



Saturday, 4:00 PM
 Sunday, 9:30 AM
 Sunday 6:15 PM



Sunday, 8:00 AM
 Sunday, 11:30 AM

*Together in Christ
 Collaborative
 Saint Ann & Saint John
 December 24 & 25, 2023
 Fourth Sunday of Advent
 & Christmas*

Fourth Sunday of
ADVENT



**THE NATIVITY
 OF THE LORD**

All things came to be through him,
 and without him nothing came to be.
 What came to be through him was life,
 and this life was the light of the human race.
 - Jn 1:3-4

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Church of Saint Ann

**103 N. Main St., West Bridgewater
 02379
 508-586-4880**

**E-Mail: stanns@comcast.net
 Website: stannswb.com
 Facebook: St. Ann-WB**

**Collaborative Office Hours are
 9:00-3:00
 Monday through Friday**

Saint John the Evangelist

**210 Central St., East Bridgewater
 02333
 Office -103 N. Main Street,
 West Bridgewater
 508-378-4207**

**E-MAIL: stjohnebridge@comcast.net
 Website: www.stjohneb.org**

**Facebook: St. John the Evangelist-EB
 Fr. Paul's Facebook Page —
 Paul Ring OFS**

TOGETHER IN CHRIST COLLABORATIVE

PASTORAL STAFF

Pastor:

Rev. Paul L. Ring
fr_plrstjohn@comcast.net

Brendan Fitzgerald (Sr. Deacon)
deaconbrendan@comcast.net

Priests In Residence

Fr. Peter Francis
Fr. Michael Diochi

Permanent Deacons:

Christopher Connelly
cconnelly@rcab.org

The Together in Christ Collaborative Office Hours are 9AM - 3PM Monday-Friday

EUCHARISTIC LITURGIES

St Ann's

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.

6:15 p.m. Live streamed Mass
w/ Drive up option

Daily Mass
Thurs & Sat.
9:00 a.m.

St John's

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

Daily Mass:
Wednesday & Friday
9:00 a.m.

Holiday Schedules will vary

SAINT ANN'S STAFF

Administrative Assistant: Arlene Stefano
stanns@comcast.net
508-586-4880

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The Sacrament of Baptism is being celebrated on Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and on Sundays at 1:30 p.m. These baptisms are private and not done at the masses currently. Prep classes will take place before the Baptism.

Please call the Rectory Office for registration.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

3:00—3:30 at the church holding the 4 PM Mass
Or by appointment.

Please call the Rectory Office to set up an appointment.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Contact the Rectory 6 months prior to the intended date of marriage.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

If you are in need of the Sacrament of the Sick, please contact the Rectory to make an appointment for a visit from a Priest.

Registration: Families not registered, please call the Parish Office

SAINT JOHN'S STAFF

Administrative Assistant: Deborah Conrad
stjohnebridge@comcast.net
508-378-4207
Music Minister: Erica Vinton



COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Finance & Operations Manager: Kevin Mercier
bmanager.tic@gmail.com

Director of Music: Rich Cesarini
richcesarini@gmail.com
Assistant Music Director: Matt Cunningham

Director of Ministries: Matthew Brady
directorofministries.tic@gmail.com
774-533-2002



St. Ann is a Stewardship Parish

Saturday, December 23, 2023

4:00 - John C. Adams, Jr. — 1st Anniversary

Sunday, December 24, 2023

9:30 - Parishioners of the T. I.C. Collaborative

4:00 - Parishioners of the T.I. C. Collaborative

12:00 Midnight - People suffering from war

Monday, December 25, 2023 — Christmas Day

8:30 - People suffering in any way.

Thursday, December 28, 2013

9:00 - William Lopes — 22nd Anniversary

St. John is a Stewardship Parish

Sunday, December 24, 2023

8:00 - Parishioners of the T. I. C. Collaborative

11:30 - Parishioners of the T.I. C. Collaborative

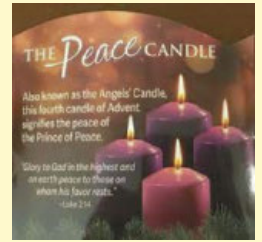
4:00 - Parishioners of the T. I. C. Collaborative

6:00 -- People suffering in any way

Monday December 25, 2023 Christmas Day

10:30 - People who need our prayers

MASSES FOR THE WEEK



My Dear Friend in Christ,

We stand on the threshold of Christmas today as we celebrate the Fourth (and final) Sunday of Advent. In today's gospel we have the Annunciation, the moment in salvation history when the angel Gabriel appears to Mary. The angel, sent by God, gives Mary the news that she is not only with child but one who is to be nothing less than the Savior of the world! To say that this is a shock to Mary would be an understatement of epic proportion! Mary, at this moment, is "betrothed" (that is, engaged) to Joseph; she is not yet married, but is well on the way. The scandal which would ensue is something of which God is well aware, which is why Gabriel attempts to bring a measure of comfort to Mary by letting her know that this is all part of God's plan for her and for the world. In speaking phrases such as "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." (Lk 1:28), Mary is "set apart" for this special mission in God's great plan for humanity.

We have a part to play in this plan of/for salvation, as well. God calls each one of us, in this Advent Season, to prepare to welcome Christ into our homes in a way similar to the welcome that Mary (and Joseph) is to give Jesus. In preparing Mary for motherhood, God is preparing the world to welcome Jesus as Lord of all and Savior of the world. It is no accident that Jesus comes into the world as an infant. In the Nativity narratives which we will hear at Christmas, Jesus is shown in His infancy to remind us that just as an infant needs care, so too do we need to care for those who are vulnerable, wounded or voiceless. We are to *see* Christ in them, and to *be* Christ for them. We do this most profoundly when we extend ourselves beyond what is expected, what is comfortable. We do this by not worrying about "what's in it for us".

As we conclude our Advent journey, let us look toward Christmas as an opportunity to welcome Christ into the world, and to ready ourselves for His coming – His coming as the "babe in the manger", His coming to us in our brothers and sisters and His coming to us at the end of time as the "King of Glory". May we attune ourselves to recognize Jesus so that when He comes, Jesus may find us watching, waiting and wanting to welcome Him. May these final days (hours, really!) of Advent not be wasted, but may we use them to prepare a welcome for Jesus in our hearts, our homes and our world.

Blessings for a (continued) Fruitful Advent,

Fr. Paul

MERRY CHRISTMAS

From

Our entire Staff:

**Fr. Ring, Deacon Brendan, Deacon Chris.
Rich, Matt, Kevin, Arlene and Debbie**

**May the spirit of Christmas fill you and your family
with joy and gratitude this holiday season.**



MINISTRY NEWS

Ministry News

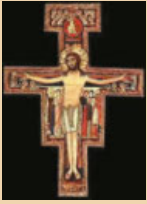
For questions or concerns, please email Matt Brady, our Director of Ministries at Directorofministries.tic@gmail.com



*Bravo to all those who participated in the Christmas Pageant!!!
The Holy Family would be proud!*



MY FRANCISCAN JOURNEY



Today is one of those anomalies in the Church calendar where the 4th Sunday of Advent comes right up against the Feast of Christmas. While St. Francis had a particular love of Christmas (which I will speak of in my Franciscan column at Christmastime), he also had a love of prayer which led him to discover this joy of Christmas. His prayer took on many forms which caused his life, itself, to be a prayer to God. Let us explore the various forms of prayer which St. Francis employed.

St. Francis of Assisi, with one or more brothers, celebrated the Liturgy of the Hours each day. Today the friars still gather for morning and evening prayer. We join our prayers with the daily prayer of the Church, sanctifying the day and evening hours with prayer. Whenever possible, St. Francis of Assisi and his brothers would participate in the celebration of the Eucharist. Today friars gather daily for the celebration of the Eucharist, sometimes with parish communities, at other times as a friar community, often in a friary chapel. St. Francis would frequently pray alone during the night, seeking out quiet places. Caves located in the hills above Assisi were a favorite place for Francis and to this day are frequented by pilgrims seeking Francis's way of prayer. Today friars practice many forms of contemplative and meditative prayer, with *Lectio Divina* - the prayerful reading of the Word of God - holding a special place in our Franciscan tradition. The Virgin Mary features prominently in Franciscan prayer as well, as do traditional devotions, such as the Stations of the Cross and Eucharistic adoration. St. Francis once asked Brother Sylvester and Lady Clare to pray that he might know which way to choose: the *contemplative* or the *active* life. The answer from both was the more difficult challenge: to continue in active ministry, while remaining faithful to his call to a contemplative life. As men and women of faith, we still hold this creative tension within ourselves as we seek both to surround our ministry *with the spirit of prayer and devotion*, and to bring our lives and all of our actions into our prayer.

As we find ourselves on the threshold of Christmas, let us be people of prayer and action. Let us look for the Christ Child and the King of Glory in all that we do, all that we say, all that we are. A Blessed conclusion to Advent to you all!

Pax et Bonum,
Fr. Paul, OFS

**OUR GRAND ANNUAL COLLECTION IS UNDERWAY!
IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE YOUR ENVELOPE,
THERE ARE ENVELOPES AT THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH.**

**THIS WEEK'S COLLECTION IS FOR
The Clergy Trust and Retirement Fund**

**NEXT WEEK WILL BE FOR
The Heat and Snow Fund**

MY FRANCISCAN JOURNEY



One of the great traditions of Christmas is the setting up, placement, and use of the Christmas crèche. It was one of my favorite traditions growing up and had rituals all its own associated with it. Did you know that it was St. Francis of Assisi who is most widely credited with the creation of the crèche?

The Christmas Crèche was started by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1223. The tradition originates back to a cave in Greccio, Italy, where St. Francis had visited to celebrate Christmas. According to one source, St. Francis had planned to celebrate Midnight Mass in the chapel of the Franciscan hermitage but realized it would be too small for the congregation for Mass, thus prompting him to set up the altar in a nearby cave.

St. Francis had wanted to create a scene that would be symbolic of Christ's birth and that would leave an everlasting impact on those in attendance. He therefore prepared a manger, which was a feeding trough for farm animals, hay, and brought an ox and donkey to where he prepared the altar. In the altar lay a statue of Christ. The scenery had symbolized the poverty and plainness that was associated with Christ's birth into the world. It is believed St. Francis had been frustrated with the greed and materialism that had consumed Italy at the time and wanted to combat this by recreating the nativity scene.

Large groups of people gathered that night to hear St. Francis preaching. He was so passionate with his words that many believed the statue of Christ came alive as he was cradling it, according to one tradition. The live nativity scene is often recreated throughout the world. Many artworks have been inspired by the Christmas Crèche as well. St. Francis had shown the humanity of Christ, and there is often a statue of the nativity in many homes celebrating Christ's birth on Christmas. Whatever your traditions may be, I would encourage you to make the crèche a part of those traditions and keep Christmas in your heart all year round! Merry Christmas!

Pax et Bonum,
Fr. Paul, OFS

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Christmas Flower Fund. We hope you think the altar looks beautiful and displays the joy we feel in the coming of the Christ Child.



COLLABORATIVE NEWS AT SAINT ANN'S AND SAINT JOHN'S



St Ann Prayer Line:

To request prayers from members of Saint Ann's Prayer Line for yourself, another person in need, or a special intention, please call or email Linda Santry at 508-586-6535 or linda@santry.org. If you would like to join the telephone tree or e-mail distribution list, please contact Linda. We would like to expand our membership for this worthy endeavor.

Please keep the following in your prayers:

Tyler Martin, Amanda Little, Patricia Estes, Kenneth Upham, Jim Cassidy, Frank Conroy, Robert Sullivan, Ann Smith, William Neyman, Janet Wooters, Kay Evans, Angela McDevitt, Nathaniel Maniff, Karen & Janet Daly, Bryan Senn, Gail Butler, Kathy Conrad, Bob Knowlton, Casey L'Italien, Joan Ward-Fusco, Joan Thompson, Kenneth McLaughlin, Fred Sprague, Joe Pigeon, Barbara Gothage, Nancy McHugh, Jeannette Arruda, Dottie & Leo Slack, Joan Fisher, Jay Lasemina, Brian Scanlan, Rocco Zarrella, Nancy Arcadipane, Alicia Boucher, Irene Churchill, Matthew Owings, Kayla Perry, Arthur Pelton, Courtney, Hannah Previti, Deb Gifford, Karen & The residents of Sachem & Westview & all our service men and women serving in the military. **If you know that some of these people should be removed or you want to have someone added, Please call the Rectory .**



4th Sunday of Advent

SATURDAY, DEC. 23, 2023 — 4 pm

AT St. Ann's

SUNDAY, DEC. 24, 2023



8:00 at St. John

9:30 at St. Ann

11:30 at St. John

No 6:15



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 at St. John (including the choir)
and 4:00 at St. Ann

6:00 at St. John

12:00 (midnight) at St. Ann

CHRISTMAS DAY

8:30 at St. Ann; 10:30 at St. John



WE ♥ OUR volunteers

West Bridgewater Food Pantry
457 Rear, South Main Street, Unit #1
West Bridgewater

**WHEN: Curbside distribution the FIRST and THIRD
Wednesday each month**

TIME: 1:45-3:00PM or 5:30-6:00PM

**Tuna, peanut butter, soups, pasta & pasta sauce, cereal
are needed.**

Cash donations also accepted

St Ann's

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Is looking for new members

PLEASE CONTACT — TINA ANTHONY

508-245-5481 P O Box 474

Thank you to all whom have donated to the St. Vincent toiletry bags for our homeless friends. If you have not done so Please pick a slip from the baskets located at each door.. Thank you and God Bless. The next meeting will be on December 12th @ 6:30 p.m. in the Church Hall.

The Society of Saint Vincent DePaul

Saint John's Conference

PO Box 544

East Bridgewater MA 02333

Call the Food Pantry Hotline for food / assistance

Hotline—508-378-3760

PANTRY HOURS WILL REMAIN THE SAME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

Our pantry is open on the First and Third Monday of each month. When pantry days fall on a major holiday, the pantry will open on the Tuesday of that week.

First Monday - 3:00 - 5:30

Third Monday - 3:00 - 4:30

Monday, January 2, 2024 (Tuesday)

January 15, 2024

Donations are always appreciated but please call to let us know you are dropping off. **508-378-3760**

The Pantry is a little low — needed any food, especially tuna, peanut butter, soups, pasta & pasta sauce, cereal.

Gift cards are also a great help. \$5 — \$25 cards are easier to distribute that large sums., ie \$100

Thank you for your continued generosity.

My Dear Friends in Christ,

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!! The time has come. The day, and season, of Christmas is upon us. Our Advent journey is at an end, and the time to welcome the Savior has arrived. Hopefully, we can take at least a moment on this day, if not in this Season, to reflect on what we are doing here. Christmas – the *holy* day, not the *holiday* – is a, for us as Catholic-Christians, an entire season in which we reflect on the goodness of God. The long reign of sin has ended, and our vindication is at hand. The Savior promised to us has arrived, and we are glad, indeed, for it.

So what is it that we are celebrating? It is more than just giving thanks to God for giving us the gift of His Son. It is an understanding that this day, as great as it is, points to an even greater reality – the hope and promise of “new life” found in the *Resurrection*. Yes, resurrection. You may wonder why I am speaking of this at Christmas, given that this day/season focuses on the birth of Christ, not His resurrection. If it does, than only half of the work is being done. The other half (the half not focused on the birth) is centered around the fact that Jesus came into the world to offer His life for us on the Cross. As one of our songs reminds us, the “wood of the cradle” is intrinsically linked with the “wood of the cross”. This is because the birth of Christ is intrinsically linked with the death, and resurrection of Christ.

The reality that the birth and death of Christ are linked come as a shock for many – but it shouldn’t. It shouldn’t because our own life and death are “linked”. When Catholic-Christians are brought into the world, they are baptized shortly thereafter. When we are baptized, we are baptized not only into the life of Christ, but also into the death of Christ – and into His resurrection. This fact shouldn’t strike dread or sadness into us; on the contrary, it should bring great joy, peace and hope into our hearts. If we are linked into the life, death and resurrection of Christ, then we fear nothing and we want for nothing. We fear and want for nothing because our hope is then in the Lord and His promise of new life.

May we come to see in this Christmas Season the promise of new life and new hope come to fruition. May we recognize that in the life, death and resurrection of Christ we have our hope and salvation. May we, as we approach the manger of Christ, be “fed” by the One who has come into the world to bring life, and life abundantly. May we have the courage to share this new life with all whom we meet.



A Blessed Christmas to All,

Fr. Paul and the Clergy and Staff of the Together In Christ Collaborative

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