

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH



3rd Sunday
in Advent
16 December 2018

St. Francis Xavier, Acushnet – Diocese of Fall River

Mass Schedule

(December 15th - December 23rd)

Sat.	Dec 15	3rd Sunday in Advent (Vigil) (Ro) 4:00pm Edmond Tetreault
Sun.	Dec 16	3rd Sunday in Advent (Ro) 8:00am Alfred H. Bonville 10:30am Nicholas Urbanek, Dorothy & Joe Mello
Mon.	Dec 17	Late Advent Weekday (Vi) 9:00am Michael Tremblay
Tues.	Dec 18	Late Advent Weekday (Vi) 9:00am Viveiros Family
Wed.	Dec 19	Late Advent Weekday (Vi) 9:00am Manuel da Costa
Thurs.	Dec 20	Late Advent Weekday (Vi) 9:00am Carl & Claudette Siler 5:30pm LATIN MASS - <i>Pro Populo</i>
Fri.	Dec 21	St. Peter Canisius; Priest (Wh) 9:00am Grace & Ralph Watts
Sat.	Dec 22	Late Advent Weekday (Vi) 9:00am Leonel, Lourdes Resendes & Parents
Sat.	Dec 22	4th Sunday in Advent (Vigil) (Vi) 4:00pm Ceasar Fernandes, Mr. & Mrs. Jose De Sousa
Sun.	Dec 23	4th Sunday in Advent (Vi) 8:00am Jenny Oliver 10:30am <i>Pro Populo</i>

Financial Report

Income:

Immaculate Conception	\$1,644.00
2 nd Sunday in Advent	\$5,421.11
Retired Religious	\$1,846.10

Prayers Please

... for all the sick of our parish: those homebound, in the hospital, and nursing facilities; and for all the souls in purgatory.

Sanctuary Lamp

If you are interested in this weekly memorial, please contact the parish office. *During Eucharistic Adoration please pray for the following person/s for whose intention the Sanctuary Candle burns this week: **John B. Gracia***

CONFESSIONS

Monday: 5:30 to 6:30pm
Saturday: 9:30 to 10:00am
Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45pm

FROM FR. WILLIAMS

IN PRAISE OF POLITICS

You read that right. I know that I am not alone in having witnessed the outpouring of tributes for the late President George H.W. Bush. Many of them acknowledged that he was neither a perfect man nor a perfect president, yet they all reflected on his humility, decency, and dedication to service of our country.

The recognition to the former president's decency is in contrast to the jaded way in which we can view politics today. We have learned the hard lesson that to blind ourselves to the faults of our leaders and their policies is harmful to our country and our society. But – each of us must ask ourselves – has doing this made us forget the real importance of politics, and the fundamental nobility – again, you're reading this right – of its calling?

We might complain about politics, but we forget how important is its task: to ensure the continued effective operation of the society in which we live. While this has been accomplished in many ways throughout history, in his Gettysburg Address Lincoln reflected that the great principle of our nation is that it is founded as a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." We need to be proud of this – proud that our country is one of the oldest currently existing democratic republics in the world, and proud of all that the system does accomplish – despite its well-publicized weaknesses. We need to be grateful that our leaders are elected by the citizens of our country – a right that, for millions of people in our world today, does not exist. We can never forget that the importance of politics comes from it being the means to accomplishing these aims – nor can we ever fail to hold accountable those politicians who fail to exercise their office with dignity and respect.

Listening to President Bush's 1989 inaugural address after his passing, I was struck by one part that reflected the right understanding of the place that God has in guiding human affairs. I will leave you with the words of our late 41st president:

...my first act as President is a prayer. I ask you to bow your heads.

Heavenly Father, we bow our heads and thank You for Your love. Accept our thanks for the peace that yields this day and the shared faith that makes its continuance likely. Make us strong to do Your work, willing to heed and hear Your will, and write on our hearts these words: "Use power to help people." For we are given power not to advance our own purposes, nor to make a great show in the world, nor a name. There is but one just use of power, and it is to serve people. Help us remember, Lord. Amen.

PARISH INFORMATION

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri: 9:30am – 4:00pm

Please make an appointment to meet with

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Religious Education: 508-998-7445

School: 508-995-4313

School Fax: 508-995-0456

ACCESSIBILITY

- Open for Prayer Every Day
- Wheelchair Lift
- Cry-room

St. Francis Xavier Parish **125 Main Street** **Acushnet, MA 02743**

tel: (508)-995-7600 fax: (508) -995-1794

email: info@sfxparish.com

Fr. Riley J. Williams, Administrator

[rjw@sfxparish.com]

Deacon David Pepin

[dbp@sfxparish.com]

Mr. Steven Guillotte, Director of Pastoral Services

[sng@sfxparish.com]

Mrs. Michelle Russo, Principal

[mrusso@sfxacushnet.com]

Mrs. Anabela Shaughnessy, Asst. Principal

[ashaughnessy@sfxacushnet.com]

Mrs. Janine Hammarquist, Rel. Ed. Coordinator

[jlh@sfxparish.com]

HOLY MASS

Monday-Sat 9:00am

Third Thursday (Latin/Extraordinary Form) 5:30pm

First Friday 9:00am & 6:00pm

Saturday Vigil 4:00pm

Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am

CONFESSIONS

Monday 5:30-6:30pm

Saturday 9:30-10:00am

Saturday 3:00-3:45pm

First Fridays 6:45-7:15pm

Any Time by Appointment

ADORATION

Mon - Friday 9:30am-9:00pm

Saturday 9:30am-2:45pm

VESPERS

Monday: Vespers with Benediction

Tuesday: Vespers

Wednesday: Vespers with Benediction

(Vespers begins at 6:30 pm)

ON THE COVER

“Sing joyfully, O Israel! Be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has removed the judgment against you, he has turned away your enemies; the King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst...” (Zep 3:14-15)

Angels appear often in sacred scripture. The term “angel” in Greek means “messenger” and angels have been, since the creation of man, the great messengers of God. The angels are also the great proclaimers of God’s glory in heaven. Interestingly, there is a not-too-serious debate among some Bible buffs as to whether or not angels actually sing. Those who contend that angels do not sing state that while you find them in sacred scripture praising God and shouting for joy, the Hebrew word for “singing” is never plainly used to describe their activity. However, those who say that angels do sing will quote **Job 38:7**: “*the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy*”. This use of poetic parallelism regarding angels (morning stars) equates singing with “shouting for joy”. Thus, the Book of Job has the angels singing in wonder while God creates. J.R.R. Tolkien went even further in his work *The Silmarillion* since he has the Divinity sit and watch as the music of his angels spills out into the void to create the universe. Shakespeare made his own contribution to the debate with a prayer for the dying Hamlet that “*flights of angels sing thee to thy rest*”. Perhaps it is just that the speech of angels is so melodic that it resounds as beautiful song when pronounced fervently.

One thing we do know is that man (male and female) has an affinity for song. On this Gaudete or Rejoice Sunday we should participate all the more in joyful song to the Lord. The high liturgy of the Church is always celebrated in song or chant. While we will never know for sure what the speech or song of angels sounds like until we reside with God in our resurrected bodies, we may fairly surmise for now that when we sing our hymns of praise and thanksgiving, we do so in imitation of the angels soaring in the liturgy of the Most High.

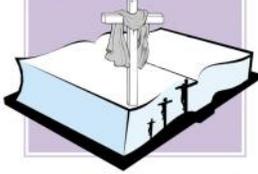
In order to ruminate on the corporate song of angels and men on this **Third Sunday of Advent**, we have placed on our bulletin cover a Mannerist work of **Orazio Gentileschi**, entitled *St. Cecelia with an Angel* (1621). One can still see in this work the influence of Caravaggio in light and color. However, this later work of Gentileschi appears to be a return to Mannerism as seen for instance in the sophistication of the posture of Cecelia's wrist and fingers and the somber intimacy of saint and angel.

Sadly, we are not able to show the entire painting which is almost as wide as it is tall. Still we can see St. Cecelia, patron saint of Church music, being inspired by the Spirit as symbolized by the celestial being holding up sheet music to Cecelia who needs not look up to read, for she perceives it in her soul. Cecelia plays on a (simple) pipe organ - the instrument which the Vatican II council declared to have special status in the Church liturgy.

Let us rejoice in song this Advent, singing proclamations to the Holy Trinity with the angelic host.

3rd Sunday in Advent - December 16, 2018

Religious Education



Confirmation Candidate/Sponsor Day Sunday 17th Dec. we will attend the 10:30am Mass and continue downstairs in the parish center until 1:30pm (includes lunch). Each candidate should be accompanied by their sponsor; if your sponsor cannot attend then a parent should fill in for them. *No classes for Level 7 & 8 on Sun. 17th December.*

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: On all Monday evenings 7:30-8:30pm. Every grade level will have a scheduled hour of Adoration from October-May. **December is Level 7.** All students in that grade level should make every attempt to join us for this hour. There will be no adoration on Dec 24th or 31st. **January is Level 5.**

No classes Sunday December 23 & Sunday December 30
Have a Blessed and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Classes resume on Sunday January 6, 2019

To keep informed of important dates please visit our Parish Master Calendar on our website at www.sfxparish.com.
you have any questions please email Mrs. Hammarquist at jlh@sfxparish.com



St. John the Baptist Pointing to Jesus
Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1655)

Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming." - (Lk 3:15-16a)

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
PRESCHOOL - GRADE 8



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ACUSHNET, MASSACHUSETTS

Our Kindergarten through Grade 5 students prepare to take the stage this upcoming Thursday evening as they put into song the joys of this Christmas season! Under the direction of Mr. Borges, (long time talent at SFX) students will perform a series of songs that are the perfect combination of fun and faith for our school parents and families. Our Upper School Chorus will also "light up the stage" under the direction of grade 4 teacher and parishioner, Miss Melissa Cournoyer. After a brief intermission, the stage is transformed into a stable and the Nativity of Our Lord is presented in song and narration. This portion of the show is always the pinnacle of our Advent season, as we fix our eyes and engage our hearts on the most important part of human history... the coming Birth of Our Lord and Savior! This year's show has a few "surprises" as a group of our teachers plan to participate in the Nativity, and Mr. Borges is planning a musical piece on his clarinet. Surely, after this coming week's festivities, we will all be ready to begin our Christmas break!

God Bless, Michelle Russo/Principal

SFX PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday	December 16	
Rel. Ed level 1-6	9:15-10:15am	Parish Ctr.
<i>Confirmation Sponsor</i>		
<i>Candidate Day</i>	10:30am-1:30pm	Parish Ctr.
	<i>(Note: No Religious Ed Classes for 7 & 8)</i>	
Christmas Caroling	6:00pm	Church Steps
Monday	December 17	
Vespers & Benediction	6:30-7:00pm	Church
<i>Eucharistic Adoration:</i>		
<i>Rel. Ed Level 7</i>	7:30-8:30pm	Church
Tuesday	December 18	
Vespers	6:30pm	Church
Wednesday	December 19	
Vespers & Benediction	6:30 - 7:00pm	Church

READINGS FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 16, 2018

Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 [6]/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18
 Monday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:1-17
 Tuesday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25
 Wednesday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 [cf. 8]/Lk 1:5-25
 Thursday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 7c and 10b]/Lk 1:26-38
 Friday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45
 Saturday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd [cf. 1a]/Lk 1:46-56

UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

December 16th - Diocesan Assessment
December 25th - Christmas Day Collection
January 1st - Solemnity: Mother of God

SFX PRAYER LINE

Please call 508-850-6649 between 8am & 8pm
Or email your prayer request to:
sfxprayerline@gmail.com

Women of Grace

Please pray to Our Lady of Guadalupe for the protection of all life. Consider *lighting a candle* (\$3) in the Pro-Life room (near elevator) in front of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe for your intentions, the prayer room is open during the week until 4pm..



NEXT LATIN MASS: Please join Father Williams this week for the celebration of the Holy Mass in the Extraordinary Form on **Thursday, 20 December** at 5:30 pm in the parish church.

Please take a Christmas Flower envelope from the church entrance if you would like to assist us in adorning our sanctuary!



THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT: The third Sunday in Advent is known as **Gaudete Sunday** so entitled for the opening antiphon: *Gaudete in Domino Semper* (Rejoice in the Lord Always). On this Third Sunday, rose vestments are worn by the priest and deacon. The color "rose" is not to introduce a laxity in our Advent practice and reflections, but to brighten the violet of Advent with a celebration that reminds us of the nearness of the Lord at his coming in the Nativity. Gaudete Sunday has its counterpart in Laetare Sunday, a part of our discipline during Lent. Next Sunday, the Fourth Sunday in Advent, we will return (for one last liturgical week) to the color of violet to once again recall the penitential nature of Advent and our need to strengthen and purify our hearts to "prepare the way of the Lord".

THE SOLEMNITY OF



ITEMS NEEDED: Your St. Vincent de Paul Society is requesting the following items to restock and replenish its pantry: rice, canned meats such as ham; juice, coffee, and tea. Thank you as always for your support.



Don't Just "Hang Around"!
This Advent... Join us for Caroling
on the Church Steps!

SUNDAY, 16 DECEMBER

6:00 PM

SFX PARISH, ACUSHNET

3rd Sunday in Advent - December 16, 2018

IDEAS FOR PRAYER

BY DOM HUBERT VAN ZELLER

Prayer needs not only the stilling of noise on the outside and excitement on the inside but also such positive influences as spiritual reading and spiritual direction. Silence and solitude do not of themselves produce recollection: they promote it where the desire to be recollected is present. Though the same may be said of reading and direction the help given here is more immediate.

Rightly handled, spiritual reading can become increasingly meditative; wrongly handled, it can be a complete waste of time and may even get in the way of true prayer. Spiritual reading must know its place, neither crowding out prayer on the one hand nor forming a quite separate exercise on the other. What is read is meant to be related to prayer in the way that study is related to knowledge and fresh air is related to health.

Spiritual direction, in the same way, has to be thought of as a help and not as an end in itself. Where it does not help it is either a luxury or a drag on the spirit. Far better to do without direction from anyone save one's superior than to sacrifice liberty of response to what one believes is the movement of grace. Persons who are over-directed find themselves incapable of making decisions or solving the smallest problems. Spiritual direction is meant to encourage them to use their heads and not to substitute somebody else's.

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSINGS: This year Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday. The parish office will be closed on the Monday (the day before Christmas) and will not reopen until Thursday, 27 December. We ask that you please complete any parish business with the office before or after these dates.

This time of the year is a very holy and reflective time and so it is important that our pastor and parish staff, which works hard all year putting in many extra hours even outside the office, is allowed the time to refresh and spend time in prayer and with their families and friends.

We thank you for your understanding and wish you all a very blessed Christmas!

SHOES FOR RWANDA: This weekend we will *continue* taking donations for our Annual Shoe Drive for children in a Rwandan village. After the Masses on Dec. 16th and the 23rd a donation of \$20 will buy a pair of shoes for a needy Rwandan child. You may also receive a card to give to another person (i.e. friend or relative) on whose behalf you can make your donation for Christmas. You can also donate shoes in memory of a loved one, and Father Leonard will remember this person (and all who donate) at Holy Mass!

INFORMATION ON THE PERMANENT DIACONATE: can be obtained on January 17th from 7 to 9 pm at Holy Name of the Sacred Heart Church in New Bedford. At that time qualified men are invited to submit a preliminary application. Please call 508 990 0341 for more information.

MASS INTENTIONS: Our Mass Book will open again on **Wednesday, 9 January** after the 9am Mass. At that time we will be taking intentions for the period of **July 1st to December 31st, 2019**. If you are unable to come to the parish that morning, please call the parish office on or after January 9th and we can assist you over the telephone; *we will not be taking intentions for this second half of 2019 prior to the 9th*. (Please note that we can also accommodate Masses offered in Rome for your loved ones during the year of 2019).

As in the past, there will be on January 9th the usual procedure of standing in line to reserve 3 Mass Intentions and returning to the back of the line (if one desires) for no more than 2 more, bringing the maximum to 5 Masses that can be scheduled that day. This allows us to keep the line moving and provides fairness to all those seeking Mass intentions. Thank you for your cooperation.

May the Lord bless you & yours
On the feast of His birth!
Come celebrate with us at
Christ's Mass.



Christmas Eve

Masses at 4 pm & 6:30 pm

Midnight Mass on Christmas

Christmas Day

Masses at 8 am & 10:30 am



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH, ACUSHNET

GIFT CARDS: Please purchase your grocery gift cards after the Masses, they are great for Advent almsgiving and Christmas stocking stuffers.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: We thank all of you (parishioners and visitors) who have already taken a Christmas Flower Envelope from the main entrance and contributed to our annual effort to beautify our church sanctuary for this holy season. This year we also needed to purchase some new artificial "greens" to adorn our flower boxes along the sides of the church interior as the old greens were shabby and falling apart. This improvement will also be funded by our Christmas flower offerings. Thank you again.