

First Sunday of Advent

MASSES & INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, November 28, 2015

4:30 P.M. MASS –Claiborne Durio, Cecilia Sonnier, Jeremy Rider, Eve Smith Guilbeau, LeRoy J. Fontenot, Pereda Fontenot, Raoul & Julia Frank, Michael Granger, Keith LeJeune, Hubert Bertrand, Harrison Harmon, Collin Guillory, Guillory Family living & deceased

SUNDAY, November 29, 2015

7:30 A.M. MASS – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

10:00 A.M. MASS – Andrus & Ella May Frilot, Leonard Beaubouef, Stacey Beaubouef, Abe Seal, Ernest & Beatrice Moore, Helene Ingham, Alee Gobert & Mrs. Colonial Gradney Gobert, Joseph Lee Gobert, Dalius & Gracie Gradney, Charles Ray & Katherine Karam

MONDAY, November 30, 2015

6:30 A.M. MASS – Hubert Bertrand

TUESDAY, December 1, 2015

5:30 P.M. MASS – Jack Johnson

WEDNESDAY, December 2, 2015

6:30 A.M. MASS – Virginia Badeaux

THURSDAY, December 3, 2015

NO MASS

FRIDAY, December 4, 2015

6:30 A.M. MASS – Claiborne Durio

SATURDAY, December 5, 2015

6:00 A.M. MASS – Sr. Zélie Thérèse of the Redeemer

4:30 P.M. MASS – Martin Goodly, Jeremy Rider, Simon, Leora & Freddie Sonnier, Pereda Fontenot, Michael Granger, Bernadine Cezar Logan, Aaron & Fabian Cezar, Ashley Cezar, P.J. Logan, Samuel Papillion

SUNDAY, December 6, 2015

7:30 A.M. MASS – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

10:00 A.M. MASS – Henry, Lula & Betty Fontenot, Dallas & Billy Bertrand, Sr., James Yeagley, Eve Smith Guilbeau, Deacon Dale & Kathy Deshotel, Stacey Beaubouef, Rayford Papillion, David & Dana Thibodeaux

Last Week's Collection

\$4,104.67

PRAYER LIST FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER

Linda Aguillard, Phil Beard, Gerry Beaubouef, Jerome, John, & Josie Bergeron, Joann Bertrand, Michael Bertrand, Alvin & Sonja Billodeaux, Renate Bourque, Virginia Bowles, Velm Brakel, Steve Campbell, Kary Cole Briscoe, Leslie Busher, Charles Chaumont, Jerry Chaumont, Florence Comeaux, Pam Dequeant, Carol Deshotel, Jeremiah Deville, Mavy & Emmalyn Ducote, Edward Duhon, Sheryl Duplechain, David Fontenot, Mary Ophelia Fontenot, Rodney Fontenot, Tanner Fontenot, Elsie Foster, Juanita Francois, Tim Germany, Monsignor Ronald Groth, Cathy Deshotel Guillory, Jim Guillory, Sybil Haas, Harrison Harmon, Mildred Harmon, Esther Harmon, Joseph Harmon, Jennifer C. Hibbs, John Jackson, Perella Jackson, Sheenita Jackson, Brandon Johnson, Pat Klein, Essie Langley, Keith LeJeune, Lou, Joe, Adam and Mary LeJeune, Mitch LeJeune, Willie Mae LeJeune, Joy Mancil, Kevin Manuel, Lula Manuel & Fly., Marlin Manuel, Pat Manuel and Fly., Trista Marler, Fran & Ronnie Meaux, Beau Montou, Kathy Montou, Leroy Moreau, Gloria Morris, Carolyn Morgon, Glenn Morgan, Marvin Morgan, Odrey & Dorothy Montou, Nicholas Odum, Lucas Orsot, Marie Parker, Devin Pelt, Mary Mott Peterson, Sally Pitre, Linda & Don Portie, Ashton Read, Lynda Reed, Ervin Reed, Terry Reeves, Leonard Richard, Johnathan, Christina, Hayley, Jayden, Ryleigh, Skylei, Richard, Sharon, Martha, Rusty, Patsy, Matt, & Josh Rider, Rev. Fred Russi, Evelyn Sandell, Tina Sapienza, Bill Scheffler, Tucker Scimemi, Donald Paul Sonnier, Kermit Sonnier, Kolton Squier, Leah Squier, Suzanne Stringer, Devin Swarthout, Maynard Topping, Matthew Truman, Danika Treweak, Ticky Family, Roselyn Victorian, Zachary Villereal, Odelia & Ernest Wilson, Nicole Young, Laura Zaidan

Poinsettias for Christmastide

Anyone wishing to donate a poinsettia for our Christmastide church décor may do so at a cost of \$30.00. You may put your donation in the collection or bring it to the church office.

Leading the Rosary before Mass this Weekend

4:30 P.M. – Haddie Goodly 7:30 A.M. – Lucy Brandon

10:00 A.M. – Deacon Norris Chapman

Vocations Candle – Marita Cezar

(Call the rectory to sponsor the green vocations candle)

Vocations Cross – Celeman Thomas

Youth Group T-shirt Quilt Raffle

The youth group is selling raffle tickets for a t-shirt quilt made from youth group t-shirts. Tickets are \$1.00 and can be purchased from a youth member or at the rectory. Drawing will be Sunday, December 20th after 10:00 Mass. Proceeds benefit youth group members attending parish, diocesan and national youth events.

March for Life Pilgrimage 2016

The March for Life Pilgrimage is for high school teens, young adults, and adults from the Diocese of Lake Charles. The total cost of the Trip is \$550.00, which includes travel, lodging, most meals, scarf, hat, bag, journal and entry fees into various events and sites. A deposit of \$150.00 per person is due with the parish registration forms to Mrs. Corinne by **Wednesday, December 16th** with the remaining balance of \$400.00 due Thursday, January 7, 2016. Contact Mrs. Corinne at the rectory to register or for more information.

Glad Tidings Program

Sunday, December 6, 2015 – **Second Sunday of Advent**: Bishop Glen John Provost is joined by Father D. B. Thompson, Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church, for a dialogue on the Gospel of the day (Luke 3:1-6).

Diocese of Lake Charles Respect Life Banquet

The Diocese of Lake Charles Respect Life Banquet will be held on Tuesday, January 12th at the Lake Charles Civic Center. Doors open at 6 P.M. The guest speaker is Ramona Trevino, Planned Parenthood Manager-turned Pro-Life Activist. Tickets are \$50. Proceeds help fund Rachael's Vineyard, Gabriel's Project, and Youth Pilgrims to the March for Life in Washington, D.C. For more information and to get tickets go to lodiocese.org or call 337-439-7400.

This Week @ SJoA

- ❖ Sunday, November 29th – RCIA @ 5:00 P.M.
- ❖ No Altar Society Meeting for December
- ❖ Tuesday, December 1st – Rosary for Vocations @ 5:00 P.M.
- ❖ Tuesday, December 1st – Holy League: Holy Hour @ 6:30 P.M.
- ❖ **Adoration: Wednesday's from 7:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M.**
- ❖ Saturday, December 5th – *Rorate* Mass of Our Lady @ 6:00 A.M.

FROM FATHER CONNER

A Word of Thanks

What a joy it was to have another Eucharistic Procession! I believe we can be assured that a fitting tribute of adoration was given to Our Lord on Christ the King Sunday! God blessed us with a nearly perfect day to process the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of the OT, and how consoled His Sacred Heart must have been in seeing the tremendous turnout: it seems to me that nearly everyone who attended the Mass also stayed for the procession. Wow! How wonderful! I wish to thank everyone who assisted in the Christ the King Mass and Procession. As always, the choir and servers were great. I thank the members of last year's First Communion Class for strewning roses and carrying the crown before Our Lord, the men who chauffeured Our Lady, the parishioners who allowed us to stop at their homes for prayers, the Oberlin Police Department and the Sheriff's Office for providing safe passage, and everyone who participated in the procession. It was a beautiful and grace-filled day. Let us thank the Lord for His continued blessings! Oh, and be sure to look at photos of the event at: www.sjoaoberlin.com.

Rorate Mass of Our Lady

Join us for one of the coolest and holiest experiences possible: the *Rorate* Mass of Our Lady. This Mass begins before sunrise and is offered in complete darkness. The consecration occurs just as the church is becoming illuminated by the sun, signifying that Christ conquers the darkness of sin and death. This is truly an awesome Mass and I offer my warmest encouragement to join us for it. The *Rorate* Mass of Our Lady will be Saturday, December 5th, at 6:00 am.

FROM FATHER CONNER

The Season of Advent

This year Advent begins Sunday, November 29th. It marks the beginning of a new liturgical year and a new "Year of Salvation" – the 2,016th Year of Salvation in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Each year I have written and spoken to you about making Advent just that, Advent, rather than observing Christmas in Advent. (We should observe Christmas in the *Christmas* Season and Advent in the *Advent* Season.) I ask that you strive to be faithful to the character of this important season rather than let the world force you (*bully* you!) into adopting its standards or conforming to its expectations. Before anything else, we are Catholic first. Please be on guard to resist the worldly influence of observing Christmas in Advent and then ignoring Christmas in Christmas. Regardless of one's intention, when the seasons are conflated, the outcome is that both (i.e., Advent and Christmas) are rendered ineffective. In the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch, let us be Christian in deed and not merely in word. I now offer for your consideration a good reflection on the Season of Advent. It comes from the website *Fisheaters*.

The focus of Advent is preparation for the coming of the Lord – both in commemoration of His Nativity and His coming again at the end of time. Though most Protestants – and far too many Catholics – see this time of year as a part of the "Christmas Season," it isn't; the Christmas season does not begin until the first Mass at Christmas Eve, and doesn't end liturgically until the Octave of the Epiphany on January 14. It goes on in the spiritual sense until Candlemas on February 2, when all celebrations of Christ's Childhood give way to Septuagesima and Lent.

The mood of *this* season is one of somber spiritual preparation that increases in joy with each day, and the gaudy "Christmas" commercialism that surrounds it in the Western world should be overcome as much as possible. The singing of Christmas carols (which comes earlier and earlier each year), the talk of "Christmas" as a present reality, the decorated trees and the parties – these things are "out of season" for Catholics; we should strive to keep the Season of Advent holy and penitential, always remembering, as they say, that "He is the reason for the Season."

To sum up the similarities and differences between Advent and Lent as penitential seasons, there's this, by Fr. Lawrence Smith:

Advent is the time to make ready for Christ to live with us. Lent is the time to make us ready to die with Christ. Advent makes Lent possible. Lent makes salvation possible. Advent is the time when eternity approaches earth. Lent is the time when time reaches consummation in Christ's eternal Sacrifice to the Father. Advent leads to Christ's life in time on earth. Lent leads to Christ's eternal Life in Heaven. The Cross – through the Mass, penance, and mortification – is the bridge connecting Advent and Lent, Christ and His Church, man and God.

Each of the Church's penitential seasons is a dying to the world with the goal of attaining new life in Christ.

Catholic apologist Jacob Michael wrote something very interesting about how secular America sees "Christmas" as beginning after Thanksgiving and ending on 25 December, and then makes "New Years Resolutions" at the beginning of the secular year:

...what Christians do (or should be doing!) during Advent and leading up to Christmas is a foreshadowing of what they will do during the days of their lives that lead up to the Second Coming; what non-Christians refuse to do during Advent, and put off until after Christmas, is precisely a foreshadowing of what they will experience at the Second Coming.

We Christians are to prepare for the Coming of Christ before He actually comes – and that Coming is symbolized and recalled at Christmas. Non-Christians miss this season of preparation, and then scramble for six days after the 25th to

make their resolutions. By then, however, it's too late – Christmas has come and gone, Our Lord has already made His visitation to the earth, and He has found them unprepared. This is precisely what will take place at the Second Coming, when those who have put off for their entire lives the necessary preparations will suddenly be scrambling to put their affairs in order. Unfortunately, by then it will have been too late, and there will be no time for repentance. The Second Coming will be less forgiving than the Incarnation. There will be no four-week warning period before the Second Coming, like we get during Advent. There will be no six-day period of grace after the Second Coming during which to make resolutions and self-examination, like the secular world does from Dec. 26th until Jan. 1st.

So please, restore Advent and don't think "Christmas is here" until it truly comes. One way to help focus on the theme of preparation is to read the parables of The Fig Tree, The Man Going on a Long Journey, The Faithful and Wicked Stewards, and The Ten Virgins in the 24th and 25th chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. Another way to help you do this is to think of the Saint who embodies the spirit of this Season more than any other: the great St. John the Baptist. If you have an icon of him, venerate it especially now. Make special prayers to him and consider the message of this "voice of one crying in the desert": "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." You will note that the readings of the second, third, and fourth Sundays of Advent focus on St. John, the earthly herald of Christ's coming whom St. Ephraem likened to the Star of Bethlehem, the Heavenly herald of His coming.

Vatican II endorses *ad Orientem* at holy Mass

Vatican II put special emphasis on what is called "liturgical eschatology" in the Mass. Eschatology is the theological study of the "end times." With respect to the Mass, Vatican II focused on the holy Mass as a vehicle that allows us to have a real and genuine participation in Heaven here and now while at the same time reminding us that this participation (in Heaven at Mass) is limited and passing (because the Mass comes to an end *and* because in this life on earth we can lose our salvation). The Council stressed over and over again in its document on the Sacred Liturgy that we are wayfarers, that is, pilgrims: a people who have not arrived at their final destination (i.e., Heaven) yet. The *ad Orientem* posture at holy Mass "puts flesh on" the desire that should be in our heart: a longing for Heaven.

At holy Mass, we are privileged to join our worship to that of the Saints and Angels in heaven. (Pay special attention to the prayers of Mass affirming this reality. Check out, for example, the conclusion of the Preface.) This union is at once *real* while at the same time a *foreshadowing* of what is hoped for. It is real in that we truly join the Saints and Angels there in God's presence, that is, in Heaven. It is a foreshadowing in that one day we hope this union will never end. In order to remind us to strive to make our call and election permanent (cf. 2 Peter 1:10), Catholics have always worshiped (especially at holy Mass) looking to the East, or "turned towards the Lord." *The theology of Vatican II corresponds perfectly to holy Mass being offered with a common direction of prayer, where the Priest and the people are all turned together toward the altar, turned as one towards Christ the Rising Sun of Salvation.* As we enter this holy Season of Advent, a time of looking to Christ and preparing for His Coming in glory, we now take up the worship of God at holy Mass with the *ad Orientem* posture (at the 10:00 am Mass). Therefore, *we should have confident assurance that such a gesture aligns perfectly with the theology of Vatican II*, which taught: "In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle; we sing a hymn to the Lord's glory with all the warriors of the heavenly army; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, until He, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with Him in glory" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 8).

Looking to the East
by His Excellency, James Conley, Bishop of Lincoln
(21 November 2014)

Jesus Christ will return in glory to the earth.

We do not know when he will return. But Christ promised us that he would return in glory, “as light comes from the east” to bring God’s plan of redemption to its fulfillment.

In 2009, Bishop Edward Slattery, of Tulsa, Okla., wrote that “the dawn of redemption has already broken, but the sun—Christ Himself—has not yet risen in the sky.”

In the early Church, Christians expected that Christ would come soon—any day. There was hopeful expectation. They were watchful—they looked to the sky in the east to wait for Christ. And because they did not know when he would return, they proclaimed the Gospel with urgency and enthusiasm, hoping to bring the world to salvation before Christ returned.

It has been nearly two thousand years now since Christ ascended into heaven. It has become easier to forget that he will come again to earth. It has become easier to forget that we must be waiting, we must be watching, and we must be ready.

In the season of Advent, as we recall Christ’s Incarnation at Christmas, we are reminded to be prepared for Christ’s coming. In the Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent this year, Nov. 30, Christ tells us his disciples “to be on the watch.”

“You do not know when the Lord of the house is coming,” Jesus says. “May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.”

We remember that Christ is coming whenever we celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In the Holy Mass we are made present to the sacrifice at Calvary, and to the joy of Christ’s glory in heaven. But we also remember that Christ will return, and we remember to watch, to be vigilant, to wait for him, and to be prepared.

The Mass is rich with symbolism. The vestments of the priest remind us of the dignity of Christ the King. We strike our breasts, and bow our heads, and bend our knees to remember our sinfulness, God’s mercy, and his glory. In the Mass, the ways we stand, and sit, and kneel, remind us of God’s eternal plan for us.

Since ancient times, Christians have faced the east during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to remember to keep watch for Christ. **Together**, the priest and the people faced the east, waiting and watching for Christ. Even in Churches that did not face the east, the priest and people stood together in the Mass, gazing at Christ on the crucifix, on the altar, and in the tabernacle, to recall the importance of watching for his return. The symbolism of the priest and people facing *ad orientem*—to the east—is an ancient reminder of the coming of Christ.

More recently, it has become common for the priest and the people to face one another during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The priest stands behind the altar as he consecrates the Eucharist, facing the people. The people see the face of the priest as he prays, and he sees their faces. These positions can have important symbolism too. They can remind us that we are a community—one body in Christ. And they can remind us that the Eucharist, at the center of the assembly, should also be at the center of our families, and our lives.

But the symbolism of facing together, and awaiting Christ, is rich, time-honored and important. Especially during Advent, as we await the coming of the Lord, facing the east together—even symbolically facing Christ together at the altar and on the crucifix—is a powerful witness to Christ’s imminent return. Today, at a time when it is easy to forget that Christ is coming—and easy to be complacent in our spiritual lives and in the work of evangelization—we need reminders that Christ will come.

During the Sundays of Advent, the priests in the Cathedral of the Risen Christ will celebrate the Mass *ad orientem*. **With the People of God, the priest will stand facing the altar, and facing the crucifix.** When I celebrate midnight Mass on Christmas, I will celebrate *ad orientem* as well. This may take place in other parishes across the Diocese of Lincoln as well.

In the *ad orientem* posture at Mass, the priest will not be facing away from the people. He will be with them—among them, and leading them—facing Christ, and waiting for his return.

“Be watchful!” says Jesus. “Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.” We do not know when the time will come for Christ’s to return. But we know that we must watch for him. May we “face the east,” **together**, watching for Christ in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in our lives.

<http://www.lincolndiocese.org/op-ed/bishop-s-column/3004-looking-to-the-east>