
4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023



THIS WEEKEND'S READINGS

First: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Second: Romans 16:25-27

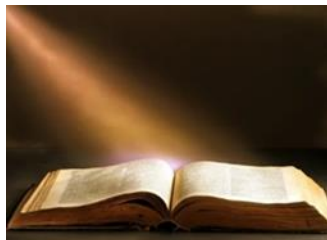
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

FOCUS: *God is the font of all blessings and salvation.*

Today's readings make evident the goodness of the Lord, and that he is the source of all blessings. The Lord promises to build a house for David – one that will last forever. And from the lineage of David comes Jesus, God himself, to dwell among us. He is our shelter, our bodies are his temple, and his kingdom endures forever. We will soon celebrate the feast of his Incarnation and Nativity, while awaiting still, with joyful hope, the time when he will come again.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

In the first reading, David ruminates on building a house for the Lord. However, the Lord reminds David how he has favored him and states that it is God who



will build a house for David. In the second reading, Paul gives glory to Christ, acknowledging the prophets and wisdom through the ages that have all participated in this revelation. In the Gospel, the angel Gabriel announces that Mary will conceive a son – the Son of God – and Mary accepts the honor, saying, may it be done to me according to your word.

MASS INTENTIONS

5 p.m.: Mary Olsen, Anne McCarthy
and The Valenti Family

10 a.m.: Fr. Pat McGuigan, The DeTulio Family,
and Grace & Josephine Tronstad

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve Mass with Pageant

5 p.m. Sunday, December 24
(There will be no 8 p.m. Mass.)

Christmas Day Mass

10 a.m. Monday, December 25

JUMP AHEAD TO JANUARY

Men's Faith-Sharing Group continues

From 6:45-8 p.m. Mondays in January, the men's faith-sharing group continues to encounter Christ through prayer, Scripture and reflection. To register, please email Deacon Carl at carloc@yahoo.com or call the office at 845-361-3107.

The **Faith-Sharing Group** that will meet for six weeks beginning January 6, based on the book "Love: A Guide for Prayer," is almost at capacity. Contact the office or Pat Davies at patdavies2@gmail.com for info.

Come Uno, come all to Game Night!

Roll the dice. Move ahead enough calendar spaces to land on Friday, **January 12**. Note the time, 7-9 p.m. Bring yourself, a favorite game and a snack – and be prepared for laughter and levity. Are you game?

Book of Hebrews to be discussed

The **Scripture Discussion Group** will reconvene its Zoom meetings beginning 10-11:15 a.m. **Monday, January 22**. Everyone is welcome to this session, the Book of Hebrews. The study guide is available through Gail Van Tassel. Call her at 845-457-3432.

HOLIDAY BASKETS

Our dedicated team of St. Paul's elves gathered after Mass last Sunday to fill another 75 baskets with the fixings for a festive Christmas feast.

Then many returned Monday to distribute the food with a warm smile!



TREASURER'S REPORT

Regular Sunday Collection

December 10-17: \$ 7,020.73

Envelopes: \$ 2,443.00 – Online: \$ 4,577.73

THANK YOU!

LAST WEEK'S MASS ATTENDANCE

Saturday – 63

Sunday – 192

ADVENT SERVICE ...

God with us.
Not God over us.
Not God judging us.
Not God condemning us.
God with us in this wonderful,
complex, sorrowful,
joyful thing we call life.
God with you and me.
God with us and them.
God here.
God now.
Just as you are.
Just as we are.
Just as they are.



Excerpted from Pat Davies' Reflection:

"We are all on a journey – and journey is central to the experience of Advent. We listen to the journey stories of Mary and Joseph and the Shepherds and the Magi. And perhaps we sense the Spirit of God moving in us, inviting us to ponder in our hearts, as Mary did, OUR journey. And most especially, the inner journey to the place where the Spirit dwells. ...

"We know that breath and life are joined together – there is not one without the other. So perhaps our God is inviting us through these four weeks of Advent to breathe in new life through the graces particular to each week. So let's slow down and take a breath ...

"I breathe in God's LOVE, and I breathe out JOY."

"Let's make room within for the presence of God, there was no room at the Inn but there is room within. God's presence within us – our best present this season."

...COME AND BE BORN IN US

What a serene celebration of Advent last Friday evening ... candles and quiet, readings and a beautiful reflection that incorporated an Advent breath prayer.

Patty Brooks, Peg Emond and Joan Miller read familiar but ever-meaningful Scripture passages interspersed with Christmas carols led by Debbe Garry and responses from the congregation.

There was time for silent Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by Benediction given by Deacon Carl.

The closing prayer, printed at the top of this page, was followed by "Silent Night" – a night that spoke loudly in the quiet, then and now.

