



## ADVENT 2011

# ADVENT

### PASTORAL PASSAGES:

*"Today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you ..." (Luke 2:11)*

The great mystery that we prepare to celebrate during the season of Advent is almost too wonderful and beyond belief. I am referring of course to the great event that we refer to as the "Incarnation." This is an ancient word from our tradition that literally means "en-flesh-ment" – the birth of the Son of God as a human being, in human flesh in time and in space. Sometimes we can take for granted how wonderful and radical this truth is.

God chose to leap down from heaven and share life with us in all its joys and sorrows. It happened in history as we know in the small town of Bethlehem in the nowhere land of Israel twenty centuries ago. The promise of the Incarnation is that God continues to enter human history and is en-fleshed in our lives in this time and this place. Believing this makes all the difference in the way that we see ourselves and look upon our neighbors, especially the lowly and the poor. It's an awesome and most challenging belief that we share. It has power to change us and our world.

### THE NEW ROMAN MISSAL

On the First Sunday of Advent, we begin to celebrate Mass with the latest edition of The Roman Missal. For months we have been anticipating this moment in which we join the whole English speaking Catholic world in common

language in our prayers. As we attempt to become familiar with the new responses and the newly worded prayers, it is good to remember that Jesus continues to be present to us in powerful ways at the Eucharist regardless of the words we use. I trust that these adjustments will not hinder us as we lift our hearts and minds to God in prayer.

### SABBATICAL NEWS

*"In the Footsteps of Jesus"*

I have been very fortunate to receive a Lilly Endowment competitive grant through their National Clergy Renewal Program. St. Joseph Parish has been awarded \$31,917 to cover the expenses of my three-month sabbatical in Jerusalem to study Scripture. It will also fund some parish programs of renewal while I am away. I will leave the parish on February 1st and return on May 22nd. Two of St. Joseph's former pastors will assist Fr. Stephen at different times while I am away – Fr. John Leo Phalen and Fr. Frank Pollie. As you may guess, I am very excited and hope to share with you my experiences while I am away and when I return to the parish.

As Christmas approaches this year, 2011, and in our communities of Lake Orion, Oxford, Lakeville and Leonard, may you continue to welcome Jesus into your life and into your family.

– Fr. Michael Verschaeve

### ADVENT/CHRISTMAS '11

#### Thursday, December 8

Immaculate Conception

Holy Day of Obligation

Masses: 9AM (SCHOOL MASS),  
12 NOON & 7PM

#### Sunday, December 11

"Only Love" Christmas Concert

FREE concert with dessert  
reception following

6PM, Church

#### Monday, December 19

Communal Penance Service

7PM, Church

Individual Confessions are held each  
Saturday at 3:30-4:15PM plus Tuesday,  
December 6 at 6:30PM

#### Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve Masses

Mass: 4:30PM, Church

Contemporary Ensemble

Mass: 4:30PM Gym

Minstrels of Praise

Mass: 7:00PM, Church

Childrens' Choir

Mass: 12:00 Midnight, Church

Adult Choir Program-11:30PM

#### Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day Masses

Masses: 9AM & 12 NOON

#### Saturday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Mary, Holy Mother of God Vigil

Mass: 4:30PM, Church

#### Sunday, January 1

Mary, Holy Mother of God

Mass: 10AM, Church

(No 4:30pm Mass that day)

**YOUTH MINISTRY:**

**THE J-WALKERS**  
Grades 9-12

I'm excited to report that our year is off to a great start! Our group continues to grow and throughout the year we'll do a variety of social, service and spiritual activities using games, team building, video clips, music, small group discussion and more to explore our faith. Fun is always a part of who we are and our mission is simple: to enrich and deepen our relationship with Christ as we continue to discover the exact person He has created us to be. If you are a high school student looking for a way to meet new people, enrich your faith and have fun, we meet on Sunday nights from 6-8 pm in the youth room. Grab a friend and "Come Walk with Us."

**ADVENT ACTIVITIES**

**Thursday, December 8th**  
Mass & Munchies, 7-9:00 pm  
Join the J-Walkers for Mass and fellowship immediately following

**Sunday, December 11th**  
"Only Love" Christmas Concert, 6:00 pm in church  
Contact Kathy Galbraith for info on how to be part of this musical performance.

**Sunday, December 18th**  
Christmas Caroling and Party  
4:30 to 8:00 pm

**Contact Information:**

Kathy Galbraith  
Coordinator of Youth Ministry  
248-693-0440, ext 246  
kgalbraith@stjosephlakeorion.org

**FLOW**  
Grades 7-8

FLOW is the 7th and 8th grade youth ministry program that has been designed to supplement our Confirmation Preparation program and is open to all students regardless of where they get their religion instruction. Students are invited to experience more about our faith in this hands-on interactive group. Service projects, field trips and fellowship provide positive opportunities for spiritual growth. In addition, students are able to count almost all experiences in their Confirmation Serve and Learn Binder.

**ADVENT ACTIVITIES**

**PBJ Ministry**  
Outdoor soup kitchen in downtown Detroit. Must register, spots are limited.  
Dates: December 10, January 14, February 11

**Tuesday, December 6th**  
Confirmation Class – 8th Grade ONLY  
6:00 to 7:45 in Myrick Hall

**Sunday, December 11th**  
"Only Love" Christmas Concert, 6:00 pm in church  
Must attend with an adult.

**Contact Information:**

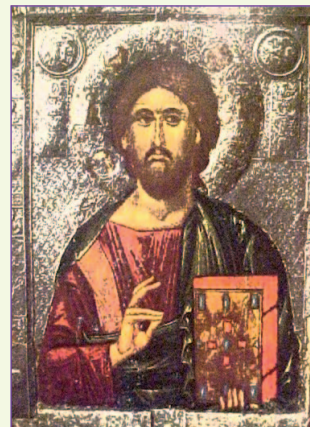
Sherry Brandon  
FLOW Coordinator  
248-693-0440, ext 241  
sbrandon@stjosephlakeorion.org



**WORSHIP:**

**Welcoming the Roman Missal, Third Edition**

Four decades ago when our current edition of the Roman Missal was implemented there was very little in-depth catechesis about it. We missed the opportunity to study and reflect on the deeper meaning of our sacred mysteries and simply adapted to the more external changes. With the lengthy process of translating the third edition, a concerted effort has been made to provide comprehensive catechesis to deepen the level of understanding of our Eucharistic celebration. The new translation changes words but more importantly has given each of us the opportunity to heighten our appreciation for what we do and what God does for us. It has inspired us to shed casual attitudes and to open ourselves to a deeper respect for the presence of Christ in the presider, the assembly, the proclaimed Word of God and in the Eucharist.



This time of change has given us new life in liturgy and a keen awareness of the abundance of God's love and salvation. We have learned that liturgy must be approached with thoughtful care and concern. As we have studied the new translations together we have enriched our experience of liturgy and our personal relationship with God. As Advent ushers in these changes to the Roman Missal, let us embrace the graces God has bestowed upon us and glorify the Lord through our liturgy, the "work of the People of God."

Sue Audette,  
Worship Coordinator

**ALPHA COURSE:**

**What is the Alpha course?**

- A chance to explore the big questions in life: What is the meaning of life? Why am I here? It sounds too good – is it really true? Was Jesus real? Why is there suffering if God is all good?
- A chance to ask any question and explore any facet of Christianity.

**Who is Alpha for?**

- Anyone with serious questions about Christianity, anyone fallen away from the Church for whatever reason, anyone whose faith needs a shot in the arm.

The Alpha kick off dinner is in January, watch for the date. Invite your friends, neighbors or family members. Engaging talks and discussion after dinner will offer everyone a chance to ask any question as they explore the claims of Christianity against the backdrop of their life and our culture. There is no obligation... just come and see.

We are not all natural born evangelists like St. Paul, but anyone can invite another person to dinner. There is no cost, there is no commitment; invite and bring others to "come and see."

## ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL:

Our school theme this year is **We are Part of God's Puzzle.** How fitting a theme as we enter the Advent season! Our God comes to us in the guise of a child to show us how to fit together the daily events in our world so that they complete a magnificent puzzle of hope, love, goodness, gentleness, and peace in our world.

God created each of us as an important piece of his plan. He offers us a challenge: we cannot just be an isolated piece; we must join others to make a difference in our world today. Daily we must ask ourselves the question, "How is God inviting me to be part of his plan, his puzzle?"

Our puzzle begins with one piece and continues to expand to include everyone with their own gifts and talents. Everything that we do within each day sets the tone for building a character that is strong in faith-filled values, for building strong Christian leadership skills within each child, and for helping each child recognize and work towards being **Part of God's Puzzle** in our



world, both now and in the future.

This Advent, please join us in praying for our children each day – they will make a difference in our world – they are the leaders of the future. We, in turn, will pray for you as a member of our parish family. We are grateful for your support and prayers throughout the years as our school has continued to grow and flourish.

If you would like your child to experience the difference attending St. Joseph School can make in their lives, please feel free to call us for more information or visit our website at [www.stjosephlakeorion.org](http://www.stjosephlakeorion.org). I also invite you to join us at our open house on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012, from 1-3pm.

Sister Theresa Darga, OSF  
Principal

## MUSIC MINISTRY:

The St. Joseph Music Ministry joined by members of the Macomb Symphony Orchestra & combined with the St. Joseph Youth Ministry will once again present "Only Love," the Christmas story told in song, word and drama. See and hear the miracle of all time unfold before you. This is the story of God in heaven who loved the world so much He sent His only Son, that whoever believed in him would have eternal life. Only God could make that promise – Only Love could write this story... Please join us!



Free-will offering to benefit PROJECT PEOPLE and cover concert costs will be most gratefully accepted at the door.

Leszek Bartkiewicz,  
Music Ministry Coordinator

## RCIA UPDATE:

As we move out of the beautiful autumn season and enter the darker, colder, bleaker days of winter, it seems natural to turn our thoughts inward and contemplate our spirituality. The liturgical season of Advent encourages us to examine our lives and prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of Christ. The adults on the RCIA journey are taking a significant step in their spiritual life. On Nov. 27th at the 9:00 mass, we will celebrate the Rite of Acceptance. At this special celebration, the inquirers will come before the parish and request admittance to the Church for the first time. As a parish community, we accept them with open arms and promise to pray for them, welcome them and offer a spiritual example through our own lives in the faith. After this cel-

ebration they will be known as catechumens and candidates for confirmation and will continue their studies and preparations for the Easter Sacraments.

At certain masses you will notice that the Catechumens are dismissed for further discussion and reflection on the Sunday scriptures. Since they are not yet able to join us at the Eucharistic Table, they spend extra time getting to know Jesus through the Scriptures and discussing the impact He has on their daily lives.

Please keep them in your prayers and welcome them to our faith community. God Bless you and your families this Advent season as we prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of our Savior!

Debbie Bloomgren,  
RCIA Coordinator

## CHRISTIAN SERVICE:

Christmas is always a wonderful time of giving! Below is a list of many opportunities and events for giving your time, talent or treasure.

### Christmas Trees

We are partnering again this year with Addison-Oaks Christmas Tree Farm. For each tree purchased by a member of our parish, \$5 will be donated to St. Vincent DePaul. The farm is located at 355 lake George Rd. in Oakland Twp. Promotion begins Nov 19. Simply say, "I'm from St. Joe's." For more info call 248-814-0583.

### Adopt a Family

Each Christmas our church helps many families in our community and from the Catholic Community Response Team (CCRT) of Pon-

tiac. If you'd like to adopt a family this Christmas, please call 248.693.0440 x221.

### AngelFish

Extra hands are always welcome to sort Christmas donations for families. Sorting will happen on Dec. 8 & 9 from 5-8pm in Myrick Hall.

### Giving Tree

The church Giving Tree programs begins on November 18. Please take a tag to help someone from one of 9 area agencies and churches. Gifts are due by Sunday, Dec. 11 at 2pm (gift sorting day). Sorting gifts can be a great family project or opportunity for teens to earn some service hours.

Colleen Schultz,  
Christian Service  
Coordinator



## PILGRIM PROJECT:

In the Footsteps of Jesus:  
Pilgrim Project 2012

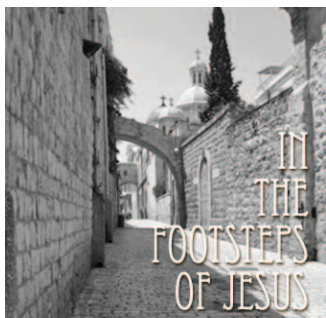
As many of you are aware, Fr. Mike will be making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land next February. He will be gone for about three months, studying and learning about our Jewish roots and Christian faith.

We are designing a parish wide "pilgrimage" so that all parishioners, young and old, can journey with him as he travels to the Holy Sites and visits the places where Jesus walked, taught and healed.



This 10-week program nicknamed the "Pilgrim Project," will be an opportunity for each person to make real the person of Jesus and follow His life story from His birth in Bethlehem, to His baptism in the Jordan, His teaching at Mt. Tabor and the Sea of Galilee, and his agony in the garden of Gethsemane. In a special way this Lenten journey will culminate with Holy Week and the Triduum. We will end the journey with the walk to Emmaus after Easter.

We hope that each parishioner will participate in the Pilgrim Project, by using a "prayer placemat" to pray with their family each week, or writing in a 'pilgrim journal', attending the Pilgrimage-based



scripture study class on Mondays or Thursdays, or studying with us online. There will be opportunities for people in every stage of life to 'walk in the footsteps of Jesus', so prepare a place to meet the Lord this Lent and watch *The Voice* for details to see how you can commit to deepening your relationship with Christ.

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

#### **The Passion According to the Gospel of Mark**

with Fr. Richard Cassidy  
Saturday, Feb. 4, 6:30pm

#### **Pilgrimage-Based Scripture Study**

Mondays, Feb. 5 – Apr. 16  
10am in Marian Hall  
Thursdays, Feb. 9 – Apr. 12  
7pm in Marian Hall

#### **Lenten Retreat**

with Fr. Alex Kratz  
Friday, Mar. 9 from 7-9:30pm  
Saturday, Mar. 10, 8:30a-4:30p

#### **Holy Land Pilgrimage**

with Steve Ray & Teresa Tomeo  
Apr. 22 – May 1, 2012  
Please register by Jan. 23, 2012  
at [stjosephlakeorion.org](http://stjosephlakeorion.org).

## RELIGIOUS ED

Will our children have faith? Will they be active Catholic Christians in adulthood? In October, we invited Mike Chamberlain, Coordinator of Youth Ministry from our Archdiocese, to speak with our middle school parents on this topic. According to a study lead by Christian Smith, Director for the Center for the Study of Religion and Society at Notre Dame University, it's up to us as parents. Smith's 2006 book, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, shares results of a national study revealing that most teenagers are comfortable with their religion and spirituality but that the adults in their lives, specifically parents, have the most influence on how they will live their lives as teens and adults. While the reviews for the book are varied, one main point stands out; parents have the most influence over their child's faith life.

Our church has always claimed that parents are the primary teacher in their child's life. Our children learn how to live by watching how we, their parents, live. They learn how to celebrate happiness, deal with stress and express anger the same way we do. They also learn to pray by watching us fall to our knees to ask for help, pray for others and give thanks. It is a common saying that *faith is caught not taught*. Though we need to teach our children the basics of our faith, they won't make it their own unless they see it in action and experience it firsthand.

So, will our children have faith when they are grown? Well, do we have faith in our lives? We might say, yes of

course, we have our children in a religious education class, or a Catholic school; we attend Mass, and we even read scripture... on our own. But how do we live? What is truly in our hearts? Having a faith life and living the way Jesus wants us to live takes time and devotion, deep contemplation and self-examination; it takes opening ourselves up to the Holy Spirit. Have our children seen us surrender to this? Have they seen us devote time to our relationship with Christ? Being open about our own faith journey will help our kids grow into faithful, spirit-filled adults.

Another poignant idea that Mike Chamberlain shared was the importance of parents' praying for their child. He believes it was his father's daily prayer for him and his sister that helped them become who they are today. His sister asked him one day why he thought they turned out to have such faith-filled lives. It turns out that they have many friends who, despite having active Christian parents are not living in faith themselves. He told his sister, "I think it is because Dad prayed for us every day." So as you model and share your faith with your family during this Advent season, don't forget that prayer is one of the most important gifts you can give your child...pray for him/her always!

#### **RE News**

We are looking for children K-8th grade that would like to be angels and candle holders during our parish's Christmas concert on December 11th at 6pm. Please let me know if your child is interested.

Peace in Christ,  
Kim Myers



**ADVENT – CHRISTMAS 2011: “Prepare the way of the Lord”**



**FEAST OF  
 IMMACULATE  
 CONCEPTION**

Thursday, Dec. 8

Masses: 9AM (school  
 Mass), 12 NOON & 7PM  
 Holy Day of Obligation



**FEAST OF OUR LADY OF  
 GUADALUPE**

Monday, Dec. 12

Masses: 7PM  
 Potluck Reception to  
 follow



**THE SACRAMENT OF  
 RECONCILIATION**

Individual Confessions  
 Saturdays at 3:30PM &  
 Tuesday, Dec. 6, 6:30PM

Communal  
 Penance Service  
 Monday, Dec. 19, 7PM  
 (Several guest priests will also  
 hear individual confessions.)



**CHRISTMAS EVE  
 MASSES**

Saturday, Dec. 24

4:30PM in Church  
 Contemporary Ensemble

4:30PM in the Gym,  
 Minstrels of Praise (Folk Choir)

7PM in Church  
 Children's' Choir

12 MIDNIGHT in Church  
 Adult Choir Program-11:30PM



**CHRISTMAS DAY  
 MASSES**

Sunday, Dec. 25

Masses: 9AM, 12 NOON  
 in Church



**NEW YEAR'S EVE**

Saturday, Dec. 31

Mass: 4:30PM Vigil  
 Mary, Mother of God

**NEW YEAR'S DAY  
 MARY, MOTHER OF GOD**

Sunday, January 1

Mass: 7:30AM, 9AM,  
 10:45AM & 12:30PM