

Old St. Joseph's Church

Est. 1733 | Philadelphia's Jesuit Parish

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Philadelphia PA 19106
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December 2, 2018 | First Sunday of Advent

Come, Lord Jesus!

When I was a young boy, each Fall was filled with great excitement and anticipation as I waited for the annual arrival of the Sears & Roebuck Christmas Catalogue. And each year that watching and waiting was always rewarded with page after page of the latest toys, the fanciest decorations, and, in the mind of a little boy, the coolest clothes. Hours were spent poring over the pages of that catalogue, totally enchanted with all that was being offered.

That sense of excited anticipation is at the heart of Advent. It has been said that Christians live in the "in between time", that time between the inauguration of God's kingdom through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the full establishment of that kingdom with the Lord's return in glory. The celebration of Advent reminds us that we are a people who wait.

From its very beginnings, the Church was mindful of the Lord's promise to return in glory and usher in the full establishment of God's Kingdom. In fact, reading St. Paul's letters, we find that the Lord's return was considered to be rather imminent. Paul is continually admonishing his people to be prepared and to live lives worthy of the call they have received as Christians, ready for the Lord's return. Our celebration of Advent draws our attention to these end times. The Scriptures for the first half of Advent speak of God's mercy and justice. We hear of the promises made to Israel and how God is faithful to those promises. We hear of restoration, of homecoming, of the call for us to be

faithful, of the glory to be revealed. In short, we hear of hope, a hope that removes all fear because we hear how our God loves us and wants us to share his very life with us. Advent reminds us of our final destiny as a people and the immense mercy of God.

However, in the middle of Advent, on December 17, there is a shift in focus. Now we are in direct preparation for the celebration of the Lord's birth.

When the Church began to commemorate the Lord's Nativity (in approximately the 4th century), the celebration of Christmas was intimately connected to the Paschal Mystery. Jesus' birth as a



human being was seen as the first stage in the Lord's victory over sin and death that took place in his Passion, Death, and

Resurrection, thus bringing about our salvation. With an emphasis on this central core of our belief, it seemed appropriate to encourage a preparation period for such a feast. Thus, Advent invites us to reflect on the mystery of the Lord's coming among us in the flesh. This period of preparation has somewhat of a penitential character to it (purple vestments, simple altar decorations, etc.), and an equally anticipatory

—continued inside



Old St. Joseph's is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are in the rear of the church.

This Week at Old St. Joseph's

Date		Mass Intention and Presider	Calendar Events	
Mon	12:05 PM	<i>James & Katherine Henderson (D)</i>		
3		Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ	6:30 PM	PREP
Tues	12:05 PM	<i>Old St. Joseph's Memorial Society</i>	12 Noon	Faith, Food, and Friends (Barbelin)
4		Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	7:30 PM	OSJ Book Group (Loyola)
Wed	12:05 PM	<i>Edward & Mary Britt Families (D)</i>		
5		Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ		
Thurs	12:05 PM	<i>John D. Iricca (D)</i>	12 Noon	Faith, Food, and Friends (Barbelin)
6		Presider: Fr. O'Donnell SJ	6:30 PM	Women, Faith & Fellowship (Drexel)
			7:00 PM	Schola Cantorum Rehearsal
Fri	12:05 PM	<i>Old St. Joseph's Memorial Society</i>	12:30 PM	Litany of the Sacred Heart
7		Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ		
Sat		<i>Feast of the Immaculate Conception</i>	12 Noon	Faith, Food, and Friends (Barbelin)
8		<i>Of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>		
	12:05 PM	Presider: Fr. O'Donnell SJ		
	5:30 PM	Presider: Fr. O'Donnell SJ		
Sun	7:30 AM	Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ	9:30 AM	Children's Liturgy of the Word (Barbelin)
9	9:30 AM	Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	5:30 PM	Loyola Choir Rehearsal (Church)
	11:30 AM	Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	5:30 PM	YAC Pre-Mass Reflection (Greaton)
	6:30 PM	Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	7:30 PM	Cookout Dinner

In your prayers,
please remember our sick and homebound brothers and sisters
and our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital.

Adeline Acerno, Teresa Aponte, Louis Balestrucci, Rick Bravo, Debbie Brooks, Christopher Browne, Tony Corvaia, Melissa Counsellor, Charlotte Croce, Ann Crowther, Simeon Crowther, Fred DiStefano, Pat Farris, Lenny Felixson, Fred Hembree, Fr. Mike Hricko SJ, Aaron Hull, Edward Jacobs, Marie Jacobs, Mary Jacobs, Janet Jeitner, Tamae Kan, Catherine Keddie, David Luerssen, Fr. Jerry McAndrews SJ, James McBride, Jerry McBride, Christine Mari-Mazzola, Allen May, Angelo Miczza, D. Minter, Catherine O'Brien, Bernie Paquett, Joanna Pearl, Lucy Pearl, Betty Farris Pfeiffer, Colleen Raymond, Kim Reed, Ursula Reed, Joan Russo, Steve Saunders, Barbara Schmidt, Mida Skalamera, Sara Smith, Janet Street, Ed Tomezsko, Arlene Tomlin, Craig Walsh, Patricia Yusko, Mickey Zippo.

Bringing Communion to the Homebound

When people are confined to home, they can remain connected to our shared worship by receiving Communion at home. If you, a family member, friend or neighbor (with their approval of course), would like to receive Communion at home, contact the Parish Rectory to arrange for a parish Eucharistic Minister to visit.

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focus where we deny ourselves certain things (e.g., the Gloria at Mass) so that our joy is magnified when we resume them on the Feast of Christmas. In short, Advent is about the two comings of Christ: in the flesh at Bethlehem and in glory at the end of time. We are a people who look to the past with gratitude, to the future in hope, while we stand in the present working for the coming of the Kingdom in the here and now.

But there is a third coming of Christ we celebrate in Advent.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), in meditating on John 14:23 (“Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him”), speaks of a third coming, Christ coming into our hearts. According to St. Bernard, those who embrace the Word of God and let it embrace their very being find in that Word a way to live between the two comings of Christ mentioned above. Meditating on God’s Word and taking it to heart gives us a way of proceeding in living our lives as disciples of the Lord. Advent, then, is a privileged time to meditate on the Word of God, take it into our hearts, and let it animate all our actions as we wait for the Lord’s return.

The model Advent provides for this embracing of the Word of God is Mary, the mother of Jesus. As a woman formed in the Hebrew Scriptures, Mary learned of the awesomeness of God, of God’s promises to Israel, of Israel’s continual failure to keep the covenant and God’s boundless mercy. Most importantly, Mary knew of God’s promise to Israel to send a Savior who will usher in God’s Kingdom, re-creating our world according to God’s mercy and justice. Mary trusted in God’s Word. It was this trust, even when things seemed impossible, that enabled her to say, “Yes” to God’s invitation to be the Mother of the Word made Flesh, Jesus.

With Mary as our example, this Advent we pray for the grace to let the Word of God fill our hearts and minds. We ask that our love for God, our brothers and sisters, and all of creation, deepen. We pray: Come Lord Jesus!

—Stephen Paesani

(Cover illustration is H.O. Tanner’s Annunciation, which hangs in the Philadelphia Museum of Art).

Advent Events

On **Tuesday, December 11 at 7:30 PM**, there will be an **Advent Reconciliation Service** in the Church. This will be an excellent opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas. All are welcome!

Lessons and Carols, December 16

We invite you to mark your calendars to join us for a liturgical and musical highlight of our season! Our parish will present a **Service of Lessons and Carols** on **Sunday, December 16 at 3:00 PM**. The liturgy foretells Christ’s coming in sacred Scripture and in song, proclaimed to rouse our spirits in preparation for Christ’s coming this Christmastide. In addition to festive Advent and Christmas carols for congregational singing, choral music will include works by Praetorius, Mathias, and Rutter, and organ works by Bach and Brahms. A free will offering will be gratefully accepted, and a reception will follow.

Announcements

Second Collection This Weekend

Begun in 1988, the Retirement Fund for Religious provides funding to US religious communities for planning and providing direct care and assistance to their retired members. Collection boxes will be in the rear of the church. As always, you may contribute through your online giving. Thank you!

Cookout Dinner Today!

The next parish cookout dinner, hosted by the Young Adult Community, will be today, **Sunday, December 2 at 7:30 PM**. All are welcome to share good food and great company!

Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas

The OSJ Ignatian Spirituality Committee invites all parishioners to set aside a few minutes a day during these beautiful seasons to pray at home with **Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas**. Each entry includes suggestions for applying the day's Scripture passages to your own life. Books will be distributed after all Masses **this weekend**.

Centering Prayer Next Week

The Centering Prayer group will meet on **Wednesday, December 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM** in the Drexel Parlor of the rectory. The meeting will include discussion of centering prayer followed by a period of centering. Anyone interested in contemplative prayer is welcome to join us. For further information, contact Christine Szczepanowski at christinesz52@gmail.com or 267-250-3049.

OSJ Book Group

OSJ's Book Group will meet in the Loyola Room on **Tuesday, December 4 and Tuesday January 8 at 7:30 PM** to discuss Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. All are welcome to join the reading and discussion!

Offering of Letter Follow Up

Have you received a non-answer from your Congressional representatives? For example, Senator Toomey's five-paragraph response to a letter about the positive impact of SNAP in Philadelphia, where nearly 20% of the population is food-insecure, contained only a single sentence complaining that his amendments to "stop food stamp fraud" were not voted on.

If you've received a similar letter, consider writing back! Bread for the World offers the following suggestions for follow-up letters. The boldface is what you might hear from your legislator; the italics are your possible responses: **Benefit cuts and eligibility changes to SNAP in the farm bill are necessary "to maintain the integrity of the program."**

- *SNAP is already an effective and efficient program that reaches exactly whom it's supposed to. The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$813, well below the strict national income limits. Ninety-two percent of SNAP benefits go to households with incomes at or below the poverty line, which is \$25,100 for a family of four.*
- *Nearly two-thirds of all SNAP benefits go to the most vulnerable—children, elderly, or disabled people. In fact, roughly 1.5 million veterans live in households that participated in SNAP at some point during the past 12 months, and about 8 percent of all veterans received SNAP.*

Stricter work requirements in SNAP are necessary to get participants "back to work."

- *SNAP already encourages work. Employment rates among households with children and at least one non-disabled adult rose nearly 10 percent from 2009 to 2015 during the Great Recession. Additionally, the majority of able-bodied adults who receive SNAP are already working or looking for work.*
- *The House Farm Bill would shift funding from food assistance to the administrative costs of job requirements and mandatory classes for people who lose assistance and cannot find work. The funding that the bill would provide for "job training" cannot possibly provide meaningful training for the millions of people who would be negatively affected by its stricter job requirements.*

Announcements

Advent Giving Tree

Take an ornament-tags from OSJ's Advent Giving Tree this weekend or next, **December 1-2 and December 8-9**, and follow the directions on it to provide a holiday gift to a neighbor in need. Unwrapped gifts must be returned to the foot of the tree by **December 16**. This year, the Advent Giving Tree will benefit the Gesu School and the Aquinas Center.

Gesu School has asked for warm hats and gloves and picture books for each of its Pre-K-grade 2 students. Books are an especially meaningful gift in Philadelphia, which is a book desert. According to Unite for Literacy, fewer than 10% of homes in Philadelphia county own more than 100 books. Picture books provide a strong foundation for emerging readers by building vocabulary and developing story sense. The best picture books offer both mirrors of a child's experience and a window onto the wider world. Want help in finding a great read for someone 4-8 years old? Search online for the American Library Association's Caldecott Medal and Honor books from 1938 to the present. The websites of the Cooperative Children's Book Center and We Need Diverse Books also feature resources with hyperlinks to award-winning books in many categories.

The Aquinas Center has requested gifts to help two newly-welcomed immigrant families furnish their kitchens, prepare for winter, and send children well-equipped to school. By also requesting gift cards to local stores frequented by South Philadelphia families, the Aquinas Center seeks to respect the families' discretion on how best to meet their basic needs.

Thank you so much for your generosity! For further information about Gesu School, visit gesuschool.org; for more information about the Aquinas Center, see aquinascenterphilly.org.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

Saturday, December 8, is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The holy day Mass will be celebrated only at 12:05 PM.

Christmas at Old St. Joseph's

Christmas Eve liturgies will be celebrated at 4:00 PM, 6:30 PM and 9:00 PM, with a musical prelude beginning at 8:40 PM. Mass on Christmas Day will be celebrated at 10:00 AM.

Special Tour of Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul

Please join the OSJ Eldership Community for a special tour of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on **Thursday, December 13 at 11:00 AM**.

Welcoming visitors since 1864, the Cathedral Basilica, at 18th Street and Ben Franklin Parkway is one of the most architecturally-eminent structures in the City of Philadelphia with its majestic façade, vaulted dome, ornate main altar and impressive side chapels. RSVP to jamesmoore2030@comcast.net by **Tuesday December 11** if you would like to be included in the tour group. A suggested offering of \$2/person is appreciated. Tour participants will have the option of gathering together for a group luncheon at a local restaurant afterwards.

Requiescat in Pace

Stephen Connolly, son of longstanding OSJ parishioners Thomas and Margaret Connolly, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, November 19. His Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at OSJ on Friday, November 23. Please keep Tom and Margaret in your thoughts and prayers.

INFORMATION

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Mass Times

Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM
Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM
Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:30 PM

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

Hearing Enhancements

Old St. Joseph's is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are in the rear of the church.

Registration

Persons who want to register as parishioners should complete a parish registration form and return it to the rectory office by mail or in person. Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at www.oldstjoseph.org.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday through Saturday: 11:30 AM to noon or by appointment

Sacrament of Baptism

Persons wanting to arrange for a baptism should call Fr. Dougherty at the parish office at least two months before the desired date to arrange catechesis and the baptism celebration.

The Sacrament of Anointing

The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is administered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

Sacrament of Matrimony

Persons wanting to be married in the parish should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office at least nine months before the desired date.

Rite of Christian Initiation

Unbaptized adults who are considering baptism into the Catholic Church, baptized Catholics who have received no other sacraments and who want to be confirmed and to receive First Eucharist, and baptized non-Catholics who are considering full communion in the Catholic Church should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office.

To arrange Mass of Christian Burial

The funeral director should call the parish office.

Pastor

Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar

Fr. Edward O'Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence

Br. Robert Carson SJ

Fr. Edward Dougherty SJ (dougherty@oldstjoseph.org)

Pastoral Associate

BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)

Business Manager

Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music

Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Offices

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Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director

Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Pastoral Council

Rana McNamara and Richard Le, co-chairs
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Finance Council

Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board

Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president.

Adult Education

Rita O'Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo
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Eldership

Joan Slavin (joanslavin@aol.com)

Parish Life

Joe Casey (joetcasey@aol.com)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation

John Bitterman (osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship

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Young Adult Community

Jenn Lydic and Megan Prilutski (osjyac@gmail.com)

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Children's Liturgy of the Word

Peggy Connolly (pmcon@comcast.net)