



# ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

[www.stromuald.org](http://www.stromuald.org)

## dear Padre

### **Parish Office:**

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: [stromuald@bbtel.com](mailto:stromuald@bbtel.com)

### **Pastoral Staff:**

*Pastor*, Father Brian Johnson

Email: [Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org](mailto:Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org)

*Deacon*, Tony Anthony

*Deacon*, Mike Wiedemer

*Administrative Asst*, Jane Haynes

*CRE: Adult*, Rosa Hockenberry

*CRE: RCIA*, Lyvenia Anthony

*CRE: 7-12*, Gayle Poole

*CRE: K-6*, Kim Brumfield

### **Pastoral Council:**

Dana Bland, Harry Mattingly,

Janet Bland, David Morton

Christi Brooks, Kevin Oelze

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Jerry Dowell, Gail Pollock

Betty Heavrin, Pam Pollock

### **St. Romuald**

### **Interparochial School:**

Phone: 756-5504

Website:

[www.stromualdschool.org](http://www.stromualdschool.org)

Principal, Rob Cox

### **School Board**

### **Representatives:**

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

### ***Why is St. Joseph called "the Worker?" Shouldn't he be honored primarily as the father of Jesus?***

Devotion to St. Joseph has developed along an interesting path. It was not until the eighth century that Joseph, underneath the title "Spouse of Mary," was even publicly acknowledged—except perhaps as an afterthought or silent participant in the Christmas story. The Church has always acknowledged that Joseph's relationship with Jesus was unique, but there was, and continues to be, reluctance to call him the father of Jesus. We understand the father of Jesus is not Joseph but rather God the Father.

A consensus about Joseph's role in the plan of salvation seems to be in place by the early fourteenth century. In 1870, Pope Pius IX declared Joseph the patron of the universal Church. By the early twentieth century, worldwide devotion had found a home at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.

The title of "the Worker" was used most often by Pope Pius XI in his references to Joseph as the patron of the Church's battle against atheistic communism. Pope Pius XII established the May 1 feast in 1955 to emphasize the Catholic teaching concerning the dignity of labor.

Saint Joseph could be summarized best as a man who did the best he could when God's will became clear. This image and model seems the best and most helpful for deepening our understanding of and devotion to him.

From Dear Padre: Questions People Ask, Liguori, 2003 [sundaybulletin@liguori.org](mailto:sundaybulletin@liguori.org)

December 18, 2016 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

## Masses for the Week

December 19th - 25th

Tues	1:00 pm	Charles & Becky Higdon (Extended Care)
Wed	5:00 pm	Mildred & Raymond Wilson (IO)
Thurs	9:00 am	Jenny Whittaker (Medco)
Fri	9:00 am	Merl & Marty Kannapel
Sat	4:00 pm	Earl O'Donoghue (PO)
	8:00 pm	Bryon Mattingly & Lori Mattingly Shaw (DM)
	12:00 am	Josh Lucas
Sun	7:00 am	Rooney Alexander (DA)
	10:00 am	Ron Wilcheck (CW)

## Readings for the Week

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24  
 Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71/Lk 1:5-25  
 Tuesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24/Lk 1:26-38  
 Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33/Lk 1:39-45  
 Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2/Lk 1:46-56  
 Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25/Lk 1:57-66  
 Saturday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89/Lk 1:67-79  
 Next Sunday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/  
 Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25  
 Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14  
 Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20  
 Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

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## Stewardship of Finance

### Last Sunday's Collection

Sunday Collection .....	\$7,778.50
Building Fund .....	\$80.00
Children .....	\$3.00
Loose change for the Poor.....	\$31.00
Retired Religious.....	\$135.00

### St. Romuald Parish Financial Summary

July-November, 2016

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$215,200</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$212,600</b>
	<b>\$ 2,600</b>

**Thank you for your financial stewardship!**

### CONFESSIONS

**Wednesday** 4:00-5:00pm

**Saturdays** 4:00 pm



## December 24th & 25th Ministry Schedule

We need Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers and Altar Servers.

You may call the church office or send an email to [stromuald@bbtel.com](mailto:stromuald@bbtel.com)

Thank you

## Words from the Pastor

+JMJ+

Matthew opens up the birth story of Jesus with these words, "This is how the birth of Jesus came about...." Does that sound familiar? Have we ever said something like that? Our story starts out normally enough **and then**, "**WOW**-Can you believe what happened next?" For example, "I was just walking down the street and this guy came up to me and handed me an envelope,....." Or "I was driving along, felt a bump and then I started skidding across the traffic lanes....." Or how about ever running in to a celebrity? Just going about your business and Pop! there appears a star! One of my Dad's friends tells of being in the old Army Surplus store called Dizzy Dave's in Owensboro once and as he looked up from the fatigue jacket rack, there stood Red Skelton the comedian. Or a group of my friends were shopping at 'Z-gallery' in Nashville a couple of years ago, and turning a corner at an aisle, there appeared Taylor Swift and her mother shopping for couch pillows. Well, that is how Matthew opens the birth story of Jesus. Sounds normal enough, until the surprises start showing up! Matthew tells how God surprises almost all along the way to Christ's birth and beyond. Mary has the appearance from the angel Gabriel. However Joseph learns of God's plan in pieces, an angel visit here and a dream there. Of course, God later uses more angels, a star and human messengers like the shepherds and wise men to pull everything together. But, back to Joseph, as he discovers God's will through installments. Joseph, not being aware of all God is up to, he is caught so surprised by Mary's miraculous conception that he devises an honorable way out for everyone (keeping his honor and keeping Mary safe). Joseph is compassionate and just. He knows he is not the Father, so he develops a plan to simply send Mary away, yet she will still be taken care of. **Until**, God intervenes through a dream to give him a fuller picture of the plan. St Joseph is a builder; he is a planner because of his carpentry work. He never enters a project without having a blueprint in mind. Yet, in this case here, **his blueprint plan is not what God's plan has prepared**. While it may be a good plan, it is not God's! I find a great lesson in this story. Often we may come up with a good and holy plan, yet if it is not God's plan or according to the grander scheme of his long-view, then as good as it is, it still will not last or bear the greatest fruit as God's own plan would accomplish. Maybe it is a matter of timing or the persons involved, but God's plan alone is where we will find the greatest fruit and the greatest peace. For example, I may have a holy plan, but if it doesn't fit into God's schedule-timing, or I am not the particular individual meant to carry it out, then in fact it is the wrong plan. I imagine everyone has had that happened working in groups. Have you ever made a statement in a group and everyone said what a bad idea it was? Then four months later, someone else mentions it and everyone swoons and jumps on the wagon like it has never been thought of in all of history. Or, even you mention the idea two years later and everyone says "Why haven't we ever done that before?" Apparently, the right time or the right persons were not yet

assembled in place for the best outcome to happen! So St Joseph comes up with a great idea, but the problem is that it is not God's will! So God sends a dream and an angel and turns things heavenward. And thank goodness for us, as we are saved by Christ's birth happening just the way God intended!

We will see that theme all throughout the birth story and early life of Jesus, that God intervenes with detours for the characters to take, who are seeking God's Way. For example, there was Joseph and Mary still quietly in Nazareth waiting for Jesus' due date, and then Caesar calls a census making them travel to Bethlehem. And then with all the crowds, there is hardly anywhere to stay, so they scrounge up a place, and on and on it goes..... But for those seeking God's purpose, signs are always provided to lead the way, whether through dreams, angels, stars, ancient prophecies or other faithful people to offer counsels. If we tune into all of these instruments of God we can know and follow his path, whether straight or winding. I think of the saying, "God writes history straight with crooked lines." Yes, I will be getting from point A to point B, but not necessarily as the crow flies. With God, I might meander or 'walk-about' to actually arrive at God's destination. Yet, imagine all the grace encountered along the way!

**Another word of Gratitude:** Funeral meal teams work hard behind the scenes preparing a comforting meal for families to enjoy with one another. I am always moved by the dedication of our meal servers and the many cooks who prepare dishes and drop them off the morning of the funeral. Listening to the families, they are always so appreciative and thankful for the anonymous generosity of parishioners who have cooked for them. It is such a blessing for me to be able to share in the meals too, and be part of the family visiting among one another after the funeral. So, I want to take a minute to thank everyone who is part of this important ministry. You are appreciated! It means so much to me for you to be helping! And if anyone would like to join one of the meal team lists, please call the office and volunteer!

Here are some daily questions to consider in our prayer time!

**Sunday:** What did God speak to me today, and how can I share His Word with someone?

**Monday:** Do I still remember His Word, and take a minute to pray about it as you begin your work week!

**Tuesday:** How many people have I thanked today for their kindness or hospitality?

**Wednesday:** Am I patient about changes in plans? Have I thought God is the one directing the change, because He has greater things in mind for me?

**Thursday:** Am I practicing Christmas gratitude and generosity each day?

**Friday:** Perform some act of mercy or anonymous act of kindness for someone today.

**Saturday:** For what am I going to be thanking God for at Mass this weekend?

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

**Marriage Help** – Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi) has helped thousands of couples who are disillusioned or even experiencing misery in their marriage. This program can help you too. For confidential information about or to register for the January program beginning with a weekend on Jan 13, 2017, call 270-852-8346, or email: [fl Elliot@audubon-area.com](mailto:fl Elliot@audubon-area.com) or visit the web site at [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org)

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**Pro-Life Articles**, an organization, whose objective is to help stop legal abortions, emails Pro-Life information to twelve thousand catholic churches each month, at no cost to the churches. Some of these email messages are returned to us, because the church has changed their email address and forgot to notify us of such change. When this happens, we must either telephone the church office to obtain the correct email address or look it up on the church's website using the internet. This requires the use Excel on a computer. We need volunteers to assist in this effort. It takes about two hours per month for each volunteer. This can be done from your home. If you would like to help, please contact: Martin Reiser @ [respectlife@respectlife1.org](mailto:respectlife@respectlife1.org) or 214-364-5767.

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### ***A Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for Healing the Wounds of Abortion***

will be offered the weekend of **January 13-15, 2017** in the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky. Participation in this retreat is open to any woman or man who has been involved, or touched by, abortion. If you have lost a child or grandchild, or a sibling, nephew or niece, to abortion, or if you have at any time in your life been involved in an abortion, then the Lord Jesus would like to offer you both healing and peace! Both Catholics and non-Catholics are welcome to participate, and our retreat is conducted with absolute confidentiality.

For more information, visit our website: [HopeAfterAbortionKY.com](http://HopeAfterAbortionKY.com), or call Debbie at (270) 570-4717 or Jennifer at (931) 242-5506.



## **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**"The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home'"**

This Fourth Sunday of the Advent Season challenges each of us to respond to the angel's invitation, by imitating St. Joseph and by welcoming Christ into our lives and homes. Once we allow the saving power of Jesus into our lives, we will never again be the same. This is Good News! To learn more about discerning your vocation, contact the Vocations Office at 270-683-1545, [jason.mcclure@pastoral.org](mailto:jason.mcclure@pastoral.org), [www.owensborovocations.com](http://www.owensborovocations.com)

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**Al-Anon Meeting:** Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.

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**Regional Meetings of Catholics at the Capitol:** Saturday January 14, 2017 at Holy Name Henderson from 10:00am-12:30 pm, concerned Catholics interested in advocacy for Life and Justice issues are gathering to plan the next meetings with representatives at Frankfort Capitol in February. For more info, please call Richard Murphy at 270-883-1545.

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**Catholic Men's Conference featuring Cardinal Timothy Dolan:** Saturday February 11 at the RiverPark Center (101 Daviess Street, Owensboro, KY 42303) is the 6th annual Diocesan Catholic Men's Conference. Come participate in day of men's spirituality. For ticket info, visit [www.kycatholic.com](http://www.kycatholic.com)

### **A Word from Pope Francis:**

"When Mary says "I am the handmaid of the Lord" in response to the news that she will become the Mother of God, she doesn't say: "This time I will do the will of God, I am available; if at another time, I'll see about it." No, hers is a full yes, without conditions. But we others are experts in the 'half-yes:' we are good at pretending not to understand what God wants. We can also be "cunning" and avoid saying "a true and firm 'no' to God" by making excuses, such as "I can't," or "not today, but tomorrow...tomorrow I will be better, tomorrow I will pray, I will do good, tomorrow. However, by doing this "we close the door to good and evil profits from these missing 'yeses,'" (Homily 12-08-2016)

## THIS WEEK:

Mon	8:00 am	High School Youth Activity
	1:00 pm	Blue Army Rosary
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon Meeting
Tues	10:00 am	Scripture Study
	1:00 pm	Mass (Extended Care)
	6:00 pm	Penance Service at St. Mary of the Woods
Wed	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
	6:00 pm	Penance Service at St. Anthony
Thur	9:30 am	Mass (Medco)
	6:00 pm	Penance Service at St. Romuald
Fri	9:00 am	Mass
Sat	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Mass
	8:00 pm	Christmas Eve Mass
	12:00 am	Midnight Christmas Mass
Sun	7:00 am	Christmas Day Mass
	10:00 am	Christmas Day Mass

## UPCOMING:

Dec 31	5:00 pm	New Year's Eve Mass
Jan 1	7/10 am	New Year's Day Mass

## Practices for the 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Mass

Monday Dec 19 3:00 - 5:00

All children are invited to participate. For more information please call Patty Curran at 270-945-8155

## Christmas Mass Schedule:

Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm, 8:00 pm, & 12:00pm Midnight-----Christmas Morning 7:00 am and 10:00 am

## New Year Mass Schedule:

New Year's Eve Mass—5:00 pm  
New Year's Day Masses 7:00 am & 10:00 am

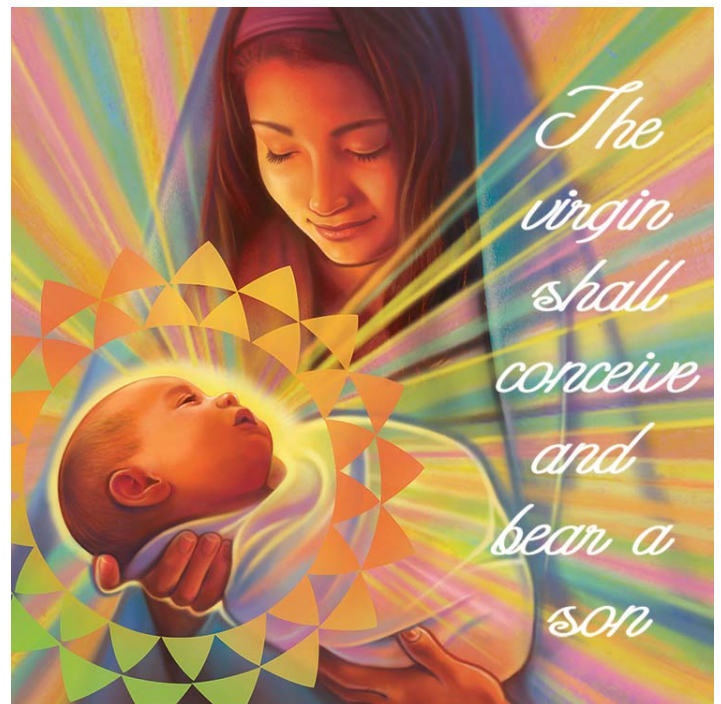
**Attention All Ministers:** We need volunteers to for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses. Please call the office if you are able to volunteer for any of the Masses. Thank You!

## We Pray For:

Gene Aldridge, Joe Ammons, Jim Ball, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Bradley Berry, Ronnie Bruner, Juanita Burch, Joann Butler, Waylon Carman, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Russel Carwile, Janet Chambliss, Diane Charlebois, Sharon Church, Joan Clark, Mary Crook, Vonda Decker, Roger Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Davye Duggins, Mary Catherine Edge, Shelby Elder, Rodney Elliott, Michael Ernest, Carroll Ferguson, Rhett Flener, Donny Flood, Ginny Flood, Shannon Ford, Andrea Fuqua, Barnard Gagel, Henrietta Gibson, Dorothy Greenwell, Bill Greenwood, Jerry Grimes, Sr., Laura Beavin Hawley, Davy Haycraft, Jessica Henderson, Dale Henning, JoAnn Henning, Lisa Henning, Karen Herbert, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Doug Hinton, Janet Hodson, Steve Hodson, David Horsley, Daniel Hoskins, Rick Hurley, **Mary Lois Irwin**, Barbara Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Don Jerrell, Kiara Jo, Jerry Johnson, Jim Johnson, Mary Ann Johnson, Jack Jolly, Lovel King, Faith Klingsmith, David Lane, Angie Lawrence, Linda Ledford, Annette Lucas, Jennie Maiden, Mark Masterson, Keith McDaniel, Ann Medlen, Kevin McHugh, Bevan Michael Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, Ian Moore, John Moore, Barbara O'Connell, Don O'Donoghue, Eddie O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, Libby Osborne, Rowan Palmer, Peggy Phillips, Judy Popham, Bobby Potts, Doris Priest, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Tracy Ralston, Jamie Riley, Rita Roach, Julie Robbins, Shirley Robbins, Suzanne Rose, Annelise Sebastian, **Judy Seelye**, Terri Shiffer, Colleen Simmons, Jerry Sosh, Lucye Stupak, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Becky Taul, Beavin & Gina Thornsberry, Dorothy Tillberg, Paul Tucker, Brook Tyler, Bobby Upchurch, Gil Urban, Johnny Vessels, Nancy Vincent, Buddy Weatherholt, Greg Weise, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Millie Whittler, Judy Whitley, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Robert D. Wilson, Shaun Winstead, Anne Wolfe, Sandra Zanone. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Jack Hayes, Stevie Higgs, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, SSgt Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Cody Simmons, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



**Have your best Advent Ever! and Christmas!** All it takes is 3 minutes a day. Sign up for "Best Advent Ever: Rediscover Christmas", from Dynamic Catholic.com, a free email program that will help you slow down and focus on what matters most during the busy holiday season. Check out <http://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever/> to sign up!



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**First Friday 24-hour Adoration:**  
 Following the 9:00 am Mass on January 6, we begin the 24 hour adoration until Saturday morning mass at 8:00 am. We are blessed with dedicated adorers for each hour, but can use extra people for some hours. Please call Minnie Nimmo 270-617-0297 or Patsy Whitfill 270-617-2557 to volunteer spending an hour in prayer with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

## Can we build a home for Jesus at Christmas?

Fr Gus, priest from Food for the Poor, when he visited last month asked us to consider raising the money to build a home for a family in Haiti (solidly reinforced structure with water). He said currently a Columbian Bank is promising to match funds for any donated homes, which means if we finance building one home, they will provide the second. TWO Homes, two families will be housed! So we will be offering a second collection to meet this need at this Sunday's mass December 18. Please be generous. Some brochures and info can be found on the tables by church doors.

## 7-12 Religious Education:

\*Any youth interested in a service project on Dec. 19 we will be traveling to St. Anthony's to help prepare and serve meals to shut-ins/widows for the Christmas Season. We will leave St. Romuald at 8am that Monday morning. If you plan to attend you will need to let Gayle know at 270-617-1308 so we can make sure we have enough seat belts. Also if you know of a parishioner/someone in our community that would love to see our youth on their doorstep with a meal please call me.

St. Romuald K-6th Religious Ed students, Catechists & parents went to the Medco Center to share their time & talents by singing Christmas carols.



# Mass Etiquette Column



## Celebration

**BIRTHDAYS:** Carl Jarboe, December 25th and Donnie Vessels, December 26th

**ANNIVERSARIES:**  
 Don & Sue Ford, December 26th, 52 Years  
 Paul & Anne O'Reilly, December 27th, 50 Years

**Pray to end abortion:** Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

**We thank our advertiser for making the bulletin possible!** Please take a moment to read the back of the bulletin and note the generous advertisers from the business community who provide our bulletin each week! Each time you visit their business, let them know you are thankful for their support of our parish's weekly bulletin!

**Advertiser of the week:**  
**O'Reilly's Auto Service**  
**270-756-2147**

Thank you for supporting St Romuald Church!



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2016**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**The coming of the new law**

As we move closer to Christmas, the O Antiphons in the Liturgy of the Hours highlight the prophecy that foretold Jesus' coming. Today, we pray, "O *Leader of Israel, giver of the law to Moses: rescue us with your mighty power!*" Time and again, God has rescued his people. Faith and divine law go hand-in-hand. Just as the Israelites tried to hold fast to the law of Moses, we are called to embrace Jesus as a new embodiment of that law. He is coming to renew the face of the earth, may his birth at Christmas renew the law in our lives.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24 (10)*. "They shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 19**

**ADVENT WEEKDAY**

**Hope starts early**

A child is born, and a surge of hope arrives with it. Truthfully, we have no idea who this stranger will be. The color of a baby's eyes may change; this tiny being may grow to be seven feet tall. She might be president of her own company. He may be a priest, a plumber, a playwright. So much potential lies hidden in each new person. Why not support our children with every possible resource? We pray in thanksgiving for the hope new life brings: "O *Root of Jesse's stem, come save us without delay!*"

TODAY'S READINGS: *Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25 (195)*. "For the boy shall be consecrated to God from the womb."

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20**

**ADVENT WEEKDAY**

**Be free**

Freedom is talked about, legislated, protested for. But what is freedom? Some definitions seem watery: We want to do as we like without restrictions. We want Mom or the government or the church off our backs. A better sense of liberty is the capacity to become more than the sum of our givens. The imprint of divine nature distinguishes us: makes us self-creators, re-inventors, transcendents of present circumstances. We pray for the right key to unlock our best selves: "O *Key of David, come and free the prisoners of darkness!*"

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38 (196)*. "Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age . . . for nothing will be impossible for God."

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21**

**MEMORIAL OF PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**

**May calmer minds prevail**

Saint Peter Canisius is remembered for being the calm voice in the midst of a storm. For Catholics in 16th-century northern Europe, the storm was the Protestant Reformation. While most partisans on both side of the divide used strident words and sometimes violent actions, Peter called for reason. Rejecting the inflamed rhetoric against Protestants that was coming from his associates, he said, "With words like these, we don't cure patients, we make them incurable." Think twice before you criticize those who see things differently. Keep the dialogue open.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Luke 1:39-45 (197)*. "O *Radiant Dawn, shine on those in darkness and the shadow of death.*"

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22**

**ADVENT WEEKDAY**

**Kinship with all**

In today's antiphon for vespers we pray, "O *King of all nations: save us, whom you formed from the dust!*" That is a reminder that all people come from the same source and have been formed by the same God. Each one of us is made in God's image and likeness. The kingdom of God is one of kinship. If we take the time to truly come to know one another, we will find the glimpses of God all around us. We just need to look!

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56 (198)*. "He remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever."

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23**

**ADVENT WEEKDAY**

**O come, O come Emmanuel!**

"O *Emmanuel: come to save us, Lord our God.*" Every day for the past seven days, the church has prayed the O Antiphons, using the ancient words and divine images found in the Old Testament. In these prayers, people of faith asked God to come and free us, to rescue us, and to shine on us. Today, the divine word is *Emmanuel*, which means "God-with-us." As today unfolds, remember that God is with you right now and will be with you through thick and thin, stress and peace, sorrow and joy. It is your job to pay attention and notice God's presence in the insights, conversations, and events of your days—and then to act accordingly.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66 (199)*. "Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths."

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24**

**ADVENT WEEKDAY**

**God is with you always**

What's in a name? In the case of Emmanuel, it's *all* in that name. "God-with-us" in the infant whose birth we celebrate; "God-with-us" in Jesus' forgiving sinners; "God-with-us" in Jesus weeping over a friend's death; "God-with-us" in feeding thousands with bread and countless people with his word; "God-with-us" carrying the cross; "God-with-us" on Christmas morning and in his last words, "I am with you always." God is with you today and always because Jesus has lived up to his name. Is there someone you ought to be with tonight?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Morning: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79 (200)*. "I have been with you wherever you went."

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