

CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2016



Parish Staff

Rev. Robert Kelly, OP, Parochial Administrator
Deacon John Murphy
Deacon Gregg Sroder
Sister Anne Becker, Pastoral Ministry
Cindy Hoffman, Parish Bookkeeper
Jill Kilzer, Music Ministry
Steve Kowal, Maintenance Engineer
Linda Rivera, Parish Secretary

Liturgy Schedule

Monday - Wednesday - Friday 8:00 am
Tuesday 8:00 am Word & Communion Service
Thursday - 9:30 am at Community of Saints School
Saturday - 4:00 pm
Sunday - 10:00 am

Reconciliation

Saturday
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm and by appointment

Sacraments

Please contact the Parish Office regarding baptism, marriage, first communion or confirmation information.

Prayer Line

651.457.0228
651.455.5473

Parish Center Hours

Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Address: 490 Hall Avenue
St. Paul MN 55107

651-224-9793
Fax 651.227.2688
510 Hall Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55107
Website: st-matts.org

Readings for the Week of December 18, 2016

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

Faith Both Human and Divine



I want to begin this reflection by directing your attention to your hands. If someone is reading this reflection for you, because you are unable to see, gently touch your hands. You might have some loose pale skin with a few age spots. You might have blue colored veins pulsing with your blood. You might have the outline of small, fragile bones and tendons. Undoubtedly, you have scars from cuts that healed long, long ago. And there might be some callouses and painful arthritis developed through the years. And those fingernails---maybe cracked, maybe smooth, maybe discolored, maybe polished, and maybe missing. Fingernails are so hard to care for and so painful to loose. If you wear a ring or a watchband that once fit perfectly, they now maybe a little tight or maybe a little loose. A ring or watchband never change in size. This means something is changing in you.

Our lives of faith are about things that have happened and about things that are happening through particular human bodies in particular places. and at particular times, like a town in Judah during the days of King Herod and at the Church of St. Matthew when you are sitting next to one another during the celebration of the Eucharist.

Our lives of faith are about God becoming human flesh in the person of Jesus. It is centered on one born of a woman, born under the Jewish law, to save us not through the promise of our own future human efforts, but through the offering of a humanly-divine body once and for all.

In all of the gospels, the ministry of Jesus is to poor human bodies. He opens eyes so that they see, ears so that they hear, he loosens tongues so that they speak, and he relaxes muscles so that people, both female and male, can stand upright and walk.

In the gospel of Luke, a woman moved by the teaching of Jesus cries out from the crowd, "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed." This was a common Middle Eastern expression at the time of Jesus that praised a mother for the fine qualities of her child be it female or male. In reply, Jesus emphasized qualities of faith expressed by the spirit and body combined, saying, "Blessed, rather, are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" The blessing Jesus gives is not degrading Mary his mother. Instead it emphasizes that listening to God's word and responding to it, like Mary, is more important than any biological relationship to Jesus.

In the gospel of Matthew, a radically disappointed Joseph responds to the words of an angel after his concerns of a failed promised marriage are addressed. Joseph, like Mary, responds to what he hears. So faith consists in hearing and acting upon God's word in a physical way.

Our faith is physical. At its center is the woman Mary who said, "let what you have said be done to me," and the man Joseph who "... did as the angel of the Lord commanded him." And the humanly-divine Jesus who says, "Behold, I have come to do God's will in the body you have prepared for me." Jesus was born to save us from hate by giving us an example of what it means to love through the sacrifice of his physical body.

As we look around in the world where we live today, there are human bodies with souls longing for the necessities of life as well as what is beyond all telling. Young parents alone with their child for the first time. The infant, only hours old, wrinkled and red, in the crook of a mother's arm. An old woman lies in her bed, skin dry and translucent. Her chest heaves and stops. Breath and spirit wrestling their way out of her. Around her stand her family their eyes filled with pain and acceptance.

Our faith in God is saying "Yes" to our human lives from birth into this life until birth into eternal life. During good times as well as the bad. As the Advent Season comes to a close many of us will ask if our faith in God has increased, improved, and deepened over the past few weeks. Look at or touch your hands, remember what they have done, and they will answer the question.

News and Events

Church Bells

The St. Matthew's church bells will ring on the following days in honor of:

- December 19 **In Memory of Mary Gagnon Montgomery**
- December 23 **Joseph Karas, Sr.**
- December 24 **Joseph Karas, Jr.**
- December 24 **Jody Knops Huisman & Bob Knops**
- December 24 **Joseph Perron**
- December 24 **Richard Squire**

Faith Formation

Faith Formation Christmas New Year's Break: St. Matthew Faith Formation students in grades 1 to 10+ will not have classes on Wednesday, December 21, Wednesday, December 28, and January 4. Faith Formation classes resume on Wednesday, January 11, 2017, at 6:30 PM with drop-off at St. Matthew Church and pick-up at 7:45 PM from the adjacent Parish Center building.

Community of Saints News

This advent season's service project is built around the theme of literacy. Students will be asked to bring in books over the course of the next week for two purposes—to "swap" with other classmates to spread the literacy cheer, and to donate to the foundation "Books for Africa". Thank you to our student leadership team for organizing and implementing this great project!

Community of Saints School would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas! Thank you to parishioners of our sponsoring parishes who support us in so many ways--from tutoring our students, and/or donating gifts, to simply praying for us--thank you, thank you, thank you, for believing in us and supporting Catholic education!

Fix It Community Dinner Fundraiser Update

Thanks to everyone who attended our annual Fix It Community Dinner Fundraiser held November 12th. Thanks to your generosity we raised the \$3000 needed to receive the \$1500 matching grant from the Catholic Order of Foresters. Our Saint Matt's chapter donated \$400 which helped us reach the \$3000. Donations to our Fix It Fundraiser have now reached \$5000. You can still donate to this designated fund which goes to making repairs to the Church building and Parish Center. Our list of repairs needed exceeds available funds, so additional donations are greatly appreciated. A special thanks to all who helped with this event. The success of this event was due to all who helped out with the organizing, set up, cooking, serving and clean up.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 17

4:00 pm Our Parish
Tom Tschida†

Sunday, December 18

10:00 am Our Parish
Rachel Snaza†

Monday, December 19

8:00 am Pamela Stickler†
Robert J. Stickler, Sr.†
Lucille Stickler†

Wednesday, December 21

8:00 am Living & Deceased Rosary
CCW Members

Friday, December 23

8:00 am Claudette Borgan,
Special Intention

Saturday, December 24

4:00 pm Our Parish
Sarah & George Gubash†

Sunday, December 25

10:00 am Our Parish
Hank Goers†

Calendar Of Events

Saturday, December 17

4:00 pm Mass

Sunday, December 18

11:00 am Coffee Sunday following **10:00am**

Mass SH

Decorating Worship Space following Mass/
Coffee Sunday

Monday Dec. 19—Fri. Dec. 23

5:00-6:00 pm Loaves & Fishes

Monday, December 19

Noon – 5:30 pm St. Mary's Clinic

Tuesday, December 20

Wednesday, December 21

8:00 am – 5:30 pm St. Mary's Clinic

No Faith Formation Classes

Thursday December 22

9:30 am Mass at St. Michael

Friday, December 23

Parish Office Closed

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Mass

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

10:00am Mass

Weekly Contributions Report

December 11, 2016

Parish Family		Extended Family	
Basket	\$649	Religious Retirement	\$1921.25
Envelopes	\$2,624	Alumni & Friends	\$100
Vigil Lights	\$15.44	Total	\$2,021.25
Christmas Flowers	\$560		
Total	\$3,848.44		



Puzzle Children's Corner

Find and circle these words from today's Gospel:

MARY JOSEPH HOLY SPIRIT WEDDING ANGEL DREAM BABY JESUS VIRGIN

V I R G I N T H W I S
J C S H U J O S E P H
D R E A M R W I D A O
S O B Y A O N U D G W
M E N G R W E A I S D
T B A B Y B M O N A E
R E N D R O I T G J O
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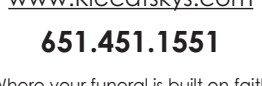
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