

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve/Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

This year, the calendar aligns so that the Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on December 24, 2017 (Christmas Eve). This has not occurred since 2006. The following are frequently asked questions regarding this calendar issue.

Are the faithful able to attend one liturgy on December 24th to fulfill their obligation for both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas? Will it 'count' for both'?

Despite falling on a Sunday, the faithful are still obligated to participate in two Masses between December 23-25th: one for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (anytime from 4 p.m. on Saturday, December 23rd until 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 24th) **AND** one for the Christmas Solemnity (either on Sunday, December 24th after 4 p.m. or Monday, Christmas Day.) As the Church, we therefore complete our Advent journey with all four Sundays in preparation for the celebration of Christmas.

What are some options for art and environment (decorating) for Advent and Christmas for the weekend?

Given the short timeframe between the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Masses, some adjustments may need to be made for the Christmas art/environment of the church.

Here are some examples and suggestions:

Decorate the church for Christmas earlier in the week before the Fourth Sunday of Advent with larger/complex items (i.e. trees, nativity scenes, etc.); however, make notable distinctions for the Advent liturgies that it is not yet Christmas (keep Christmas lights off, the image of the Christ child out of the nativity scene, postpone placing flowers around the sanctuary until after the Advent celebrations, etc.).

If possible, keep lights dimmer for the Advent liturgies; then illuminate the church more for Christmas liturgies.

December 17th begins the "O Antiphons" of the Church, when the season of Advent focuses on preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. If the church is being used for weekday celebrations and rites between December 17th and 23rd, consider using this as a reason to begin to transition the church environment during this time.

Be sure to continue to use violet altar cloths and vestments for any remaining Advent liturgies.

Is January 1, 2018, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God a holyday of obligation?

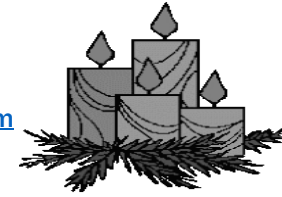
Whenever the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God falls on a Saturday or on a Monday, the precept to attend Mass is abrogated. If your parish regularly celebrates Mass on Sunday evening, the Mass for the Feast of the Holy Family should be celebrated on the evening of December 31. While the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God on January 1 liturgically outranks the Feast of the Holy Family, since January 1, 2018 is not a holyday the precept to attend Mass is not attached to it as it is for the Feast of the Holy Family.

St. Edward and St. Stephen Catholic Churches

300 NW 5th Street, Fairfield IL 62837

Email stedwardcatholicchurch01@frontier.com

Website: stedwardfairfield.com



812 N. Main Street, Flora IL 62839

Email: ststephen_flora@yahoo.com

Website: ststephenflora.com

Rev. Father Charles Anyaoku, Pastoral Administrator

Email: fronyekaanyaoku@yahoo.com, cell phone: 618-641-8978, office phone: 618-662-6261

St. Edward Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Confession, Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday, 3:30 p.m.

Parish Office: Peggy Garrison, Secretary

Office hours Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday,
8 a.m. to 12 noon Rectory/Office 847-7931

Fax – 847-7393 Parish Hall 847-7512

Bulletin Info: Peggy Garrison, Parish Office.

Please submit by noon on Thursday

New Parishioners Register at the Parish Office

PSR Coordinator: Sarah Pickens

RCIA Coordinator: Ginny Barrett

Music Director: Denise Zurliene

Pastoral Council – 3rd Thursday

Altar Sodality – 3rd Monday

Men's Club - As announced

CYO Meeting - As announced

Food Pantry Distribution – 2nd Saturday 8am

St. Stephen Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:30 a.m.

Confession, Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday noon-1 p.m. & Sunday 8:00-8:20 a.m.
or call for appointment

Parish Office: Trudi Herdes, Secretary,

Office hours: Monday & Wednesday, 8 a.m. to noon
Office, Fax and Social Room - 662-8121

Rectory – 662-6261

Bulletin info: Beth Fancher, 665-3163 submit by

Thursday email: bafancher@wabash.net

New Parishioner Register contact Father Charles,

Trudi Herdes or Dorothy Uebinger 662-3711
email dot@wabash.net

Music Director: Diane Briscoe

PSR Coordinator: Paul Duquaine

RCIA Coordinator: Cheryl McCarty

Knights of Columbus – 1st Wednesday, 7 pm

Finance Committee – 2nd Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Altar Society - As announced

Baptism, Marriage, Vocations, Sacrament of Anointing & Care of the Sick, contact
Father Charles Anyaoku or call St. Edward or St. Stephen Parish Offices.

**One thing I ask of the Lord, and this I long, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. (Ps. 27, 4)
That should be our daily prayer. That should be our daily desire. That should be our daily wish.**

ST. EDWARD MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 23, 4:00pm—John Robison III+
Sunday, December 24, 10:30am—St. Edward Parishioners – 6pm—Marshall & Lucille Sork+
Monday, December 25, 11:00am—Parishioners of St. Edward
Thursday, December 28, 6:30pm—Blessings Received
Friday, December 29, 8:00am—For St. Edward Parishioners
Saturday, December 30, 4:00pm—Dennis Milligan+
Sunday, December 31, 10:30am—Deceased of the Parish
Monday, January 1, 10:30am—John Robison III+

Rosary—Every Saturday 3:30pm and 2nd Sunday 10:00am

Weekly Contributions 12-17-2017

Envelopes(37) \$1,724.00
Loose 94.00
Total \$1,818.00
We need \$1,887.00

Building Fund \$ 149.00
Immac. Concept. 10.00
Ret. Fund for Rel. 40.00
Christmas Flowers 20.00
Christmas Offering 255.00
Attendance: Sat. 27 Sun. 56



Garland Keck, Kim Buchanan,
Lanora Neavill, Ute Britton, Leon
Chamness, Jack Ciesielczyk, Jalain
Thompson, Phyllis Laird, Kurt Wiseman, Nanette
Williams, Julie Griffith, Gina Williams, Emilee
Stanley, Noreen Reeves, Paula Zdan, Maddox
Oppenheimer, Sara Kerchner, Charles Drechsel,
Dorothy Baylor, Eva Decker, Matthew Rorban,
Kathy Bramlet, Tom Colvin, Andrew Mayo, Robyn
Meagher, Sheila Zurliene, Sandra Henson, Andrew
Luna, Elaine Jeffers, Jodi Hunt, Claire Grosso,
Sarah Frye, Homer and Shirley Clark, Sam Ochs
and all priests who are sick. .

Monday, January 1—New Year's Day 10:30am

Lector: Diana Zurliene
E. Mins: Peg Garrison, Sally Conley
Ushers: Jim & Margaret Thompson

Our Daily Scripture Readings:

Mon: Is 52:7-10 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18
Tues: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 Mt 10:17-22
Wed: 1 Jn 1:1-4 Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Thur: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2 Mt 2:13-18
Fri: 1 Jn 2:3-11 Lk 2:22-35
Sat: 1 Jn 2:12-17 Lk 2:36-40
Sun: Sir 3:2-6,12-14 Col 3:12-21 Lk 2:22-40

Saturday, December 30

Lector: Jay Fyie
EM: Tim & Jackie Schoenborn
Ushers: Ken & Theresa Nordmann
Gifts: Hank Eckleberry, Teresa Williams
Servers: volunteers

Sunday, December 31

Lector: Tom Konopasek
EM: Peg Garrison, Mary Murphy
Ushers: Scott Merkle, Richard Rennier
Gifts: The Pickens Family
Servers: Cali Bunting, Jackson Mills

ST. STEPHEN MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 23, 6:00 p.m. mass – Sharon Pierce+
Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve, 8:30 a.m. mass – for the living and deceased
of the parish, 10 p.m. mass – Al Uebinger+
Monday, December 25, Christmas Day, 9:00 a.m., For the living and deceased of the parish
Tuesday, December 26, 6:30 p.m. mass – Ray Grundy+
Wednesday, December 27, 6:30 p.m. mass – Roger Beard+
Thursday, December 28, 8:00 a.m. – Bill & Mary Handley+
Saturday, December 30, 6:00 p.m. mass – Evelyn Myers+
Sunday, December 31, 8:30 a.m. mass – For the living and deceased of the parish
6 p.m. mass – Tom Scanlan+
Monday, January 1, New Years Day, 8:300 a.m. – Jim Stanford+

Weekly Contributions 12-17-17

Envelopes..... \$1469.00
Loose..... 141.00
Total \$1,610.00
We Need - \$1,731.00

Retirement Fund for Religious - \$250.00
Attendance: Sat. - 67 Sun. – 76

Weekend Ministers

Saturday, December 30

Lector: Cheryl McCarty
Commentator: Volunteer
EM: Dorothy & Jim Fehrenbacher, Sam
Pierce, Beth Sulsberger
Altar Servers: Pierce Family
Ushers: Jim McCarty, Jerry Price

Sunday, December 31

Lector: Deb Zimmerman
Commentor: Ted Zimmerman
EM: Beth & Phil Fancher, Ted Whitehad
Altar Servers: Max, Sam & Nolan Duquane
Ushers: Justin Fleener, Jacob Whitehead

St. Stephen Activities for the Week

Sat. Dec. 23, Sacrament of Reconciliation noon – 1 p.m.
Sunday, December 24, Sacrament of Reconciliation
8 – 8:20 a.m., No PSR Mass 10 p.m.
Monday, December 25 – Christmas mass 9 a.m.
Saturday, Dec. 30, Sacrament of Reconciliation,
noon – 1p.m.
Sun., Dec. 31,-. No PSR Mass 8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
Sacrament of Reconciliation 8-8:20 a.m.
New Years Day, Monday, January 1, mass 8:30 a.m.

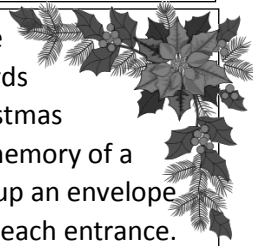
PRAYER INTENTIONS: Linda Grifffy, Bill Marks, Nichole
Wheaton, Lisa Persinger, Verna Oliver, LaVonne Kemmerer,
Patience McKnight, Clara Wilson, Claire Fopay, Mildred
Garrison, Ray Vaughn, Anita Allen, Joe Falica, Lois
Houlihan, Ray & Irene Winka, Pat Venable, Chris Boyd, Dr.
Mark Wallace, Gerty Grundy, Ginny Timm, Tracy Winka,
Steve Dudzik, Ruth Wilson, Mike Burge, Angie Borrelli,
Roger Wells, Tom Kasper, Becky Payne, Rita & Judy Porter,
Bob Bluhm, Rhonda Ryker, Kelly Coan, Rick Harvey, Dr.
Don Bunnell, Duck Greenwood, Paul Weidner, Marilyn
Wheaton, Jim Brown, Jakob Lane, Ted Zimmerman, Diana
Fleener, Rodney Greenwood, Robbie Porter, Kyle
Schroeder, Bob Tackett, David Sulsberger, Doug Frost

ST. STEPHEN NEWS

Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass will be at 10 p.m. with Carols starting at 9:30 p.m. and Christmas Day Mass will be at 9 a.m., December 25. New Years Eve, Dec. 31 mass will be at 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. New Years Day 8:30 a.m. See December/January Calendar.



If you would like to donate towards purchasing Christmas poinsettias, in memory of a loved one, pick up an envelope on the tables at each entrance.



Please welcome to our parish family Reagan Erbacher, who made his First Communion last weekend. Also welcome Alan Huff. He will be making his First Communion during the Christmas Eve mass. We ask that you keep both men in your prayers as they continue their journey to faith.

Welcome

Prayer Chain: When a parishioner has an intention & requests prayers, Erin Pierce will initiate the prayer chain. She will contact Fr. Charles, who will determine the prayers. An email will be sent to all members, who will pray for the intentions. Each member should endeavor to assure the obligation is met. Erin erinmp1968@aol.com call 662-2266.

CRY ROOM St. Stephen's Cry Room is in the Library, which is equipped with a TV set up with a live feed of the Mass.

Adoration Note: There will be no Eucharistic Adoration on Wednesday, December 27, or on Friday, December 29. Adoration will resume regular schedule on Wednesday, January 3, and Friday, January 5. Thank you

The next Altar Society rotating chairman are: Jill Fehrenbacher, Mary Beth Lancaster /Susan Schroeder, and Erin and Emma Pierce.

Anyone willing to help put up the Christmas decorations in church, please contact Jeff Etchison at 662-9335.

Please consider purchasing SCRIP cards after weekend Masses. There are several retailers & restaurants participating in the program. St. Ann's buys the cards at a discounted rate and sells them at full face value. When you buy a card you receive a card worth the purchase price, Contact Erin or shopwithscrip.com Retailer list is on website.

If you would like to help earn money for St. Ann's general fund visit Goodsearch.com and register making St. Ann's your charity. Please type in "St Ann's Altar Society" (no punctuation). Make it your homepage or just use it to search or make online purchases.



*May the peace and hope of
Christ's birth
be with you now and in the days ahead...*

ST. EDWARD NEWS

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

**We have finished our journey with "Prepare the way of the Lord".
Hoping the spiritual journey has touched you in some way this Advent
Season. A thank-you to the Ladies Altar Sodality for the experience.**

Fourth Sunday of Advent—Secret no more.

What may have seemed a big secret, is made known over time by spending time with God (prayer and quiet) and faithful activity(mercy works). As with Blessed Mary long ago, the Holy Spirit is doing something in me, calling me to something important. Can I name it? Will I say "yes" to it after prayer as Mary did?

***What does God want me to say or do?**

***How will the Holy Spirit help?**

***Will I do it?**

PRE CANA DAY: Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Carbondale will be presenting a **Pre Cana Day on Saturday, January 20th, 2018.** Couples go to the parish website, <http://www.stfxcarbondale.org/PreCana> to download the registration for, fill it out and mail it in with the \$40.00 registration fee. **The cutoff date for registration is January 16th, 2018.**

Thank-you to everyone who donated towards the Christmas Flowers. The memorials are on the bulletin board in the hall.

REMINDER: WE WILL BE DECORATING THE CHURCH AFTER 10:30AM MASS THIS WEEKEND!!!!!!

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

THE 2018 CALENDARS HAVE ARRIVED!!! THEY ARE ON THE TABLE IN THE HALL ALONG WITH COLLECTION ENVELOPES FOR NEXT YEAR. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A SET WITH YOUR NAME ON IT AND YOU WOULD LIKE ONE PLEASE CONTACT CHURCH OFFICE.

MAY THERE BE PEACE IN YOUR HOMES THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON!!!!!!



FROM FATHER CHARLES' DESK:

Fourth Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14-16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1: 26-38

Saying YES to God

And Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

Mary is at the center of today's gospel. Her concern was to do the will of God. In this gospel Mary gives us a great example. She didn't say to the angel, "Sorry, but I have my plans. I want to follow my dream." She said, "It's not what I want, but what God wants that matters. Let what God wants be done to me." She trusted so deeply in God that she was open to all possibilities. She gave up control over her future and let God define her life.

These words carry within them a revolutionary significance. With those words, something in the universe shifted gear. With those words, a spark of new light entered our world as deep within Mary's body, a baby began to form. With those words, a new universe of obedience to God began. Those words are Mary's response to the call and promise of God. They represent a willingness to believe what is not immediately apparent, a readiness to allow oneself to be used in risky and even painful ways. They represent obedience and surrender. Those words carry within them the seeds of all the Joyful Mysteries, the Luminous Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the Glorious Mysteries of our rosary.

Mary's surrender to God is heroic. Those words of Mary changed not only her life but also the life of the world. When we utter those words to God, "I am the servant of the Lord, may it be done to me according to your word" they are also heroic because then we are changed and so is part of our world.

In this season of Advent, as we prepare for the coming of the Lord, are we really willing to let God come into our lives if He comes with a word of challenge? Are we really willing to let God come into our lives if He comes with a call to commitment? Are we really willing to let God come into our lives if He comes with a summons to be patient or heroic or cooperative or visionary or loyal or especially prayerful?

Those who accept duty as Mary did may not find happiness and fulfillment in the eyes of the world, but they certainly will find it in eyes of God. And deep down they will know it. The greatest grace in life is when **what we have to do is what to do.**

Are we willing to say, "I am the servant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word"? If we can say these words, then we will really be ready for Christmas. Therefore, may we make our lives a dwelling place of God's light and love and of His will.

December and January Calendar for St. Stephen and St. Edward Parishes

Saturday, December 23 – Regular mass times at both churches

St. Edward – 4:00 p.m. St. Stephen – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24 - Regular mass times at both churches

St. Stephen – 8:30 a.m. St. Edward – 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve masses – St. Edward – 6:00 p.m. St. Stephen – 10:00 p.m.

Monday, December 25 – Christmas Day - St. Stephen - 9:00 a.m.

St. Edward – 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 31, New Years Eve - St. Stephen - 8:30 a.m.

St. Edward - 10:30 a.m.

St. Stephen - 6:00 p.m.

Monday, January 1, New Years Day – St. Stephen - 8:30 a.m.

St. Edward - 10:30 a.m.

Respect Life Corner

Family Prayer – Praying together as a family is a beautiful way to increase your family's relationship with the Lord and with one another. The Holy Family of Nazareth experienced both joy and sorrow as do families of today. Learn, Act, Connect, Pray: In daily family life, Pope Francis affirmed the importance of speaking key words within our families: "may I," "please" and "sorry". We must use our words to treat every person with dignity and respect. Pray for healing and reconciliation within families so that no one feels unloved or unwelcome.



