

TODAY'S READINGS

Hail, favored one!. (Luke 1:28)
Face-to-face with the mighty angel Gabriel, Mary was "greatly troubled" (Like 1:29). Gabriel announced God's plan for her to conceive through the Holy Spirit and bear a son who would inherit the throne of David and rule forever. And Mary, despite not having all the answers, was able to say: "May it be done to me according to your word" (1:38).

The words are so simple, so faith-filled, that we might miss out on what was behind them. By saying "yes" to the angel, Mary also said "no" to many things. She closed the door on an alternative life that had its own attractions: a life of quiet contemplation, out of the limelight, surrounded only by friends and family; a life of simple joys and everyday challenges. And yet with just a few words, she put aside all her dreams to embrace God's dreams instead.

We can read this passage and marvel at Mary's faith—and lament our lack of faith in comparison. But it's important to see that when he greeted her, Gabriel called Mary full of *grace*, not full of *faith*. Mary's "yes" to God was the result of the grace God had given her, not the result of her own willpower and forceful personality.

This is a key point for all of us. For in the final analysis, faith is not something we drum up on our own. It's a gift given to us by a gracious, generous God. It's a *grace* that he pours into us, a potent seed that is waiting to be plunged into the soil of our hearts. We may think we have weak faith, but the truth is God has given us all the faith we will ever need. We just have to learn how to yield to this great gift.

So what do you think? Can you say "yes" to God today? Yes, you can. God's gift of grace guarantees it!

"Father, thank you for the gift of faith. Knowing you is greatest joy of my life"

Taken from *The Word Among Us*, Advent 2011, Vol. 31, Number 1: Used with permission.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Sunday 18th 2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16 / Rom 16:25-27 /

Fourth Sunday of Advent Lk 1:26-38

Monday 19th Jgs 13:2-7,24-25 / Lk 1:5-25

Tuesday 20th Is 7:10-14 / Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday 21st Sg 2:8-14/ Lk 1:39-45

St. Peter Conisius

Thursday 22nd 1 Sm 1:24-28 / Lk 1:46-56

Friday 23rd Mal 3:1-4,23-24 / Lk 1:57-66

St. John of Kanty

Saturday 24th 2 Sm 7:1-5,8,12,14,16 / Lk 1:67-79

Sunday 25th Is 52:7-10 / Heb 1:1-6 / Jn 1:1-18

The Nativity of the Lord

LAS LECTURAS DE HOY

Que Dios haga conmigo como me has dicho. (Lucas 1,38)
Purísima Virgen María, ¿cómo ibas a saber que el simple "sí" que diste significaría tanto para el mundo?

Recibiendo a Jesús en tu santo seno, permitiste que nos acercáramos a la salvación eterna.

¡Dios perdonaría nuestros pecados y nos daría la salud completa, todo porque tú dijiste que sí!

¿Cómo fue que lo hiciste? ¡Qué inmenso amor a Dios y a su pueblo debes haber tenido en el corazón! Más que cualquier otra persona pudiste percibir el amor de Dios cuando el Señor lo derramó sobre ti, y lo único que quisiste fue corresponder a ese amor con todas tus fuerzas. Ese "sí" que diste en la

Anunciación fue uno más de los muchos otros

que pronunciaste en tu vida, y por eso te estoy inmensamente agradecido, porque llevaste una vida de tanta fidelidad.

¡Oh, María, sin pecado concebida, enséñame a decir que "sí"! Enséñame a confiar en Dios y a dejar que sucedan cosas en mi vida que tal vez me parezcan extrañas y diferentes al principio. Enséñame a detenerme un poco y poner atención al suave susurro del Espíritu, que me pide hacer la voluntad de Dios, no la mía. Rueda por mí para que yo tenga el coraje de creer y hacer más las promesas de Dios, como tú lo hiciste cada día.

Sabemos, santísima Virgen, que en las bodas de Caná les dijiste a los servidores "Hagan todo lo que él les diga" (Juan 2,5). Esta no fue una nueva revelación para ti, sino un reflejo de cómo vivías cada día. Pide, Señora, que yo tenga el mismo corazón dócil, confiado y obediente, que escuche a Jesús y haga lo que Él me dice, para que yo también llegue a ser un instrumento de su gracia y una bendición para los que tengo a mi lado.

"Dios te salve, María, llena eres de gracia. El Señor está contigo. Bendita tú eres entre todas las mujeres y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre, Jesús. Santa María, Madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros, pecadores, ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte."

Escogida con el permiso de *La Palabra Entre Nosotros*, Vol. 31, Número 6: Adviento 2011.

LECTURAS DE LA SEMANA

Domingo 18 2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16 / Rom 16:25-27 /

Cuarto domingo de Adviento Lc 1:26-38

Lunes 19 Jue 13:2-7,24-25 / Lc 1:5-25

Martes 20 Is 7:10-14 / Lc 1:26-38

Miércoles 21 Cant 2:8-14/ Lc 1:39-45

San Pedro Canisio

Jueves 22 1 Sm 1:24-28 / Lc 1:46-56

Viernes 23 Mal 3:1-4,23-24 / Lc 1:57-66

San Juan Cancio

Sábado 24 2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16 / Lc 1:67-79

Domingo 25 Is 52:7-10 / Heb 1:1-6 / Jn 1:1-18

La Natividad del Señor

HIGHLIGHTS

COME—LET US ADORE HIM!

Join us for Eucharistic Adoration during this final week of Advent, on Monday, **December 19** from 6 to 7pm. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available during the hour. “In a world where there is so much noise, so much bewilderment, there is a need for silent adoration of Jesus concealed in the Host. . . . It is a source of comfort and light, particularly to those who are suffering.” (Pope Benedict XVI)

CHRISTMAS DECORATING ON FRIDAY—HELP NEEDED



On-the-Job Training! On Friday, **December 23** we will decorate the Cathedral for Christmas in one session. We need 10-15 volunteers beginning at 9am to prepare poinsettias,

decorate wreaths and assemble the Crèche, put lights on the trees and place poinsettias in the chapels. Come for as long or as little as you are able. Snacks will be served. To help, contact Fr. Regan at 202-347-3215 or kregan@stmatthewscathedral.org.

FIND THE PERFECT GIFT & LEAD OTHERS TO HIM

It's not too late to join parishioners from all over the archdiocese in the second year of an exciting Advent Evangelization campaign to invite people to reconsider the spiritual meaning of Christmas. Jesus, the perfect gift, changes lives. Parishioners are placing signs in their yards or windows that read “FindthePerfectGift.org.” On that website are a series of short reflections inviting people to think about the meaning of gift-giving. The signs remind us that just as the star in the East led the Wise Men to Jesus, we too can guide people to an encounter with our Lord. **Call the rectory at 202-347-3215 to receive a sign and post it in your yard or window, or pick one up at Mass this weekend.** Use it as an opportunity to talk with neighbors and friends about the feast of Christmas and the gift Jesus has been for you.

Watch for *Find the Perfect Gift* TV spots on WJLA and Comcast—we hear that the commercial is super!

FAITH IN ACTION

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CLASSES – FOR ADULTS

Classes in the upcoming Spring semester of our ESL Program will be held **January 17 to March 29** on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, 6:30-8:30pm, with optional tutoring 6-6:30pm. Students may register, in person, Wednesday, January 11, between 6:30 and 8pm, at St. Matthew’s Education Center, 1726 N Street, NW. At registration, each student will be assessed to determine the appropriate class level in which he/she will be placed. Student registrations will be accepted until February 2. The cost of the 11-week program is \$40. For more information, please contact the ESL Program Coordinator at stmattseslprogram@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ESL PROGRAM – TEACHERS, TUTORS & PERSONS OF HOSPITALITY

We are looking for volunteers to serve as teachers, tutors, and persons of hospitality **one night per week** (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday) in the Spring semester of our ESL Program, which will run **January 17 to March 29** (see above for more details.) While volunteers are not required to have formal training in teaching English as a second language, we expect their native language to be English. Classes will be taught in English only. If you do not feel comfortable teaching a class on your own, we can pair you with a more experienced teacher. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the ESL Program Coordinator at stmattseslprogram@gmail.com.

SPANISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (SSL) PROGRAM – FOR ADULTS

Classes in the upcoming Spring semester of our SSL Program will be held **January 17 to March 29** on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, 6-8:30pm, with optional tutoring 6-6:30pm. Language instruction will be provided at Level 1 only. Students may register, in person, Wednesday, January 11, between 6:30 and 8pm, at St. Matthew’s Education Center, 1726 N Street, NW. The cost of the 11-week program is \$50, plus \$30 for the textbook that will be used during the semester. Student registrations will be accepted until January 24. For more information, please contact the SSL Program Coordinator at stmattsclassesdespanol@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SSL PROGRAM – TEACHERS

We are looking for volunteers to serve as teachers, tutors, and persons of hospitality **one night per week** (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday) in the Spring semester of our SSL Program, which will run **January 17 to March 29** (see above for more details.) While volunteers are not required to have formal training in teaching Spanish as a second language, we expect their native language to be Spanish. Also, each volunteer should possess a university degree. Classes will be taught in Spanish only. If you do not feel comfortable teaching a class on your own, we can pair you with a more experienced teacher. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the SSL Program Coordinator at stmattsclassesdespanol@gmail.com.

NEWS AND NOTES

HOSPITALITY MINISTERS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES!

To current and prospective ministers of hospitality, will you please help us this Christmas? If you can serve at a Mass on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, please sign up in one of the books at the Cathedral entrance or contact us at Reply@stmatthewscathedral.org or 202-587-5143.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

During Advent, a season of waiting, conversion and hope, we have the opportunity to reflect upon the many blessings of the Lord, particularly those graces experienced at St. Matthew's. We rely upon your gracious generosity, which enables us to help build up the Kingdom of God in our parish and our community. Please use the envelope in your offertory packet or in the pews marked "Christmas Offering." We sincerely appreciate your generosity.

SEVEN NIGHTS OF LIGHTS

On Christmas Eve, **December 24**, at 1pm, over 800 luminaria will be blessed and lit (and remain lit through New Year's Eve) by the friars of the Franciscan Monastery (1400 Quincy St. NE, Washington, DC.), illuminating the monastery's outdoor rosary porticos. All are welcome to the blessing and to visit the monastery, which includes a replica of the Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem, during the Christmas season. Free parking; near Brookland-CUA Metro. For information, visit myfranciscan.com or call 202-526-6800.

CATHEDRAL CALENDAR

December 18 – December 25

SUNDAY—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Las clases de Catecumenado y Catequesis Familiar continúan a las 11:00 de la mañana.

MONDAY—The Development & Stewardship Committee meets at 6:45pm in the West Conference Room.

Wine and Wisdom meets at 7pm in the East Conference Room.

TUESDAY—An Advent Communal Penance Service is held in the Cathedral at 12:10pm. There are no 11am Confessions and no 12:10pm Mass.

Las Reflexiones de Adviento concluyen hoy a las 7 de la tarde en el salón de conferencias del Oeste.

The Faith Formation Committee **does not** meet this month.

WEDNESDAY—Breaking Open the Word **does not** meet on December 21 or 28.

SATURDAY—**Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord.** See insert for the Mass schedule. **The Rectory closes at 2pm.**

SUNDAY—**Feast of the Nativity of the Lord.** See insert for the Mass schedule. **The parish offices are closed.**

RESPECT LIFE

ADULT & FAMILY RALLY & MASS FOR LIFE

The Archdiocese of Washington and the Association of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities will sponsor the annual *Adult and Family Rally and Mass for Life* at the Cathedral on the day of the March for Life, Monday, **January 23**. The Rally will kick off at 9am with prayer, music and inspirational speakers including Loretta Fleming from the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, and the St. Margaret of Scotland Gospel Choir. Mass begins at 10am. Registration is required. Register at <http://adultrally4life.eventbrite.com>.

FAITH FORMATION

BECOMING CATHOLIC

Throughout the year, adults come forward seeking to learn about the Catholic faith. For those interested in learning about the Catholic faith or thinking about becoming Catholic, St. Matthew's offers Inquiry, a casual, ongoing conversation about the Catholic faith, once a month. Inquiry is the first step in the process of discerning one's commitment to full initiation in the Catholic Church. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month, 6:30-7:30pm, in the East Conference Room. An overview of the adult initiation process (RCIA), which begins formally each June, can be presented after Inquiry for those who are interested. The next Inquiry will be Wednesday, **January 11**. For more information, contact Heather Kinney at hkinney@stmatthewscathedral.org.

ADULT CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

St. Matthew's offers adult Confirmation preparation for *active Catholics who have received both the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist* in the weeks between Easter and Pentecost. The celebration of adult Confirmation occurs at a special Mass on Pentecost Sunday, which will be May 27 in 2012 (Memorial Day weekend). The preparation includes five weekly sessions on consecutive Thursday evenings -- tentatively set for April 19, 26 and May 3, 10, and 17 -- and a Saturday retreat tentatively set for May 19. Registration begins in January, so please follow announcements in the bulletin and the website for information on how to register.

BOOK CLUB: THE STORIES OF J.F. POWERS

All are invited to join the St. Matthew's Book Club for its next meeting Monday, **January 23** when they will discuss *The Stories of J.F. Powers*. J.F. Powers was a 20th-century American novelist and writer of short stories on life in the Catholic Church. The club meets in the West Conference Room at 6:45pm. Contact Paul Zummo at pzummo@gmail.com if you have any questions.

NOTICIAS DE LA PARROQUIA

ENCUENTRE EL REGALO PERFECTO

Sea parte de la nueva evangelización: encontrar el regalo perfecto es una iniciativa de Adviento de la Arquidiócesis de Washington, que invita a los católicos a compartir con los vecinos y amigos, a considerar el gran don de Dios al enviarnos a su Hijo a la tierra. Cuando alguien le pregunte acerca de la campaña, comparta con ellos el enlace a la página digital: findthepperfectgift.org o regaloperfecto.org y comparta con ellos la diferencia que puede hacer una relación con el Señor en su vida.

SERVICIO COMUNITARIO AL MEDIODÍA Y CONFESIONES EN LA TARDE

Les invitamos a que experimenten el amor de Cristo a través del Sacramento de la Confesión en el Servicio Comunitario de Adviento, el martes **20 de diciembre**, a las 12:10 del mediodía. Habrá varios sacerdotes disponibles, incluyendo sacerdotes en español y otros idiomas. No puede venir durante el día? Esa tarde también habrá confesiones de 6:00-7:00 tendremos sacerdotes disponibles, incluyendo un sacerdote en español.

REFLEXIONES DE ADVIENTO

Las reflexiones son a las 7:30 de la noche en el salón de conferencias del Oeste tendremos las reflexiones de Adviento, tomando como referencia las promesas mesiánicas del profeta Isaías. Esperamos nos ayuden a prepararnos para celebrar la Navidad con un corazón renovado y bien dispuesto.

Semana 4. Martes **20 de diciembre**

¡Levántate y brilla! que ha llegado tu Luz

Empecemos esta época del año con una buena preparación
¡Les esperamos!

CATEQUESIS

Les dejamos saber que los domingos **25 de diciembre**, y **1 de enero** no habrá clases de catecismo y catecumenado. Las clases se reanudarán el domingo **8 de enero** con el mismo horario. Les deseamos ¡Feliz Navidad y Año Nuevo!

OFRENDA NAVIDAD

Durante el Adviento, tiempo de espera, de conversión y de esperanza, tenemos la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre las muchas bendiciones del Señor, en particular los dones experimentados en San Mateo. Como siempre dependemos de su amable generosidad, la cual nos permita construir el Reino de Dios en nuestra parroquia y en nuestra comunidad. Por favor utilice el sobre que fue enviado o los sobres que hay en los bancos con el letrero "Ofrenda de Navidad." Agradecemos sinceramente su generosidad y pido a Dios que esta Navidad trae muchas bendiciones a usted y toda su familia.

¿HA ESTADO USTED EN FÁTIMA?

Mons. Jameson les invita a que se unan a él y a otros feligreses y amigos de San Mateo a un viaje fabuloso de peregrinación a Madrid, Fátima y Lisboa en Abril de 2012! El itinerario está designado a mostrar lo mejor de Madrid dejando tiempo libre para explorar a su propio paso. Pase tiempo en el lugar famoso de Fátima donde Nuestra Señora se apareció seis veces a Lucia, Jacinta y Francisco, con tiempo para reflexión, y oración. Finalmente, descubrir partes interesantes de Lisboa y ciudades de los alrededores. El grupo saldrá de Washington, el miércoles **11 de abril de 2012**, y regresará el domingo **22 de abril de 2012**. La fecha final para inscribirse será el **1 de febrero de 2012**. Para más información, recoja un folleto en la rectoría, también pueden llamar a Mons. Jameson al 202-347-3215.

RITO DE INICIACION CRISTIANA DE ADULTOS (RICA)

Es usted: 1) un adulto sin bautizar que les gustaría ser católico, 2) bautizado en otra religión cristiana que quiere profesar su fe como cristiano católico, 3) un adulto bautizado católico que desea completar su iniciación en la Iglesia Católica. Para más información, llame a Fátima al 202-347-3215 x543.

CLASES DE INGLÉS PARA ADULTOS

El nuevo semestre de inglés comienza el **martes 17 de enero hasta el jueves 29 de marzo**. Las clases serán de 6:30 a 8:30 de la noche. Nuevos alumnos necesitan venir el miércoles 11 de enero, entre las 6:30 y 8:00 de la noche, en el Centro Educativo St. Matthew, que queda en 1726 N Street, NW y deberán tomar un examen que determinará el nivel de clase que les corresponde. El costo es de \$40 por el programa de 11-semanas. Para más información, contactar al Coordinador de ESL al siguiente correo electrónico: stmattseslprogram@gmail.com.

EL PROGRAMA DE ESPAÑOL COMO SEGUNDA LENGUA (SSL) – PARA ADULTOS

Buscamos voluntarios que puedan servir como maestros una noche a la semana (martes, miércoles o jueves) para el semestre de primavera del programa de SSL de San Mateo, el cual se llevará a cabo del 17 de enero hasta 29 de marzo, 6:30 a 8:30 de la noche. No es necesario que los voluntarios sean entrenados en la enseñanza del español como segunda lengua, pero insistimos que el español sea su lengua natal. Además, cada voluntario debe tener título universitario. Las clases se enseñarán solo en español. Si usted está interesado en ser voluntario por favor póngase en contacto con el Coordinador del Programa SSL al stmattsclassesdespanol@gmail.com.

MASS INTENTIONS**Sunday, December 18**

5:30pm (vigil) – Richard Douglas Longo

7am – David Colantonio

8:30am – Douglas Ritter

10am – Msgr. Edward Westenberger

11:30am – All Parishioners

1pm – Consuelo y Catalina Leon

5:30pm – Cipriano Agpasa

Monday, December 19

7am – Kinslow Bailey (living)

8am – Andres Yelicie

12:10pm – Patrick & Anne McEvoy

5:30pm – Gersona Da Sousa

Tuesday, December 20

7am – Horacio Santos

8am – Robert White

5:30pm – Paule Kengne & Family (living)

Wednesday, December 21

7am – Louis Migliorini

8am – Antonio Cancio (living)

12:10pm – Joseph Di Battista

5:30pm – Dr. Joyce C. Clifford

Thursday, December 22

7am – Tom McGrath

8am – Epy Alcantara

12:10pm – Mario & Norma Di Battista

5:30pm – Poor Souls in Purgatory.

Friday, December 23

7am – Jeffrey Dompas

12:10pm – Russell & Dorothy Gunsales

5:30am – Andy Davis & Doris Gallagher

Saturday, December 24

8am – Lillian Mahshie

12:10pm – Patricia Day

4:30pm – The Wilson Family (living)

6:30pm – Modesta Castro

10pm – Fr. Keith Ramey

Sunday, December 25

8:30am – Ronald J. Hilgert

10am – John Pripusich

11:30am – Ming Fa-Yu

1pm – Francisco y Angélica De León

To arrange a Mass intention, speak to our receptionist in the Rectory.

There is no fee but an offering is customary. Intentions are reserved in advance so particular dates may be unavailable.

MARRIAGES

Couples who are interested in celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage at the Cathedral are encouraged to visit the parish website to review our guidelines for weddings. The next step is to call the Rectory 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 ceremony 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.

BAPTISMS

Parents who wish to have their child baptized at the Cathedral should contact the Baptismal Coordinator at the Rectory at 202-347-3215 x555. Parents are encouraged to make contact with us **at least six (6) months in advance** of a desired baptismal date, at which time they may ask for the priest of their choice to perform the Baptism. This early contact enables parents to be scheduled for the necessary sacramental formation session before the child's baptism and allows time for sponsors to obtain letters from their parish pastor.

CATHEDRAL TOURS

Visitors are invited to schedule a guided tour of the Cathedral or to do a self-guided tour using the color brochures available at the inside entrance to the Cathedral. Guided tours are given free of charge. Donations to the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle are always appreciated and may be given to your tour guide or to our receptionist at the Rectory. To schedule a guided tour, contact us at 202-347-3215 x512 or 202-587-5143 or mhurley@stmatthewscathedral.org.

Please check our parish website regularly for updates on liturgies and events at St. Matthew's!

www.stmatthewscathedral.org

**** PARISH PILGRIMAGE **
TO SPAIN AND PORTUGAL**

Join Msgr. Jameson and fellow parishioners and friends on a pilgrimage to Madrid, Fatima and Lisbon in April 2012! The itinerary showcases the best of Madrid while affording you time to explore the city. Spend time at the famous site in Fatima where Our Lady appeared six times to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco and take time to reflect and pray. Discover interesting, artsy and unique parts of Lisbon and hip surrounding towns. The group will leave Washington on Wednesday, April 11, 2012, and return on Sunday, April 22, 2012. Enroll by **February 1, 2012**. For more information, see the brochure on our website, pick one up at the rectory or call Msgr. Jameson.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS &
OTHER GIFT ITEMS**

St. Matthew's is pleased to offer a 48-page souvenir book on our beautiful Cathedral church written by Richard Schmidt and Claudia Rousseau, with Joseph Carey, Nancy McKinley and Elizabeth Sullivan. It features the Cathedral's history, art and architecture vividly portrayed through photographs by local photographer, Neil Greentree.

Also available are sets of six note cards picturing the art of the Cathedral, boxed sets of ten **Christmas cards** featuring St. Matthew's Crèche, Christmas ornaments and several CD recordings of the Cathedral's *Schola Cantorum*. CD titles are listed on our website.



**St. Matthew's
Crèche -
Christmas cards
available in
boxed sets of 10
cards &
envelopes**

Items are available for purchase in the Rectory during office hours. Unless otherwise indicated in this bulletin, the Rectory is open Monday through Thursday from 9am until 8pm and Friday through Sunday from 9am until 4pm. You also may order items by contacting us at 202-347-3215 x 517 or at gharrington@stmatthewscathedral.org. MasterCard and Visa are accepted.

Come Home For Christmas—

Advent Communal Penanace Service

Tuesday, December 20

12:10 p.m



We invite you to experience the love of Christ through the Sacrament of Reconciliation at our Advent Communal Penance Service, *Come Home for Christmas*.

Experience the power of the sacrament, which restores us to God's grace and joins us with him in an intimate friendship.

Join parishioners and friends as we acknowledge our need for forgiveness from sin and reconciliation with God in preparation for the coming of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, at Christmas.

Priests from around the Archdiocese will be available for individual confessions in English, Spanish, German, Italian and American Sign.

Can't make it during the day?

Then join us for an evening confessions hour
the same day from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

Questions?

Contact the Rectory at 202-347-3215
CATHEDRAL OF SAINT MATTHEW THE APOSTLE
1725 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
www.stmatthewscathedral.org

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

What is Reconciliation and Why do we need it?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (also called Confession) was instituted by Jesus Christ in His love and mercy for the Christian Faithful. The sacrament offers the Faithful forgiveness for all offenses committed against God. The Sacrament also reconciles us to the Church because the Church community is also wounded by one's sins.

When we sin, we hurt ourselves, other people and God. Through the sacrament of reconciliation, we acknowledge our sins before God and the Church. We express our sorrow, receive the forgiveness of Christ & the Church, make reparation for what we have done and resolve to do better in the future.

How Do I Make a Meaningful Confession?

Confession is not hard, but one should properly prepare themselves for the sacrament through an examination of conscience. Begin by placing yourself in the presence of God through prayer. Ask God, Our loving Father for healing and forgiveness. Carefully review your life since your last confession- what thoughts, actions, words have not conformed to God's love, to His Law or to the laws of the Church? Here are some questions based on the 10 Commandments to help you prepare:

- Do I pray to God every day? Have I thanked God for His gifts to me?
- Did I put my faith in danger through readings hostile to Catholic teachings or involvement in non-Catholic sects? Did I engage in superstitious practices: palm-reading or fortune-telling?
- Did I take the name of God in vain? Did I curse or take a false oath?
- Did I miss Mass on Sundays or holy days of obligation through my own fault? Am I attentive at Mass? Did I keep fast and abstinence on the prescribed days?
- Did I disobey my parents and lawful superiors in important matters?
- Did I hate or quarrel with anyone, or desire revenge? Did I refuse to forgive? Was I disrespectful?
- Did I get drunk? Did I take illicit drugs?
- Did I consent to, recommend, advise or actively take part in an abortion?
- Did I willfully look at pornography, entertain impure thoughts or engage in impure conversations? Did I use artificial means to prevent conception?
- Was I unfaithful to my spouse? Did I engage in sexual activity outside of marriage? Did I steal or damage another's property? Have I been honest and just in my business relations?
- Have I been responsive to the needs of the poor and respected the dignity of others?
- Did I tell lies? Did I sin by calumny, or detraction, of others? Did I judge others rashly in serious matters?
- Have I envied other people?

The Rite of Reconciliation: A Step by Step Guide

The sacrament can be face to face or anonymous with a screen between you and the priest. Choose the option which is the most comfortable for you.

1. The priest gives you a blessing or greeting. He may share a brief Scripture passage.
2. Make the Sign of the Cross and say: "Bless me father, for I have sinned. My last confession was..." (give the number of weeks, months, or years).
3. Confess all of your sins to the priest. The priest will help you to make a good confession. If you are unsure about how to confess or you feel uneasy, just ask him to help you. Answer his questions without hiding anything out of fear or shame. Nothing that you say to the priest will ever be revealed. Place your trust in God, a merciful Father who wants to forgive you.
4. Following your confession of sins, say: "I am sorry for these and all of my sins."
5. The priest assigns you a penance and offers advice to help you be a better Catholic.
6. Say an Act of Contrition, expressing your sorrow for your sins. There are several versions of the Act of Contrition but a common one is: "God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to confess my sins, do penance, and to amend my life. Amen."
7. The priest, acting in the person of Christ, then absolves you from your sins.
8. After you've left the Confessional or Reconciliation Room: Complete the penance you received.

This condensed guide for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is based on the Archdiocese's "The Light Is On For You," campaign. For more resources please see www.the-light-is-on.org.

CATHEDRAL OF ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE

CONFESSIONS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Monday, *December 19* -
11am to Noon &
6-7pm (during Eucharistic
Adoration)

Tuesday, *December 20* –
12:10pm (English, Spanish & other
languages, part of our *Advent
Communal Penance Service*) &
6-7pm (English & Spanish)

Wednesday, *December 21* –
11am to Noon

Thursday, *December 22* –
11am to Noon (English & Spanish)

Friday, *December 23* –
11am to Noon (English & Spanish)

Saturday, *December 24* –
No Confessions

CONFESIONES ANTES DE LA NAVIDAD

Lunes, *19 de diciembre* –
11 de la mañana a 12 del mediodía y
6 a 7 de la tarde (durante Adoración
Eucarística)

Martes, *20 de diciembre* –
12:10 del mediodía (inglés, español, y
otros idiomas; parte de nuestro programa
de *Adviento Servicio Comunal de
Penitencia*) y
6 a 7 de la tarde (inglés y español)

Miércoles, *21 de diciembre* –
11 de la mañana a 12 del mediodía

Jueves, *22 de diciembre* –
11 de la mañana a 12 del mediodía
(inglés y español)

Viernes, *23 de diciembre* –
11 de la mañana a 12 del mediodía
(inglés y español)

Sábado, *24 de diciembre* –
No habrá confesiones

CATHEDRAL OF ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS EVE

The Cathedral closes at 1pm and reopens at 3pm.

A CHRISTMAS PRELUDE AT 4:00PM

The Contemporary Choir

VIGIL MASS OF CHRISTMAS, 4:30PM

Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson, V.F.

Celebrant and Homilist

MISA DE VIGILIA DE NAVIDAD, 6:30PM

Rev. Evelio Menjivar

Celebrante y Homilista

Coro Hispano

Bendición del Nacimiento

A CHRISTMAS PRELUDE AT 9:15PM

The Schola Cantorum and Festival Singers

SOLEMN MASS OF CHRISTMAS, 10:00PM †

DONALD CARDINAL WUERL

Archbishop of Washington

Celebrant and Homilist

Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson, V.F., *Concelebrant*

Blessing of the Manger Scene

CHRISTMAS DAY

The Cathedral opens at 8:00AM.

Mass Schedule:

8:30AM: Rev. John Hurley

10:00AM: Rev. Mark Knestout

11:30AM: Rev. Kevin Regan †

1:00PM (*en español*): Rev. Evelio Menjivar

The Cathedral closes after the 1:00PM Mass.

The Rectory is closed.

† ~ Interpreted for the deaf

PARKING ON THE HOLIDAYS

Penn Parking has informed us of the following holiday hours for the garage next to the Cathedral:

Saturday, **December 24**, Christmas Eve

7am – Midnight

Sunday, **December 25**

Christmas Day, 6:30am – 2:30pm

Saturday, **December 31**, New Year's Eve

7am – 9pm

Sunday, **January 1**, New Year's Day

6:30am – 7pm

Contact Michael P. Amoroso at Penn Parking at 410-782-9110 with any questions.

SOLEMNIDAD DE LA NATIVIDAD DEL SEÑOR NOCHEBUENA

La Catedral se cerrará a las 1 y se abrirá a las 3 de la tarde

PRELUDIO DE VILLANCICOS

Coro Contemporáneo

MISA DE VIGILIA DE NAVIDAD

A LAS 4:30 DE LA TARDE

Rev. Mons. W. Ronald Jameson, V.F.

Celebrante y Homilista

MISA EN ESPAÑOL A LAS 6:30 DE LA TARDE

P. Evelio Menjivar

Celebrante y Homilista

Coro Hispano

Bendición del Nacimiento

CONCIERTO DE NAVIDAD 9:15 DE LA NOCHE

Festival Cantores de San Mateo

MISA SOLEMNE DE NAVIDAD 10:00 DE LA NOCHE †

PRESIDIDA POR EL CARDENAL

DONALD W. WUERL

Arzobispo de Washington

Bendición del Nacimiento

† ~ Hay intérprete para sordos

DÍA DE NAVIDAD

La Catedral se abrirá a las 8:00 de la mañana.

Horario de Misas en Ingles: 8:30, 10:00 y 11:30 de la mañana

MISA EN ESPAÑOL 1:00 DE LA TARDE

P. Evelio Menjivar, *Celebrante y Homilista*

Coro Hispano

La Catedral cerrará después de la Misa de 1:00.

La rectoría estará cerrada.

APARCAMIENTO EN DIAS NAVIDEÑOS

El aparcamiento Penn que está a la derecha de la Catedral, nos ha informado del horario durante los siguientes días:

Sábado **24 de diciembre** Noche Buena

de 7 de la mañana a medianoche

Domingo **25 de diciembre** Navidad
de 6:30 de la mañana a 2:30 de la tarde

Sábado **31 de diciembre** Fin de Año
de 7 de la mañana a 9 de la noche

Domingo **1 de enero** Año Nuevo
de 6:30 de la mañana a 7 de la noche

Para más información puede llamar a Michael P. Amoroso al 410-782-9110.



Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2011

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Coming to a manger near you

After somewhat of a rocky start with the Philistine giant Goliath, David reached the pinnacle of his career, ensconced in a palace, king of Israel. With power, wealth, and leisure now at his disposal, David noticed that the Ark of God was housed not in palatial splendor like himself but rather in a mere tent. David magnanimously pledged to build a temple for the Ark, but God gently rebuffed him, reminding him that it was God, not David, who brought him from the brink of disaster to be king of God's people. With David we recall that God is the source of all that is good in our life. As we await the arrival of God, not in a palace but in a stable, let us pray for a spirit of gratitude for all that God has done.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38 (11)*

"I have been with you wherever you went."

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19 ADVENT WEEKDAY

Turn your heart toward children

After hearing of a newborn king in Bethlehem, King Herod ordered the slaughter of all young male children in the village. Truth be told, it has never been easy to be a child. Historian John Boswell reveals in *The Kindness of Strangers* that child abandonment was a common and often accepted practice from antiquity until the Renaissance. Although strides have been made in child welfare, abuse, neglect, and exploitation are still alarmingly widespread. A society that puts children first has a great future to look forward to. Be a voice for those who are still learning to speak.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25 (195)*

"He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children."

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20 ADVENT WEEKDAY

Find your bliss

Many people believe God has a special plan just for them—if only they can figure out what it is! From this point of view, discovering what God wants for a person is like a search for a missing key: Find it, and you can get in; don't, and you're locked out. Discerning what God may be calling you to, though, may be as simple as seeing where, in the words of campus minister Sally Willitzer in the 2011 issue of *VISION* magazine, you "can best be an instrument of love in the world," and that means not only discovering where you can most effectively help others but also what makes you happy.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38 (196)*

"Do not be afraid . . . for you have found favor with God."

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21

FEAST OF PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Give it your all

Saint Peter Canisius might have been what today we call a Type A personality. He lived at a pace that illustrated his saying, "If you have too much to do, with God's help you will find time to do it all." Sometimes it seems that he *did* do it all. He had a master's degree by 19, became a popular preacher, a founder of

the Catholic press, and a diplomat who used his gifts to bring the challenge of Christian values into the marketplace. Whether or not we have as much energy as Peter Canisius, the important thing is to give what we have and do what we can.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Luke 1:39-45 (197)*

"The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior."

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22 ADVENT WEEKDAY

Generous Christmas to you

The constant jingle-jangle of ads this time of year reminds us that it is not too late to get into "the spirit of giving." Most of the time those words are followed by encouragement to run to the local mall for last-minute shopping, but there are many other ways to give as well. We can give of our time, lend an ear, share our table, make a donation, deliver a gift to those who are less fortunate. There are many ways to experience the special feeling that comes from an act of generosity. If there is magic to the season, that is surely it.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56 (198)*

"He has filled the hungry with good things."

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23 ADVENT WEEKDAY

Say yes to the mess

Every birth is an unequivocal "yes" to life. We enter the complexities on earth without any assurance that our lives will be smooth and we won't have difficulties. We don't know whether we will have a disability, experience the trauma of an earthquake or a fire, or struggle with addiction, or feel deep loneliness. Yet in spite of the insecurities, the unknowns, all the possible things that could go wrong, we are somehow willing to risk for life, we are willing to risk for love. Today, in the midst of the busyness of Christmas preparations, take a moment to appreciate the courage it takes to say yes.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66 (199)*

"What, then, will this child be?"

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 ADVENT WEEKDAY

Peace is within our reach

The promise of peace is surely the greatest of all God's rewards. For a human race caught up in the throes of fear and competition year in and year out, the idea that there is a path toward peace is good news indeed. As Christians we believe Jesus was sent to us by God for the specific purpose of showing us the way of peace. Jesus is not only the Prince of Peace, he is peace itself. Embrace Jesus and you embrace peace. Then, as promised, you will be filled with a sense of wholeness, harmony, healing, and hope. What more is there to proclaim but hallelujah!

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79 (200)*

"The dawn from on high shall break upon us, . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace."

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Scripture quotes come from the New American Bible.

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The Faith Formation Committee presents:

THE GOSPEL OF MARK:
A GOSPEL FOR THE
NEW EVANGELIZATION



Time: 10:00 to 11:45am

--- Consider staying for our 12:10pm Mass afterward. ---

Dates: Saturdays, January 14, 21, 28 & February 4

(makeup session on Saturday, February 11 if needed in case of inclement weather)

Place: North Conference Room

Facilitator: Father Kevin Regan

Join us as we explore the Gospel of Mark, the first written of the Gospels. Particular attention will be given to the themes and unique characteristics of Mark.

Please bring a Bible and your own morning beverage.
Homemade coffee cake will be provided.

NO RSVP NECESSARY & NO COST TO ATTEND!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

*Contact: Heather Kinney, Director of Faith Formation,
hkinney@stmatthewscathedral.org*