

I am baptizing
you with water,
but one
mightier than I
is coming.
I am not
worthy to
loosen the
thongs of
his sandals.

Luke 3:16



John the Baptist Preaching in the Wilderness
Gustav Doré (French, 1832-1883), 1867
nikolae Adobe Stock

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Third
Sunday of

Advent

December 12, 2021

Joy and exultation ring through the first reading, as Zephaniah's ancient messianic prophecy pictures God "rejoicing over (us) with gladness, renewing (us) in his love, singing joyfully because of (us) as one sings at festivals." This joyful God is not distant: the prophet declares twice that God "is in your midst." Zephaniah so trusts this joyful God's love for us that he declares our deliverance "a done deal": both from inward fear and guilt—"the Lord has removed the judgment against you"—and from external threats: "he has turned away your enemies." The Responsorial Psalm, from Advent's principal prophet, Isaiah, echoes an exultant joy that should prompt us to be "confident and unafraid," "for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel." Paul likewise exhorts the Philippians—and us—to joy, to a kindness that should be evident to all, to prayer free from anxiety, serene and thankful.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

But then John the Baptist cries out on Jordan's bank: Repent! Prepare for a Messiah whose baptism "with the Holy Spirit

and fire," unlike John's water baptism, will utterly transform its recipients. His winnowing fan will clear away the dead wood, bundling wheat and burning chaff in unquenchable fire. If this is going to be "good news" for us, then well might we, like the crowds, tax collectors, and soldiers who first heard John, ask "What should we do?" When John responds to the people then, and to us today, the answer, while supremely challenging, is almost surprisingly simple. Nobody is ordered to abandon the place in which their personal life's journey or the realities of a history beyond their control have put them. God saves us not despite or apart from our real-life circumstances but in them and through them. Our call now is to practical, generous charity: we are to share clothing and food; practice justice and professional and personal integrity; and be honest toward others and with ourselves. Such is the teaching of the Messiah that John heralded.

Today's Readings: Zep 3:14–18a; Is 12:2–3, 4, 5–6; Phil 4:4–7; Lk 3:10–18

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PASTOR: Rev. Michael T. "Mike" Snider

Celebration of the Sacraments:

Mass: Saturday: 5:00 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
Tues - Fri: 9:00 AM

Reconciliation:

Saturday & Sunday:
45 minutes before Mass

Marriage or Baptism:

Contact the parish office six
(6) months prior to the
anticipated date 903-769-3235

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Welcome Visitors!

*We hope that you have enjoyed celebrating Mass with us
and felt welcomed in our church as your "home away from home."*

*Whether you are new to the area or have lived here for years,
you are invited to join our parish family. **Please come again!***

Third Sunday of Advent

We remember in our prayers all the sick, especially the following:

Nancy Rasca. Jess Corrigan Jr. Clifford & Frances Jo Moore. Fran & Kathleen Fleming. Naomi Alfred. Dave Cormier. Thomas Holzmann. Jim Hickey. Michael Allen. Joe Fazzio. Rick & Teri Jackson. Ron Emma. Kate Serres. Belinda Flowers. Dona Jordan. Jaye Anderson. Georgette March. Kyle Fabitz. Greg Mooney. Garry Fetsch. Karee Haney. Bollinger Family. Charlie Parker. Tammy Johnson. Carolyn Simmons. Dianne & Gary Laudt. Wanda & George Duke. Doris & Jo Hoffman. Jo Ann Crowell. Ann Richardson. Jacob Stephens. Mary Margaret Ellison. John Kominis. Esther Coronel. Elise Sugg. Joann Rayl. Avery Boultinghouse. Wanda & Mike Stephens. Geri O'Neil. We list the names of our sick Parishioners. Friends and Relatives for one month.

Please pray for the men and women active military service from our parish community:

Dawn Quinn, US Army PFC (Granddaughter of Bob & Jean Quinn). Reid Patrick Hope, US Marine (Nephew of Mike & Wanda Stephens). 1LT Joseph Chandler, U.S. Army (Nephew of Mike & Margaret Jemigan) Seaman Logan Adkinson (great grandson of Fr. Mike). Jay Guajardo, Navy Rescue School (Great Nephew of Lex & Liza Forster). Senior Airman, Natalie York (Daughter of Steve & Julie York). Pvt First Class Randall Scheaffer US Army (Grandson of Carlos & Pat Gallardo). Lt. Col. William P Shea. (Nephew of Deacon Sam and Nancy Mullen). Colonel John Anthony Fontana. U.S. Army (Son of John & Mary Fontana). Lt. "JG" Gary Buchanan; Capt. Blake Gaughan; 2nd Lt. Will Corrigan (Great Nephews of Jess & Eva Corrigan). Paul Moreno E4 AMT 3rd Class (Grandson of Kathy & Dale Boman). Staff Sergeant Daniel Hodan. U.S. Army (Grandson of Ron & Barbara Emma). Warrant Officer Michael Hauck (Son of Jerry & Vicki Hauck & brother of Cathy Ellis) & Seaman Rainer Hauck (Grandson of Jerry & Vicki Hauck & nephew of Jeff & Cathy Ellis).

AN ADVENT PRAYER

May the God of peace make us completely holy.
May God keep us blameless in spirit, soul and body
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Forever faithful is the One who calls us—God our Father!
Expectant, let us live in joyful hope
for the revelation of the glory
of our God and Savior, Christ Jesus!
To him be glory forever!
Come, Lord Jesus! Your grace be with us all.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading: Shout for joy! Sing joyfully! Be glad and exult! The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior (Zephaniah 3:14-18a).

Psalms: Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 12).

Second Reading: Rejoice! The Lord is near. Make your requests known to God (Philippians 4:4-7).

Gospel: John tells his hearers to share their possessions with the needy; be honest; do not threaten or accuse others falsely (Luke 3:10-18).

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9; Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23; Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 7:18b-23

Thursday: Is 54:1-10; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b; Lk 7:24-30

Friday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17

Saturday: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25

Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45

Mass—Intentions

Sat. 12/11 Thomas Holzmann (M/M Murfin)

Sun 12/12 Geri O'Neil+ (K of C)

Tue 12/14 Mike Fleming+ (K of C)

Wed 12/15 Guy Adams+ (M/M Hansen)

Thurs 12/16 No Mass Fr. Mike attending Priests Advent in Athens

Fri. 12/17 Thomas Holzmann (M/M Murfin)

Sat. 12/18 Fran Fleming (K of C)

PARISH SUPPORT

Average weekly amounts for the month of October, 2021

Expenditures \$ 3,882

Regular and debt & maintenance collections \$ 3,562

Attendance 12/04 Saturday 50 12/05 Sunday 80



Pope's Intention for December:

Catechists. Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection question:

How am I faithfully awaiting the Lord's Nativity?

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Third Sunday of Advent

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

REJOICE

The prophetic writings we hear in today's scriptures call us to rejoice and celebrate the goodness of God. Zephaniah, Isaiah, Saint Paul, and John the Baptist in Luke's Gospel all follow the rich tradition of the Biblical prophets, a tradition that reaches full expression in Jesus. The prophets warn that human failings have truly disastrous consequences. All are summoned to repent, and to change their lives. Today we hear the Good News that God's gracious love exceeds and overcomes all human corruption. God has not given up on us. Indeed, God keeps pursuing us, and eagerly seeks to reconcile with us. God's initiative to set the world aright culminates with Jesus, whose coming John the Baptist announces. John's prophetic message summons us to join in God's reconciling work, by living generously and justly in our daily lives. As we rejoice in God's grace, we then extend the fruits of this grace to all.

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THANKS TO OUR HOLY SPIRIT COMMUNITY, 37 CHILDREN WILL HAVE A MERIER CHRISTMAS. AS ALWAYS, OUR ANGEL TREE WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS. THE GIFTS HAVE BEEN PASSED ON TO THEIR PARENTS OR GRANDPARENTS TO PUT UNDER THEIR TREE CHRISTMAS MORNING. **GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!**



We are still looking to find a Director of Religious Education (DRE) for our parish. If you are interested and have questions, please call the office at 903-769-3235 for more information.



And, we are still looking for an organist for our parish. If you are interested; you know of someone, or have ideas please call the office at 903-769-3235.

DECEMBER NEWS & EVENTS

Sun., Dec. 12th: 9:00am Mass. Coffee & Donuts in St. Jude's Hall.

Tues., Dec. 14th: 9:00am Mass & Adoration (Adoration 9:30am—12:30pm; 6:00-8:00pm). **Confession 9:30am—Noon then from 6:00pm—8:00pm.**

Thurs., Dec. 16th: No Mass Fr. Mike attending Priests Advent in Athens *Last day to collect Christmas Food donations.*

Sat., Dec. 18th: Delivering Christmas Food Baskets, volunteers needed. Call or text Bob Mailliard at 503-559-6022.

Sun., Dec. 19th: Coffee & Donuts following 9:00am Mass in St. Jude's Hall. Also, immediately following Mass, Jane Bidlack facilitates "The Bible and Mass Study" Class in the middle classroom.

Tues., Dec. 21st—Fri., Dec. 24th: No 9:00am Mass or Adoration. Church Office closed all week. Diocese of Tyler Closed 12/23—12/24 & 12/31

Fri., Dec. 24th: 4:00pm Christmas Eve Mass.

Sat., Dec. 25th: 9:00am Christmas Mass. **NO** 5:00pm Mass

Sun., Dec. 26th: 9:00am Mass. **No coffee & donuts**

Mon. Dec. 27th: Fr. Mike's 13th Ordination Anniversary

Tues., Dec. 28th—Fri., Dec. 31st: No 9:00am Mass or Adoration

Christmas Schedule

Fri., Dec. 24th: 4:00pm Christmas Eve Mass

Sat., Dec. 25th: Holy Day of Obligation
9:00am Christmas Mass

December Second Collections:

11th & 12th: "Retirement Fund for Religious."
24th & 25th: "Retired & Infirm Priest of the Diocese".

Cenacle of Life: Cenacle of Life devotion each Wed. from 3:00—4:00pm. Please join us in church as we pray two rosaries for an end to abortion, euthanasia and all sins against the sanctity of human life. **Questions call Vicki Hauck 817-637-9382**

Legion of Mary— Pilgrim Statue: Our Lady of Fatima Statue is now ready to visit your home. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex or you may contact: Marge Clymer, 903-216-7953 or Jane Bidlack, 903-569-7749. If scheduling permits, the Statue may be kept for two weeks.

DAY OF RECONCILIATION — CONFESSION Tues., Dec. 14th from 9:30AM—12:00 (NOON), THEN FROM 6:00-8:00PM IN THE DEACONS OFFICE. If you have an emergency and need Fr. Mike call him on his cell # 903-490-3883.



It's time to get ahead for 2021

The KofC Member Benefits Program of Mutual Funds, Charitable Giving/Donor Advised Funds, Life, Long-Term Care, Disability and Retirement Annuities is always improving.

Join us via Zoom on Dec. 15th, 2021, 7 pm CST for 1 hour to learn about the recent enhancements.

The Welcome Committee will again be representing Holy Spirit in this year's **Christmas Golf Cart parade** at Holly Lake Ranch on **Saturday, December 18th** beginning at 4:45pm. If you would like to participate please contact Anna Parker at 903.833.7019 or parkerbiz52@yahoo.com. **Additional candy is needed to toss to the spectators during this parade.** If you have any wrapped candy to donate please leave it in the marked container in the church foyer. We appreciate your help.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE

Thank you for your generous support for the thanksgiving food drive. We delivered food to 20 families this year. This drive is above and beyond our weekly food distribution. Below is a list of food items needed Christmas.

Stuffing mix; gravy packages; can cranberry sauce; can yams; cake mix & frosting; biscuit/muffin mix; instant potatoes; \$ 10/\$ 20 gift cards for meat; pudding; jello & fruit cups, etc.

Thank you in advance for your continued support for this food drive and our weekly food baskets. Please place donations in the K/C box just outside Bridget's office on or before **12/16/2021.**

If you are unable to deliver your donations, please call or text **Robert Mailliard at 503-559-6022**

We are also looking for volunteers to deliver the food boxes on **12/18/2021.**
MANY BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS FOR THIS PROJECT

Article for the Big Sandy-Hawkins Journal. 8 December 2021 Edition

(Submission date: 3 December 2021) Submitted by Randy Munoz

Have we ever wondered about Christmas Carols? According to an article from Did You Know (<https://didyouknow.org/christmas/carols/>), we learn the following:

The Apostles sang songs of praise, many based on the Psalms. As founders of the churches, their enthusiasm inspired their new congregations into song. But unfortunately, they did not leave us any copies of the musical scores. One of the earliest known Christmas songs is from the 4th Century, *Jesus refulsit omnium*, composed by St. Hilary of Poitiers. During the 12th Century, St Francis of Assisi formally introduced Christmas carols to church services. As patron of the arts, he inspired the composers and poets of the day to deliver Christmas music. The lighter joyous Christmas songs were introduced many years later in Renaissance Italy – the 1400s, the time of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. The earliest known copy of an English carol was written by Ritson about 1410. Throughout the years, monks also contributed significantly in composing music themes from the Bible. When Johannes Gutenberg started his printing press rolling in 1454 copies of carols could be distributed fairly freely. However, keep in mind that Christmas celebrations were suppressed by purists at that time; Christmas did not become widely popular until late last century. Thus, many of the Christmas carols that we know today are not quoted directly from the Bible and were composed fairly recently.

Christmas carols were banned between 1649 and 1660 in England by Oliver Cromwell who thought that Christmas should be a solemn day. (Cromwell also abolished the monarchy.) When Protestants, inspired by Martin Luther, took to the joy of Christmas carols, many had to flee Europe under pressure from the Catholic Church. They took the Christmas carols with them to their new homes across the world. In 1649, John de Brebeur wrote the first American Christmas carol, called *Jesus is Born*. Fortunately, in Europe, when carols couldn't be sung in Churches, they found a stage elsewhere. The world's most famous religious play, the Passion Play, was staged in Oberammergau, Germany in 1634 (and has been performed every 10 years since). In the 1700s, the music by Mendelssohn and Handel was adapted and used as Christmas carols. Georg Friederich Handel was born in Germany in 1685. The Royal Houses of Britain and Europe had always been closely interrelated, and the Act of Settlement of 1701 secured the Protestant succession of Anne to the Crown. Handel ... moved to Ireland. In 1742, he gave the first performance of *the Messiah* in the Music Hall, Fishamble Street, Dublin in aid of several charities. By 1170, the famous *Messiah* was performed in Colonial America, 2 years before its first performance in his native Germany. Handel died in 1759 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, recognized in England as the greatest composer of his day. His *Messiah* was as popular then as Bing Crosby's *White Christmas* is today.

Perhaps the best known Christmas carol is *Silent Night*, written in 1818 by an Austrian assistant priest Joseph Mohr. He was told the day before Christmas that the church organ was broken and would not be repaired in time for Christmas Day. Saddened, he sat down to write three stanzas that could be sung by choir to guitar music. "*Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht*" was heard for the first time at that Midnight Mass in St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. The congregation listened as the voices of Fr. Joseph Mohr and the choir director, Franz Xaver Gruber, rang through the church to the accompaniment of Fr. Mohr's guitar. Today, *Silent Night, Holy Night* is sung in more than 180 languages by millions of people. ...

Christmas carols: big business. Oliver Cromwell might be turning in his grave. The biggest selling Christmas single of all time is Bing Crosby's *White Christmas*, soundtrack of the holiday movie classic *Holiday Inn*. More than 30 million copies have been sold. (In fact, only Elton John's *Candle in the Wind '97* has sold more copies, at 33 million.) Every Christmas season, record companies rush to release Christian and secular Christmas songs by artists young and old. The word "carol" is derived from the old French word *caroller*, which means dancing around in a circle. It was derived from the Latin *choraula*, which in turn was derived from the Greek *choraules*. "*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*" was written in 1849 by Edmund Hamilton Sears. The score was provided the next year by Richard Storrs Willis, a New York organist. In 1865, after a trip to the Holy Land, Rector Phillips Brooks wrote the words to "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*." Three years later, Lewis Redner wrote the score.

The most popular Christian carols:

Silent Night, Holy Night

O Come All Ye Faithful

O Holy Night

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Little Town of Bethlehem
Angels From the Realms of Glory
The twelve days of Christmas
Go Tell It On the Mountain
Away in a manger
Joy To the World
What Child Is This
The First Noel

Most popular secular carols:

White Christmas
Santa Claus is coming to town
Jingle Bells
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas
We Wish You A Merry Christmas
Blue Christmas by Elvis Presley
I'll Be Home for Christmas (made famous during WWII)



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