

Today's Readings

Be watchful! Be alert! (Mark 13:33)

It's the First Sunday of Advent, and you have just received an invitation: The Most High God requests the honor of your presence at the entry of his Son into the world. This unprecedented event will be followed by a joyous celebration in two locations: heaven and earth. The event will take place on December 25, and you are encouraged to spend the next four weeks preparing for the festivities.

Welcome to Advent—a season of hope and expectation! Over the course of the next month, you may be part of family gatherings. You might reenact time-honored traditions: buying gifts, decorating homes, and preparing special meals.

And to crown all these observances, Jesus himself will come and visit you. As today's Gospel tells us, we may not know when he is coming, but he promises he will come. Even now, he is looking for new ways to touch your heart. Right now, he is preparing special gifts of grace and blessing for you—Advent and Christmas presents that he will give as you open your heart to him.

What kind of gifts will he give? Reminders of his Father's love. A sense of hope as you face life's challenges. New insights and wisdom that you can share with your loved ones. Freedom from guilt as you lay your sins and failings at his feet. And above all, peace and joy as he tells you that he has you in the palm of his hand.

So take up his invitation today! Do everything you can to be alert and ready to receive Jesus and his gifts. Try to spend a little more time in daily prayer and Scripture reading. Go to Confession so that you can get rid of anything that blocks you from receiving his love and his gifts.

Jesus wants to celebrate with you. And he's given you a whole month to get ready! Step by step, day by day, you can draw closer to the Lord—and feel him draw closer to you!

"Jesus, I accept your invitation. By your Spirit and your grace, help me to get ready for your coming on Christmas Day."

Taken from *The Word Among Us*, Advent 2017 Vol. 37, Number 1: Used with permission.

This Week's Readings

Sunday 3 <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	Is 63:16b-17,19b; 64:2-7 / 1 Cor 1:3-9 / Mk 13:33-37
Monday 4 <i>St. John Damascene</i>	Is 2:1-5 / Mt 8:5-11
Tuesday 5	Is 11:1-10 / Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday 6 <i>St. Nicholas</i>	Is 25:6-10a / Mt 15:29-37
Thursday 7 <i>St. Ambrose</i>	Is 26:1-6 / Mt 7:21,24-27
Friday 8 <i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Gn 3:9-15,20 / Eph 1:3-6,11-12 / Lk 1:26-38
Saturday 9 <i>St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatatzin</i>	Is 30:19-21,23-26 / Mt 9:35—10:1,5a,6-8
Sunday 10 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	Is 40:1-5,9-11 / 2 Pt 3:8-14 / Mk 1:1-8

Parish Calendar

December 3 – 10

Sunday 3—First Sunday of Advent

A second collection for Cathedral maintenance is taken at all Masses. Hospitality receptions are held in the North Conference Room after the 8:30am, 10am, 11:30am and 1pm Masses, with a Holy Land gift sale.

Children's Faith Formation classes meet at 9:45am at St. Matthew's Education Center. Las clases de Catequesis, Catecumenado y Catequesis Familiar continúan a las 11:00 de la mañana.

RCIA Dismissal is held at the 11:30am Mass.

Cathedral Coffehouse meets after the 5:30pm Mass.

Monday 4—The Parish Council meets at 6:45pm in the East Conference Room.

Tuesday 5—El grupo de Oración se reúne a las 7 de la tarde en el salón de conferencias del Oeste.

Wednesday 6—RCIA meets in the North Conference Room at 7pm.

Sacred Page, Sunday Scripture Reflections, meets at 7pm in the West Conference Room.

Friday 8—Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Holy Day of Obligation. Masses are at 5:30pm (Vigil Mass) on December 7, and at 7am, 8am, 11am (no confessions), 12:10pm, 5:30pm and 7pm (in Spanish).

Sunday 10—Second Sunday of Advent

A second collection to benefit the Retirement Fund for Religious is taken at all Masses.

The VMI Chamber Strings provide a musical prelude to the 8:30am Mass.

Children's Faith Formation classes meet at 9:45am at St. Matthew's Education Center. Las clases de Catequesis, Catecumenado y Catequesis Familiar continúan a las 11:00 de la mañana.

RCIA Dismissal is held at the 11:30am Mass.

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated at the 1pm Mass, with refreshments and music following the 8:30am, 10am, 11:30am and 1pm Masses in the North Conference Room.

Always God's Children meets in the West Conference Room at 3:30pm.

News & Notes

Cathedral Coffeehouse Series: "Livin' on a Prayer" – Join us on Sunday, **December 3** in the West Conference Room after the 5:30pm Mass for the final edition of this Cathedral Coffeehouse series. The theme is "Stump the Seminarians"—come with whatever questions you may have about the faith, and one of our seminarians will answer it!

Always God's Children – Always God's Children, the Cathedral's ministry to gay and lesbian persons and their families and friends, meets Sunday, **December 10** at 3:30pm in the West Conference Room.

December Papal Intention – Please pray for Pope Francis' December intention: that the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.

Advent

Our **Advent & Christmas brochure** is available in the pew racks, at Cathedral entrances, and at the rectory office. You may also download the brochure by clicking [here for English](#) or [here for Spanish \(en español\)](#) or visiting our website at www.stmatthewscathedral.org.

Click [here](#) for a preview of the **Christmas Mass schedule!**



Our Lady of Guadalupe – We will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Sunday, **December 10** at the 1pm Spanish Mass, and with refreshments and music following the 8:30am, 10am, 11:30am and 1pm Masses in the North Conference Room.

The celebration continues on Tuesday, **December 12**, the actual

feast day, when **Bishop Mario Dorsonville** celebrates a special Mass in Spanish at 7pm, followed by music and refreshments in the North Conference Room. All are welcome on both dates.

Find the Perfect Gift – Christmas celebrates the Perfect Gift of God's love in Jesus, and Advent is the time when we prepare our hearts to welcome this gift. This week, take time out of the busyness of the season to slow down and reflect on the miracle of God becoming man. After some quiet reflection, share your joy and inspiration with someone you love or on social media to spread the Perfect Gift of Jesus this Christmas season. To find Christmas resources and Mass times across the Archdiocese of Washington, visit FindthePerfectGift.org.

Christmas Offering – During Advent we reflect upon the many blessings of the Lord, including those graces experienced at St. Matthew's. Your generous response enables the building up the Kingdom of God in our parish and community. You may mail your Christmas offering to the rectory, drop it in the offertory, or give via [Faith Direct](#) or online at www.stmatthewscathedral.org. (Choose *Make a Gift* on the front page, then *Donate* under *Make a One-Time Gift*. After typing address and card information, click *Review Donation* and *Continue*. Choose *Comments*, and in the window type "Christmas."). We truly appreciate your generosity.

Christmas Flowers – Each year every effort is made to decorate the Cathedral for Christmas in a way that truly reflects the noble simplicity of that holy season. Your generous support is needed again. You may mail your Christmas flower offering to the rectory, drop it in the offertory, or donate online or via

[Faith Direct](#). Many requests are made this time of year, so please be assured of our gratitude for all gifts.

Christmas Decorating – On Saturday, **December 23**, from 1 to 4pm, we will decorate the Cathedral for Christmas. We need volunteers to unwrap, prepare and place poinsettias, put lights on the trees, and assemble the crèche. To volunteer, contact Pam Erwin at 202-347-3215 or perwin@stmatthewscathedral.org.

Christmas Cards – You may purchase Christmas cards featuring the Cathedral crèche (in boxed sets of 10 with envelopes) at the rectory office. For delivery by mail, contact Gloria Harrington at gharrington@stmatthewscathedral.org or 202-347-3215.

Outreach



Volunteers at the Thanksgiving meal for our homeless neighbors were ready to serve on the Monday morning before Thanksgiving Day!

Reminder: Gifts for Christmas Drive – If you have taken a gift tag, your new, wrapped, and labeled gift is now needed. If you did not bring it to Mass this weekend, please bring your gift to the rectory office (open from 9am to 8pm) no later than Tuesday, **December 5**. If you have any questions or are no longer able to purchase your gift, please contact Pam Quinn at pquinn505@aol.com or call Norma Canedo at the rectory office at 202-347-3215. Thank you for your generosity!

Music



**Visiting
String
Ensemble**
– The
Virginia

Military Institute Chamber Strings will provide the prelude music for the 8:30am Mass next Sunday, **December 10**. The Ensemble will be directed by Dr. John Brodie. Please come early for Mass that day to hear the wonderful string arrangements played by this acclaimed group. During their visit in Washington, the ensemble also will play at Walter Reed Hospital and the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Mount Pleasant. For more information, contact Tom Stehle (contact info below).

St. Matthew's Festival Singers Auditions – Each year we invite experienced singers of the parish to join the Schola Cantorum for our *Advent Lessons and Carols* and *Christmas Eve Choral Prelude and Mass*. Singers must be able to attend all rehearsals for an event but are not obligated to sing on both dates. We look for singers who can read music and have a pleasant voice, previous choral experience, and a commitment to work diligently and cooperatively.

Lessons and Carols

- Mondays, December 4 and 11
7-9pm: Rehearsal
- Wednesdays, December 6 and 13
8-9pm: Rehearsal
- Sunday, December 17
7:30-9pm: *Advent Lessons and Carols* (6:30pm arrival)

Christmas Eve

- Monday, December 18
7-9pm: Rehearsal
- Wednesday, December 20
7-9pm: Rehearsal
- Sunday, December 24: 9:15pm
Prelude; 10pm Mass (8pm arrival)

To schedule an audition or for more information, contact Tom Stehle at 202-587-5141 or tstehle@stmatthewscathedral.org.

New Parishioner Registration ~ Welcome!

If you attend Mass at the Cathedral, we invite you to register as a parishioner so we can welcome you properly, learn about any special needs and interests, and keep you informed of our worship opportunities and activities. We invite you to consider becoming involved in our various organizations, committees and other aspects of parish life. Register by clicking [here](#) or visiting the parish website (www.stmatthewscathedral.org) and clicking the *Join Us* tab (choose *Register as a Parishioner*). You also may register at the rectory office.

Celebrating the Sacraments

For our *Mass and Confessions* schedule, see the bulletin front cover or click [here](#).

Baptism

Parents who wish to have their child baptized at the Cathedral should contact the Baptismal Coordinator at baptism@stmatthewscathedral.org. Parents should contact us at least six (6) months in advance of a desired baptismal date, and may ask for the priest or deacon of their choice to perform the Baptism. Early contact allows parents to be scheduled for the necessary sacramental formation session and godparents to obtain letters from their pastor. For more information, click [here](#) or go to the *Sacraments* tab on the parish website front page (choose *Baptism*).

If you are a registered parishioner at St. Matthew's and need a letter of good standing in order to be a godparent for a baptism to be celebrated at another parish, please call the rectory office at 202-347-3215 to ask about obtaining a letter.

Marriage

Couples who are interested in celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage at the Cathedral are encouraged to click [here](#) or go to the *Sacraments* tab on the parish website front page (choose *Marriage*, then choose *Weddings*) to review our guidelines for weddings. The next step is to call the rectory office at 202-347-3215 and ask for the priest of your choice or the priest on duty, who can speak to you about marriage preparation and the possibility of scheduling your wedding at the Cathedral. Couples are expected to contact us at least nine (9) months in advance of the date on which they hope to celebrate their wedding.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Sunday Children's Faith Formation classes include preparation for the reception of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. For more information on classes, click [here](#) or go to the *Faith Formation* tab on the parish website front page (choose *Children's Sacramental Preparation/Religious Education*). Registration packets for classes beginning in the fall of 2017 are now available at the rectory office and can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Adult Confirmation

Each spring during the Easter season, St. Matthew's offers adult Confirmation preparation for active, baptized Catholics who already have received their First Eucharist. For more information, click [here](#) or go to the *Sacraments* tab on the parish website front page (choose *Confirmation*). Registration forms for our 2018 Confirmation group are available at the rectory office and can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Rite of Christian Initiation

Are you an unbaptized adult who would like to become Catholic, an adult baptized in another Christian denomination who wishes to profess your faith as a Catholic Christian, or a baptized adult Catholic who would like to complete your initiation in the Catholic Church? We invite you to inquire about the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. RCIA is an ongoing process of conversion and faith formation for adults who would like to explore our Catholic faith and prepare for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. **RCIA meets Wednesdays at 7pm in the North Conference Room.** For more information, click [here](#) or go to the *Faith Formation* tab on the parish website front page (choose *Adult Initiation Process (RCIA)*).

Contact Theresa Prymuszewski, Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, at 202-587-5139 or tprymuszewski@stmatthewscathedral.org for more information.

Lecturas de Hoy

Hoy es el Primer Domingo de Adviento y acabas de recibir una invitación que dice: "El Dios Altísimo solicita el honor de tu presencia con motivo de la entrada de su Hijo en este mundo."

Este gran acontecimiento sin precedentes será seguido por una gozosa celebración en dos lugares: el cielo y la tierra. El evento tendrá lugar el 25 de diciembre, y se te exhorta a dedicar las próximas cuatro semanas a prepararte para las festividades."

¡Bienvenido al Adviento, tiempo de esperanza y expectativa! Durante este mes, probablemente participarás en varias reuniones familiares, y seguramente volverás a repetir las tradiciones: comprar regalos, decorar el hogar, preparar cenas especiales, etc.

Y para coronar todas estas celebraciones, el propio Jesucristo vendrá y te visitará. Tal vez no sepamos cuándo va a venir, pero sabemos que sin duda vendrá, pues él lo prometió. Ahora mismo está preparando dones especiales de gracia y bendición que te concederá a medida que abras tu corazón.

¿Qué tipo de regalos traerá? Principalmente, cosas que te harán recordar el amor del Padre; un nuevo sentido de esperanza cuando te toque enfrentar dificultades; un nuevo entendimiento y sabiduría, que puedes compartir con tus seres queridos; una sensación de libertad de la culpa, mientras depositas tus pecados y fallas a sus pies. Y, sobre todo, la paz y el gozo cuando él te asegura que te tiene grabado en la palma de su mano.

¡Así pues, acepta la invitación hoy día! Haz todo lo que tengas que hacer para mantenerte despierto y preparado para recibir a Jesús y sus regalos. Trata de dedicar un poco de tiempo a la oración diaria y leer la Escritura. Anda a confesarte de manera que puedas librarte de todo lo que obstaculice tu camino, para que recibas el amor y los dones del Señor.

Jesús quiere celebrar contigo. Y te da todo un mes para prepararte. Paso a paso, día a día, puedes acercarte más al Señor, y sentir que él se acerca a ti también.

"Amado Jesús, acepto con gusto tu invitación. Por tu Santo Espíritu y tu gracia, ayúdame a estar listo para recibirte cuando vengas el día de Navidad."

Escogida con el permiso de la Palabra Entre Nosotros. Vol 37, Numero 1; Adviento 2017

Lecturas de la Semana

Domingo 3	Is 63:16b-17,19; 64:2-7 / 1 Cor 1:3-9 /
<i>Primer Domingo de Adviento</i>	Mc 13:33-37
Lunes 4	Is 2:1-5 / Mt 8:5-11
<i>San Juan Damasceno</i>	
Martes 5	Is 11:1-10 / Lc 10:21-24
Miércoles 6	Is 25:6-10 / Mt 15:29-37
<i>San Nicolás</i>	
Jueves 7	Is 26:1-6 / Mt 7:21,24-27
<i>San Ambrosio</i>	
Viernes 8	Gen 3:9-15,20 / Ef 1:3-6,11-12 / Lc 1:26-38
<i>La Inmaculada Concepción de la Virgen María</i>	
Sábado 9	Is 30:19-21,23-26 / Mt 9:35—10:1,6-8
<i>San Juan Diego</i>	
Domingo 10	Is 40:1-5,9-11 / 2 Pt 3:8-14 / Mc 1:1-8
<i>Segundo Domingo de Adviento</i>	

Intenciones de Misas Mass Intentions December 3 – 10

Sunday, December 3

5:30pm Vigil (December 2) – Terry (Ruby) Vega
7am – All Parishioners
8:30am – Clarisabel Billini
10am – Walter & Mary Orzechowski
11:30am – Fred J. Ayoub
1pm – Gabriela Sotelo
5:30pm – Jean Margaret Boehme

Monday, December 4

7am – Karl Weissenbach
8am – Josefina Carlos Punsalan
12:10pm – Moises Lopez
5:30pm – Simone Aubin

Tuesday, December 5

7am – Carol De Costa, M.D. (living)
8am – Roger Aquino
12:10pm – Lucy Obsequio
5:30pm – Elizabeth Allen

Wednesday, December 6

7am – Carolina Sulbaran
8am – Shirley Alorro (living)
12:10pm – Philip Buffa
5:30pm – Nelly Alorro (living)

Thursday, December 7

7am – Helen McGlynn Sarle
8am – Lod Langelo
12:10pm – Julian Caplan
5:30pm – Julio Cesar Villatoro

Friday, December 8

7am – Brooksie, Betsy & Myrtle Banks
8am – Thomas Kingsbury
11am – Clara van Hissenhover
12:10pm – Veronica Weaver
5:30pm – Esperanza Espinal
7pm – Francisco & Angélica De León

Saturday, December 9

8am – Arlene McGrath
12:10pm – Guillermo Espinal
5:30pm – All Parishioners

Sunday, December 10

7am – Katie Snyder Evans
8:30am – Carl Richard Boehlert
10am – John Michael Snyder
11:30am – Dorothy McKnew
1pm – Jorge Rodriguez Silva
5:30pm – Eileen Steele

Oprima [aquí](#) para ver nuestro folleto de Adviento y Navidad, Programa de Liturgias y Actividades. Oprima [aquí](#) para ver las Misas de Navidad.

Noticias de la Parroquia

Se les recuerda: Regalos para la colecta Navideña – Si usted ha recogido una etiqueta de regalo, por favor de traerlo, envuelto en papel de regalo y con su etiqueta lo antes posible. Si usted no lo trajo a misa este fin de semana, por favor traiga su regalo a la rectoría, a más tarde el martes, **5 de diciembre** la rectoría estará abierta de (9:00 de la mañana a 8:00 de la noche). Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre la colecta navideña o no puede comprar su regalo, por favor llame a la rectoría y pregunte por Norma Canedo al: 202-347-3215 o mande un correo electrónico a: socialjustice@stmatthewscathedral.org. ¡Muchas gracias por su generosidad!

Grupo de Oración – El grupo de oración se reúne los martes a la 7:00 de la tarde. El objetivo es profundizar nuestra fe por medio de las Sagradas Escrituras. El grupo de Oración tendrá charlas programadas a través del año. La próxima charla: *El Matrimonio*, el martes **5 de diciembre**. Será dirigida por el padre Austin en el salón de conferencias del Oeste.

Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción – El viernes **8 de diciembre** es la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción, día de precepto. Las misas se celebrarán a las 7:00, 8:00, 11:00 de la mañana, 12:10 del mediodía, 5:30 de la tarde y 7:00 de la noche en español. Misa de vigilia a las 5:30 de la tarde el jueves **7 de diciembre**.



Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe – Únanse a nosotros en la celebración de [Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe](#) aquí en la Catedral en la misa de español a la 1:00 de la

tarde el domingo **10 de diciembre**. Después de las misas de 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 de la mañana y 1:00 de la tarde habrá refrescos y música en el salón de conferencias del Norte.

La celebración continua el martes **12 de diciembre**, el día de la Virgen de Guadalupe, **Obispo Mario Dorsonville** celebrará la Misa a las 7:00 de la tarde en español, seguida por música y refrigerios en el salón de conferencias del Norte. Todos son bienvenidos ambos días.

Retiro de Adviento – El sábado **16 de diciembre**, tendremos el Retiro de Adviento, todos están invitados. Tema: *Prepare el Camino del Señor*. El retiro se ofrece en el salón del Norte, 9:30 de la mañana-4:00 de la tarde.

Intenciones de Oración del Papa Francisco para Diciembre 2017 – Por favor únase en oración en todo el mundo por las intenciones del Papa Francisco este mes: por los ancianos, para que sostenidos por las familias y las comunidades cristianas, colaboren con su sabiduría y experiencia en la transmisión de la fe y la educación de las nuevas generaciones.

December/Diciembre 9, 2017
 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm



Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
 Holy Rosary (Santo Rosario) - 1:30 pm
 Mass (Misa) - 2:30 pm

Procession - Procesión - 12:00 pm

From: Shrine of the Sacred Heart - Santuario del Sagrado Corazón
 16th St. and Park Rd., NW
 Washington, DC 20010
 (2.5 mile procession)

To: Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
 Basílica del Santuario Nacional
 4th St. and Michigan Ave., NE
 Washington, DC 20017

Principal Celebrant- Celebrante Principal
 His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl
 Archbishop of Washington

Homilist - Homilista
 Most Reverend Mario Dorsonville
 Auxiliary Bishop of Washington

Ofrenda de Navidad – Durante el Adviento, tenemos la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre las muchas bendiciones del Señor, en particular los dones que se experimentan en San Mateo. Dependemos de su generosidad, la cual nos permite construir el Reino de Dios en nuestra parroquia y en nuestra comunidad. Les invitamos a que manden su donación de Navidad a la rectoría, ponerla en la cesta

de la colecta, o donar vía www.stmatthewscathedral.org. Agradecemos sinceramente su generosidad y pido a Dios que esta Navidad traiga muchas bendiciones a usted y toda su familia.

Ofrendas Florales – Cada año se hacen todos los esfuerzos posibles para decorar la Catedral para la Navidad de una manera que refleje verdaderamente la noble sencillez de esta época. Para hacerlo de nuevo, necesitamos de su apoyo generoso. Usted puede mandar su ofrenda de flores a la rectoría, ponerla en la cesta de la colecta, o donar en la página digital de la Catedral. Sabemos que en esta época, hay muchas solicitudes, por eso apreciamos cualquier donación.

Encuentra el Regalo Perfecto – Navidad celebra el regalo perfecto del amor de Dios en Jesús, y el Adviento es el tiempo en el que preparamos nuestros corazones para la bienvenida de ese regalo. Esta semana tomemos un tiempo de nuestras atareadas ocupaciones de la temporada y reflexionemos en el milagro de Dios hecho hombre. Para encontrar recursos y horarios de misas en toda la Arquidiócesis de Washington, visite: www.RegaloPerfecto.org.

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Patronal Feastday of the United States (Holy Day of Obligation)

Friday, December 8

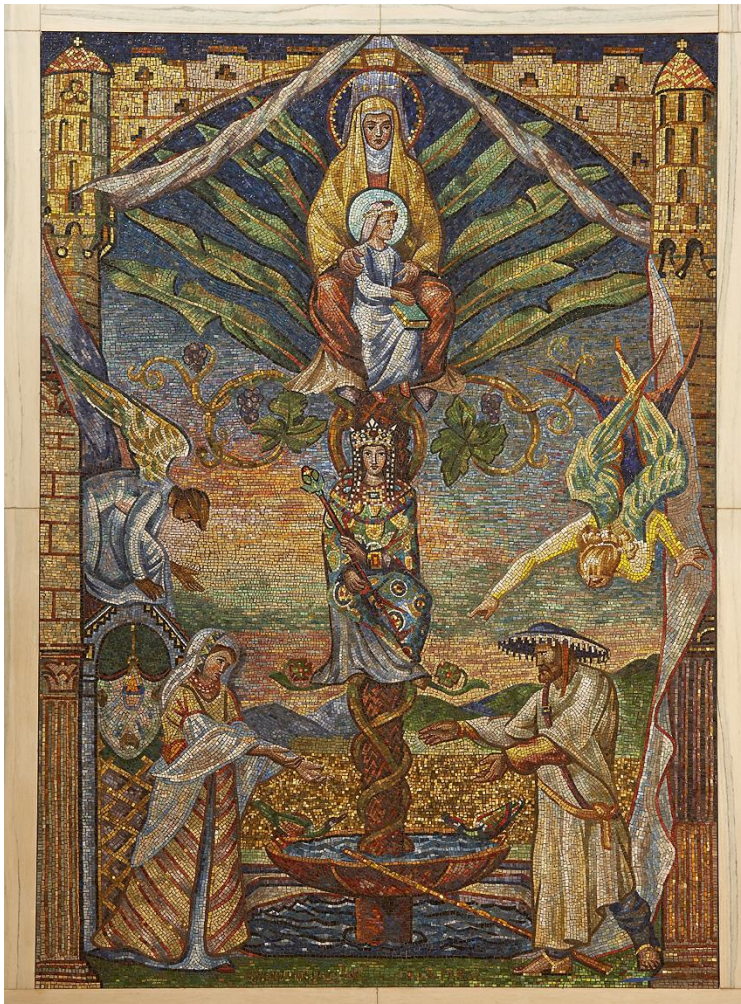
Vigil Mass at 5:30pm on Thursday, December 7

Masses on December 8 at 7am, 8am, 11am, 12:10pm, 5:30pm, and 7pm (en español)

No 11am Confessions on December 8

“The feast of the pure and sinless Conception of the Virgin Mary, which is a fundamental preparation for the Lord’s coming into the world, harmonizes perfectly with many of the salient themes of Advent. This feast also makes references to the long messianic waiting for the Saviour’s birth and recalls events and prophecies from the Old Testament, which also are used in the Liturgy of Advent.” (Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy, 102)

Take a Moment and Take a Look in the Cathedral!



The mosaic at left is located to the left of the statue of Our Lady in Our Lady's Chapel.

It shows angels holding back the curtain of time to reveal St. Joachim and St. Anne at the fountain of the Golden Gate.

The scene is laid against the glow of the setting sun, symbolic of the advanced years of St. Anne and St. Joachim, when it was made known to them that they would have a child, Mary.

Between them at the bottom of the mosaic flows a fountain.

From this fountain there springs a genealogical rod, at the top of which St. Anne presents to the world her child, Mary, who is to be the Mother of Christ.

THE PROPHETS ISAIAH AND ADVENT

Many of the first readings at Mass during Advent come from Isaiah. Isaiah stands out in this period of expectation and waiting for its beautiful and poetic presentation of the hopeful lead-up to the yearned for coming of Jesus, at Christmas and the Second Coming. But it is helpful to recognize that just as there were three magi who came from the East to recognize the birth of the King of the Jews, so too there are three different Isaiah presentations in this wonderful Book of the Old Testament—of the original one and of two later disciples.

Scripture scholars recognize that the Book of Isaiah is an anthology:

- A) Chapters 1-39, writings relate to the early prophet himself (740-687);
- B) Chapters 40-55, known as Deutero-Isaiah (Second Isaiah), focus on the Exiles (597-538);
- C) Chapters 56-66, known as Trito-Isaiah (Third Isaiah), focus on post-Exile (c. 537-510).

Thus the full Book covers a period of over 200 years.

In FIRST ISAIAH, Chapters 1-39, Isaiah's style reflects variety of expression, a very literate person, clarity of thought, precision and balance of phrase. A master of the language, he stands out for the beauty of his poetry as well as the sheer power of his faith. His experience of God is above all one of holiness, as his vision shows.

Chapters 1-12, his early ministry, center around the pressure on young King Ahaz to avoid foreign alliances and the need of faith. Chapters 6-12, sometimes referred to as the Book of Emmanuel, contain the great Isaiah themes, especially chapter 6 on the call of Isaiah, and chapter 7:10-14 on the prophecy of the Messiah (a maiden/virgin shall conceive). While the child predicted probably was Hezekiah, Christians see Jesus here. Isaiah is a prophet extolling the holiness of God, from whom salvation comes.

Two institutions dominate his life and work: a) Jerusalem (Zion)—the place of Yahweh's Temple and David's throne, and b) the Davidic Covenant. While for Isaiah the Sinai covenant was conditional, the Davidic covenant was not. However, ultimately the people are dependent on the true KING.

DEUTERO-ISAIAH covers the two Babylon Exiles (597) and (587-538), in Chapters 40-55, and King Cyrus' victory over Babylon. It begins in 40:1 already with "Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God." Notable are the four servant songs that Christians feel are a preview of what Christ will be forced to suffer. Another beloved verse from chapter 52 is "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings..." Deliverance is in store for all.

TRITO-ISAIAH covers the period when those in Exile returned and met up with the remnant. This prophet is active in the rebuilding period and knew the writings of the great Isaiah and the work of the prophet in Exile. The theme of comfort again is repeated. Chapter 61 (3rd Sunday of Advent) previews Jesus preaching in Nazareth: God's intervention on behalf of His people. Already in Chapter 56 there is openness to foreign nations and gentiles.

—Father Jack Hurley

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Waiting

O God, you are the maker of heaven
and earth,
the potter who fashioned all of creation.
Come and rouse our hearts from despair
and fill us with the light of faith as we
await your return.
Grant us patient perseverance during
this period of waiting
so that, having been enriched by
Christ Jesus,
we may joyfully and faithfully live in
this world.
Keep us vigilant in our daily living.
Wipe away all darkness
so our hearts may be made holy
and pure.
Like our ancestors in faith, we cry out
to you to come and save us!
Filled with hope,
we trust that all creation will be made
new on the day of your return.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 3, 2017

Keep Alert

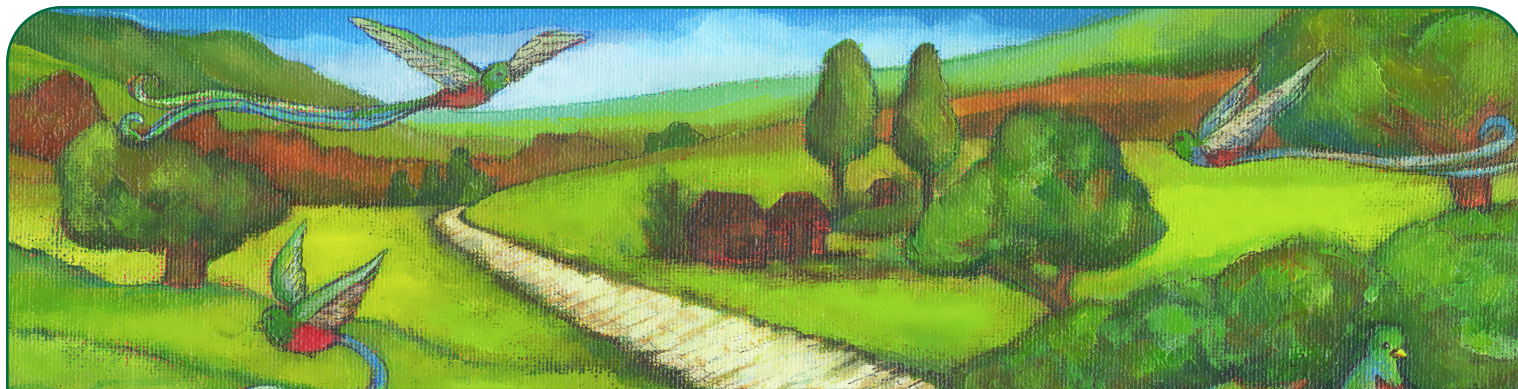


Today's Readings: Isaiah 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7; Psalm 80:2–3, 15–16, 18–19; 1 Corinthians 1:3–9; Mark 13:33–37. Today's readings may not be what you expect as this season of hope and longing begins. Two general themes unfold during Advent: the first two Sundays invite the Church to reflect on the Second Coming of Christ, while the final two Sundays direct our attention more specifically to the Incarnation. Along with the readings, be attentive to the Collects, or Opening Prayers, during the next few weeks, to notice these themes.

The overarching theme for today is “Keep alert.” The First Reading, a communal lament (63:16b–17, 19) and a prayer (64:2–7), focuses our attention on a hurting world. When there is suffering, it is easy to complain or become

cynical and forget God's faithfulness. St. Paul is telling us that in Christ we have already received the gifts we need to remain faithful during this life, this in between time. This is important information as we look to the Gospel. Jesus is very clear that we do not know the day or time of the Second Coming. Like the servants whose master is away, we have been charged to continue preaching the Good News, to keep our “house” in good working order.

We must remain watchful so that at that final hour, we may be found ready to give all glory and honor to the living God. This week, as you prepare your Jesse tree, consider the ways our ancestors were watchful and remained faithful. What might help you remain vigilant?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 4

Peace

At the beginning of Advent, the Church invites us to ponder the Reign of God. The First Reading paints an image of God gathering and instructing the nations. God's instruction leads the nations to unity and peace. Our world continues to be divided so we must continue to pray for peace and strive to make known the Reign of God. Also, do you notice a familiar text in the Gospel? We say this prayer before receiving Holy Communion. At dinner, take some time to discuss this phrase and its relation to the Eucharistic table. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Matthew 8:5-11.*

Tuesday, December 5

Jesus Revealer of the Father

In today's Gospel, we see Jesus rejoicing over what God has revealed to the disciples. To understand the reference the reader needs to read verse 17 of the chapter, which describes a battle between good and evil. Like the disciples, we must be watchful, work for justice, and fend off evil. Those who have seen Christ know the Father. Today, create a Jesse tree with your family and discuss Christ's role in salvation. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Luke 10:21-24.*

Wednesday, December 6

St. Nicholas

The message of the First Reading and Gospel helps us understand St. Nicholas' desire to serve the poor and needy. Jesus, whose love is overflowing, inspired Nicholas to give generously to others. Instead of seeking gifts today, read about St. Nicholas and decide how your family might share its resources with the poor. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 25:6-10a; Psalm 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Matthew 15:29-37.*

Thursday, December 7

St. Ambrose

Advent invites us to look into our hearts to discern our willingness to listen and to respond to God's call. The readings today tell us that only the just will enter God's Kingdom and stand firm amidst adversity. Is your heart open to the Father's will? In what ways do you struggle to listen and respond to God? Take time today to journal and name ways you are living the Father's will. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 26:1-6; Psalm 118:1 and 8-9, 19-21, 2-27a; Matthew 7:21, 24-27.*

Friday, December 8

The Immaculate Conception

Today's solemnity celebrates God's grace working in Mary that kept her free of sin from the moment of her conception. The Gospel passage helps us understand that throughout her life she cooperates with God's grace. Confronted by the angel Gabriel, she puts aside her entire self and says yes. She is the New Eve, the mother of all the living. Unlike Eve in Genesis, Mary humbly and obediently accepts God's will and brings forth life in Jesus. After dinner, sing the Magnificat and discuss the powerful images. *Today's Readings: Genesis 3:9-15, 20, Psalm 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38.*

Saturday, December 9

Discipleship

Jesus, in today's Gospel, commissions the disciples to "cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons" as part of their mission to proclaim the Reign of God. In Baptism each of us was commissioned to live in such a way that our lives proclaim the Good News. What does it look like to "cure" the sick or "drive out" demons today? Jesus is calling us to go to the margins and proclaim God's Reign. Today, consider celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Psalm 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8.*





Looking for a convenient way to support our parish offertory?

Faith Direct is the innovative solution that allows you to support our parish using electronic funds transfer from either a credit card or bank account. It is a hassle-free, simple solution for today's busy families.

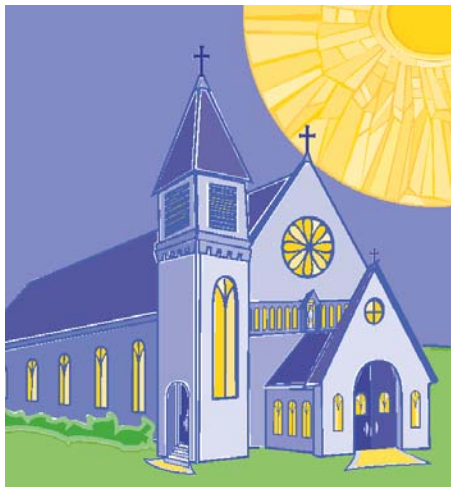
Sign up using the enrollment form on the other side or go online to www.faithdirect.net and use our parish code **DC284** to enroll today!

ENROLL TODAY!

How does Faith Direct work?

Faith Direct is a secure system that works directly with your bank or credit card—much the same as other direct payments you may have set up for utility bills or mortgage payments.

When do transactions take place?



Transactions take place once per month on the 4th or the next business day. The total amount of your gifts for that current month (both offertory & second/special collections) will be debited in one monthly total. The Cathedral will receive the funds 4 business days later.

Can I stop, increase, or decrease my payment at any time?

Yes, by calling **Faith Direct** at 1-866-507-8757 (toll free) by emailing info@faithdirect.net, or by logging in to your account through www.faithdirect.net.

How does the Cathedral benefit from my participation with Faith Direct?

The Cathedral will see a substantial increase in net revenue, a decrease in administrative costs, and a clearer picture of cash flow for their needs.

If you have any questions about the Faith Direct program,
please call 1-866-507-8757 {toll free} or send an email to info@faithdirect.net,
or contact Pam Erwin at the Rectory at 202-347-3215 x537 or
perwin@stmatthewscathedral.org.

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Process my gifts on the: ☐ 4th *or* ☐ 15th of the month (please check only one box)

"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." (Peter 4:10)

Weekly Offertory Gift: \$ _____

*(Note: The total amount will be determined by the number of
Sundays in the month. Some months have 5 Sundays.)*

You may also choose to give to the following second and special collections as part of the regular monthly transaction.

COLLECTION	AMOUNT	MONTH	COLLECTION	AMOUNT	MONTH
<input type="checkbox"/> Cathedral Maintenance	\$ _____	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Dome at National Shrine	\$ _____	May
<input type="checkbox"/> Music Ministry	\$ _____	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Father	\$ _____	June
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Box/Outreach	\$ _____	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Communications & Human Development	\$ _____	August
<input type="checkbox"/> Solemnity of Mary	\$ _____	January	<input type="checkbox"/> Assumption	\$ _____	August
<input type="checkbox"/> Church Missions within the US/ Archdiocese of Military Services	\$ _____	January	<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic University	\$ _____	September
<input type="checkbox"/> Churches in the Developing World	\$ _____	February	<input type="checkbox"/> Propagation of the Faith/ World Missions	\$ _____	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Ash Wednesday	\$ _____	March	<input type="checkbox"/> All Saints Day	\$ _____	November
<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Relief Services	\$ _____	March	<input type="checkbox"/> All Souls Day *	\$ _____	November
<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Thursday	\$ _____	March/April	<input type="checkbox"/> Archdiocesan Priests' Retirement	\$ _____	November
<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Land	\$ _____	March/April	<input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Fund for Religious	\$ _____	December
<input type="checkbox"/> Easter Flowers	\$ _____	March/April	<input type="checkbox"/> Immaculate Conception	\$ _____	December
<input type="checkbox"/> Easter Sunday (In addition to regular Sunday gift)	\$ _____	March/April	<input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Flowers	\$ _____	December
			<input type="checkbox"/> Christmas	\$ _____	December

** Please call the church at 202-347-3215 with the names of your intentions for this collection.*

I would like to enroll in the *Faith Direct* program for the benefit of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle. I understand that my **total** monthly contribution amount will be transferred directly from my checking account or credit card as stated above, a record of my gifts will appear on my bank or credit card statement, and my transfers will begin on the 4th or next business day of the month following my enrollment. I understand that I can increase, decrease, or suspend my giving by contacting *Faith Direct* toll free at 1-866-507-8757.

{All gifts provided to your Church originating as Automated Clearing House transactions comply with US law.}

Signature: X _____ **Date:** _____

Name(s): (please print) _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

☐ Name as I/we would like it to appear on Offertory Cards: _____

☐ I do not wish to receive Offertory Cards to place in the collection basket as a sign of my electronic giving.

If you choose to enroll by mail, you can contact Faith Direct at 1-866-507-8757 {toll-free} to set up online access to your account.

For Bank Account Debit: Please return this completed form and a voided check to *Faith Direct* Enrollment.

For Credit/Debit Card: Please complete the following... ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit/Debit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

If you have any questions about the *Faith Direct* program, please contact us at 1-866-507-8757 {toll free} or info@faithdirect.net.