

Advent

December 21, 2014 ♦ Fourth Sunday of Advent

In the whole of the New Testament, Mary appears only a handful of times. She is, of course, present at the birth of Jesus and at his death. She comes looking for her son in the temple when he's twelve and again when he's preaching. She lets him know that the time has come for his first miracle when he's in Cana.

She has more to say in this story of the annunciation than in any of the others, and in this one story we get more than a glimpse of the woman she would become in our memory—called on by millions, revered by all—an example of unparalleled obedience and openness to the movement of God in her life.

It strikes me that, along with being the mother of God (the Orthodox Church uses the word *theotokos*, which means “God-bearer”), Mary is our example of the best response to the presence of God. We let him in; we show God hospitality in our very being; we allow God to change our lives in ways we cannot even imagine yet.

The reality for most of us, though, is that in many times and places we *have* had the chance to welcome God in. Instead, we've shut God out because we thought something else was more important. Maybe it was power or wealth. Perhaps God was challenging us to move on a particular path, and we didn't want to.

Maybe our question for the week is, *what would happen if I do as God asks?*

With four days left before Christmas, let us practice saying yes to God—for in doing this, we honor the mother of us all.

MARY KATHARINE DEELEY
sundaybulletin@liguori.org



We allow God to change our lives in ways we cannot even imagine yet.

Today's Readings
2 Sm 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16
Rom 16:25–27
Lk 1:26–38

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 secretary@icbvm.org; ccd@icbvm.org; bulletin@icbvm.org; newsletter@icbvm.org

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann Pastor
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak
 Victim Assistance: Wendy S. Krisak, 1-800-791-9209
 Safe Environment: Sister Meg Cole, 610-866-0581, ext 19
 Diocese of Allentown.....www.allentowndiocese.org

Parish Office610 582-2411
 Parish Religious Education/CCD610 582-3880
 Parish Preschool610 404-8645
 Parish Fax.....610 404-2609
 Parish Website..... www.icbvm.org
 Immaculate Conception Academy..... 610 404-8645

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 21, 2014

★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM ANTHONY VOLPICCINI	THU	9:00 AM CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE INTENTIONS
SUN	7:30 AM HELEN & FRANK JANISZEWSKI		11:00 AM CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE INTENTIONS
	9:00 AM LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS	FRI	NO MASS
	11:00 AM DEC'D MEMBERS OF THE MACDOUGALL FAMILY	SAT	5:15 PM MARY BUTLER
MON	7:30 AM JOSIE & GUS FREDRIKSEN	SUN	7:30 AM FLORENCE & ORLANDO LEBRESO
	9:00 AM ICA MASS - LOIS WINGLE		9:00 AM DOROTHY PETUSKY
TUE	7:00 PM JOSEPHINE, PETER & JOHN BOGUS		11:00 AM LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS
WED	4:00 PM CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE INTENTIONS		
	7:00 PM CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE INTENTIONS		
	MIDNIGHT LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS		

*The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Annette Brennan,
 In Memory of Paul P. Powaski and In Memory of Herbert Fecera - 3rd Anniversary*

NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

SCRIP: Gulla 5:15pm Costanzo 7:30am Kasperowicz 9:00am Carvalho 11:00am DeFalco

<u>DAY</u>	<u>MASS</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>COMMENTATOR</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
SAT	5:15pm	Mary Schwendt	Shirley Wheeler	Ally, Diego and Jacob Santos
SUN	7:30am	Dan Sweeney	Pam Amos	Mason Cambria, Jessica Kritschil, Sam Reitnour
	9:00am	Brian Hannon	Val Romasanta	Michael and Robert Beitz, Brent DeMarco
	11:00am	Betty Effinger	Mike Bobb	Morgan DeCray, Meghan Grieco, Jen McNerney

The second collection next week is for Debt Reduction

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2014

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

PENANCE SERVICE

Monday, December 22 - 7:00pm

CHRISTMAS MASSES

CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday, December 24 - 4:00pm, 7:00pm,
 Midnight

CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday, December 25 - 9:00am, 11:00am

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Joe & Betty Cuccaro, Cecelia Potts, Marco Fiato, Bryan Fiato, John Kakas, William Kuehler, Maryanne Prentice, John LeFosse, Tracy Seasholtz, Aaron Gulla, John Iezzi, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Andrew Martin, Alice Smyk, Barbara Pease, Yolanda Marino, Robert Mariani, Marie Snyder, Irene Wade, Loretta Kozlowski, Patricia Reigel, Patricia Winkel, Ann Kretzman, Ann Schlott, Patricia McDermott, Maryanna Niemczyk, Linda D'Alessandro, Michael Kovach, Lannie Knapp, Mary Pender, Geri Barth, Jo Ann Hofer, Ron D'Augustine, Paul Milshaw, Roger Villano, John Glacken Sr., Jacob Lovera, Ronald Readinger and Tom Hafer

Please pray for the recently departed: Bernie Rissmiller

Please pray for the recently baptized: Coby Roz Mogavero and family

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS: Monsignor McCann and Deacon Paul Hiryak visit our hospitalized parishioners regularly. If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, call the parish office at 610-582-2411.

THIS WEEK AT ICC:

Mon 12/22 7pm Advent Penance Service
7:30pm RCIA
Tues 12/23 7:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sat 12/27 4-5pm Confessions

WHAT'S HAPPENING

There will be NO MASS on December 26th

PARISH OFFICE NOTICE

Our parish office will be closed December 24th through January 1st in observance of Christmas and the New Year.

NEW YEAR'S MASSES

NEW YEARS EVE

Wednesday, December 31 - 5:15pm

NEW YEAR'S DAY - SOLEMNITY OF MARY

Thursday, January 1 - 9:00am, 11:00am

ICA HSO 12 Days of Christmas Raffle Winners

December 2 - \$50 Wawa Gift Card - Repko Family
December 3 - \$75 Visa Gift Card - Scott Derr
December 4 - \$100 Red Lobster Gift Card - Coughenour Family
December 5 - \$125 Visa Gift Card - Tara Oswald
December 8 - \$150 Giant Gift Card - Jessica Bailey
December 9 - \$175 Visa Gift Card - T. Venna
December 10 - \$200 Toys-R-U's Gift Card - Rowe Family
December 11 - \$225 Visa Gift Card - Martha Weller
December 12 - \$250 Target Gift Card - Rosa Flores
December 15 - \$275 Visa Gift Card - Mary Radwanski
December 16 - \$300 Amazon Gift Card - Bill Weber
December 17 - \$500 Visa Gift card - Fontana Family
Congratulations to all our winners!!!

2014 Walk-A-Thon for Catholic Education - Donations are being gratefully accepted. Please place it in an envelope marked "**ICA Walk-a-thon**" and drop it in any Sunday collection basket or mail it to Immaculate Conception Academy, 903 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518.

All donations are greatly appreciated.

TRANSFER GRANTS: Any public, private, or charter school student who transfers into Immaculate Conception Academy, grades 1 through 7, will receive a Bishop's Tuition Transfer Grant of \$1,500 over two school years (\$1,000 for the first year; \$500 for the second). Call Shannon at 610-404-8645.

The Women's Society would like to take the opportunity to wish all of our members and parishioners a joyous and blessed Christmas and bright New Year. Our parish family and wonderful members are always supportive of our fundraising efforts. We hope you have enjoyed the fruits of our labor be it Apple Dumplings, delicious baked goods, candies, or Christmas Cookies.

2015 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CALENDARS are now available in the narthex. We are most grateful to the Dengler Funeral Home for providing these beautiful religious art calendars to our parishioners.



May this Christmas season be a time of real joy, of real peace, of real tenderness - a time in which you experience deeply and richly the intimate presence of Jesus in your life. A time for your family to come together, a time for you to be united with all those you love. A time of forgiveness, of reconciliation, of renewal. A time to celebrate lovingly, live joyfully, give generously and believe completely.

You and your family will be remembered at every Mass during this Christmas season with prayer and thanksgiving for all that you do for our parish and your brothers and sisters in Christ.

*Monsignor John B. McCann
Deacon Paul Hiryak*

World Meeting of Families-Philadelphia 2015 — **Registration Open!** Mark your family calendar for the 8th World Meeting of Families! Philadelphia is proud to welcome families from around the world to this event on September 22-27, 2015. Registration is now open. Families can look forward to speakers, celebrations, activities for kids, and prayer, all of which will bring renewal and transformation for you, your loved ones, and the world. Visit the official World Meeting of Families website at: WorldMeeting2015.org to learn more.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend! The Annual March for Life will be held January 22, 2015 in Washington, DC. Our parish will be sponsoring a bus to the March for Life. Watch the bulletin for additional details.

Grane Hospice Care - Do you have the gift of time and presence to share? Grane Hospice desires compassionate, caring adults to volunteer individually or as a group for the sake of our patients and their families in the Greater Reading Area as they walk together through the winter season of life. We acknowledge the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of an individual and seek to meet them through our visits. There are many creative ways in which this can be accomplished: playing music, holding a hand, visiting with your children or certified dog, reading aloud, chatting or simply taking the time to listen. If you are interested in learning more please contact Eric Trumbower at 610-337-1721 or etrumbower@granehospice.com. Special hospice training and mileage reimbursement are provided.

Life Ad Donation Coupon

Benefits Mary's Shelter and Mary's Home

Be counted when we publish the Anti-Abortion/Pro-Life ad in the Reading Eagle on January 22, 2015. **Deadline for donation is December 30th.** \$6/person, \$12/couple or family

Place this coupon with donation (check made payable to "Life Ad") into your Sunday Mass collection or mail to:

Mrs. Elizabeth Effinger - 1848 W. Schuylkill Road
Douglassville, PA 19518-9101

Parish: _____

Name: _____

Phone#: _____ Amount: _____



December 21, 2014

dear Padre

Monday

DECEMBER 22

Advent Weekday

1 Sm 1:24-28

Lk 1:46-56

Tuesday

DECEMBER 23

Advent Weekday

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24

Lk 1:57-66

Wednesday

DECEMBER 24

Advent Weekday

2 Sm 7:1-5,

8b-12, 14a, 16

Lk 1:67-79

Thursday

DECEMBER 25

Nativity of the Lord

Is 52:7-10

Heb 1:1-6

Jn 1:1-18 or

1:1-5, 9-14

Friday

DECEMBER 26

Saint Stephen,
the First Martyr

Acts 6:8-10;

7:54-59

Mt 10:17-22

Saturday

DECEMBER 27

Saint John, Apostle
and Evangelist

1 Jn 1:1-4

Jn 20:1a and 2-8

Sunday

DECEMBER 28

Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary, and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or

Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3

Col 3:12-21 or

3:12-17 or

Hb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Lk 2:22-40 or

2:22, 39-40

Was Jesus actually born December 25?



How do we know the date of Jesus' birth? I've checked my Bible, and I can't find any mention of the date.

You're right: The Bible doesn't say Jesus was born December 25. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke are the only Scriptures to give much detail about Christ's birth and infancy. They name the key political figures of the day, but not much else (Luke 1:5 and 2:1-2). Neither evangelist included specific information about the dates.

Dates were apparently not important to the earliest Christians. Besides, the first few generations of Christ's followers were far more interested in celebrating Christ's resurrection each Sunday, and eventually on Easter, than they were in celebrating his birth.

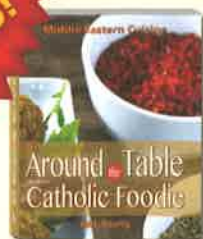
Christians started to associate December 25 with Christ's nativity centuries after the fact: the year 336, according to the earliest evidence.

The most popular theory is that the Church chose to replace a popular pagan Roman sun festival celebrating the winter solstice (December 21 or 22) with a Christian feast that could overtake the pagan festival and use its sun imagery to speak of Christ as the unconquered "Sun of Righteousness."

FR. MATTHEW ALLMAN, CSSR
sundaybulletin@liguori.org



FREE RECIPES!



Experience the Holy Land from your kitchen!

Cook up a savory experience of food and faith with free recipes from *Around the Table With the Catholic Foodie: Middle Eastern Cuisine*. Visit Liguori.org/Catholicfoodie by February 28 to get your free recipes and a coupon for 30% off this full-color book of recipes and stories from the author's Holy Land pilgrimage. Enjoy!