is careful to place the activities of John the Baptist in their proper historical and political context, showing how God acts in human history. Can you think of a time in your personal history when you felt God present?

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Ministry Schedule

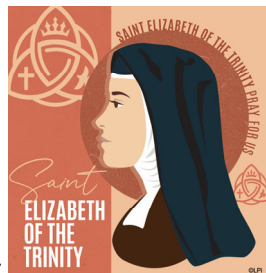
December 14/15, 2024

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	D Tourville	C McCarthy
Reader #1	T Riley	J Kosnak
Reader #2	D Tourville	C McCarthy
EME	D Tourville	N Virga
	M Simmons	M Black
	T Riley	T Karolski
Greeters	R Bertolini	B Gutowski
	L Collins	T Lane
	R Pasiak	R Juska-Svoba
	T Pasiak	S Bosetti

Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of December 14/15
Corrine McCarthy

GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS

ST. ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY
NOVEMBER 8
1880-1906



St. Elizabeth of the Trinity was born Elizabeth Catez in Avor, France, where her father was stationed with the military. She was the eldest of two girls. Her father died in 1887 and the widow and her daughters moved to Dijon. Their apartment was close to the city's Carmelite monastery. Elizabeth was a stubborn child with a hot temper, but she was also a good student and an accomplished pianist.

Fascinated by the nuns at the nearby convent and inspired by Thérèse of Lisieux (also a Carmelite), Elizabeth began her religious journey. At just 14 years old she made a personal vow of virginity and set her mind on becoming a Carmelite. Elizabeth's mother opposed her desire to enter the convent and asked that she wait until she was 21. The saint worked with troubled youth and children, catechizing them while she waited.

Finally, Elizabeth was able to enter the Carmel in Dijon in 1901. She loved being a part of the community. She found particular peace and connection with the Trinity in contemplative prayer. Much of what she wrote has been published, including many of her letters and her prayer, "O My God, Trinity Whom I Adore." Elizabeth would be with the Carmelites for only five years before she succumbed to Addison's disease after much suffering. Before her death she said she was sure it would increase her joy in heaven if her friends asked for her help. She was canonized in 2016 by Pope Francis. Her fierce belief in the Trinity within us, reachable through contemplative prayer, and her deep wish that we embrace God's love by letting ourselves be loved are her powerful legacy. St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, pray for us!

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THE STRAIGHT PATH

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Ten to fifteen years ago the Department of Transportation decided that it would be fun to give everyone in my zip code something to complain about and replaced most of our major intersections with roundabouts.

This wouldn't be so irksome, I suppose, if I understood how to navigate a roundabout. In theory I do, I've read all the rules and I've watched those cute little YouTube videos where they show you which car is supposed to go at what time. But theory and practice are rather different. And the bottom line is, I never approach a roundabout without taking a deep, anxious breath and tightening my grip on the steering wheel, not entirely sure what my next move should be.

I think of roundabouts every time I hear today's Gospel reading, where John the Baptist echoes Isaiah in beseeching us to make straight the paths of the Lord. See, I always think I've made a straight path between me and God. I go to Mass. I go to Confession. I say my prayers.

He can get to me if He wants, I tell myself.

But without realizing it, I put up roundabouts. I make rules. *You go here, God, and then I go here. I'll do this, God, but first You do this. You stay in your lane, and I stay in mine.* Eventually I find myself taking a different route altogether; the road that stretches between me and Him is too daunting. I start avoiding it.

Sometimes I think God wants the path to be straight not for Himself but for us. He can handle a roundabout. But He knows that when we must run to Him, we have to do it without thinking. In the dark. In fear, in anxiety.

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INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

John the Baptist was appointed to prepare the way for the Lord. This Advent, follow his example and prepare the way for the Lord. Invite the Lord to make straight the roads in your life that wind, and to smooth all that is rough in your heart.

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OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Advent
- Monday: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Tuesday: Our Lady of Loreto
- Wednesday: St. Damasus I, Pope
- Thursday: Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Friday: St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr
- Saturday: St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Next Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Advent

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HOLIDAY
Mass Schedule

CHRISTMAS EVE
Tuesday, December 24, 2024 - 4:00pm & 9:00pm

CHRISTMAS DAY
Wednesday, December 25, 2024 - 9:00am

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
Vigil Tuesday, December 31, 2024 - 4:00pm
Wednesday, January 1, 2025 - 9:00am

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING Nov 23/24, 2024

Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	245	96		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 10,003.44	4,818.44	10,263.08
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	511.00	39.00	(1,954.55)
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	65.00	(1,608.00)	(5,181.16)
Bequests		72.00		805.50
Bequests: Thanksgiving		275.00		*1,245.00
AOD Collections: Priest Retirement Fund		10.00		1,113.63
AOD: Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan		402.00		402.00
Holy Days: Immaculate Conception/Mother of God, Saints, Souls		60.00		3,049.00
*reflects corrected total for Thanksgiving donations				

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING Nov 30/DEC 1, 2024

Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	245	97		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 6,029.90	844.90	11,107.98
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	1,605.00	1,133.00	(821.55)
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	437.00	(1,236.00)	(6,417.16)
Bequests				805.50
AOD Collections:				
Holy Days: Immaculate Conception		96.00		3,145.00
CSA 2024 Pledged 75,810.34				Paid 73,070.34

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