

# FOURTH SUNDAY *of Advent*



*Saint Philip the Apostle Parish*  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY

## FROM FATHER NICO

A two-year-old boy asks his father, "how are you related to my favorite uncle Bob?" The father explains that he and his Uncle Bob have the same dad, which makes them siblings. To check that the kid gets it, the father asks, "You and your brother James have the same dad, me -- what does that make you?" Without missing a beat, the boy replies, "Happy!"

We find the story sweet. We find the boy delightful and charming. In the Gospel reading this Fourth and last Sunday of Advent (*see* Matthew 1:18-24), Saint Matthew also tells a story about a father and a son, about Joseph and Jesus. Their story not only sweetens our lives, delights, and charms us; it also brings us the good news. And what is the good news? That Jesus is *Emmanuel* which means God is with us. That we are never entirely alone. We have a brother. We have a brother in Jesus. That is good news! And what should that make us? As the boy said in our story, it should make us "Happy!" Happy because no matter what, having Jesus on our side means we are never entirely alone. We will never be alone.

I could only imagine Joseph's concerns when he discovered that Mary was pregnant. How utterly frightened Joseph must have felt that God sent an angel to assure him in a dream, "Do not be afraid." These words of the Angel, "Do not be afraid," must have given Joseph strength and hope. And so, they should for us, also.

Friends, the Lord is with us. That is the good news. We are never entirely alone. We may feel lost, not knowing where to go and what to do; we can find clarity with these words in prayer: **The Lord is with us.** We may feel we lack the grace and gifts to live holy and faithful lives, to live our full potential, and to concretize our plans; we can find encouragement with these words in prayer: **The Lord is with us.** We may feel frightened, alone, weak, and anxious; we can find strength with these words in prayer: **The Lord is with us.** We may feel lost in the overwhelming uncertainty and impossibility around us, but we can find hope with these words in prayer: **The Lord is with us.**

Advent season encourages us to trust, inspires us to hope, and offers us faith-filled reassurance that we are never entirely alone. No matter what our situation is. There is good news, no matter what is happening around us or in us. We are never wholly alone. The Lord is with us. Jesus, our brother, is with us. That should make us find happiness and peace even amid chaos. Only Jesus can calm the storm around us and in us.

To all who might feel alone or lonely, to all who might feel helpless or hopeless, to those who might be worried or frightened about the future... The reassuring words of the Angel to Joseph — "Do not be afraid" — are now God's words to us.

I invite you before you do anything. Breathe in and out these simple words: **Do not be afraid; the Lord is with me. Jesus is with me.**

Despite how things seem, we are never entirely alone. The Lord is with us. Jesus, our brother, is with us. And what does that make us?" Without missing a beat, like the boy in our story, we can say, "Happy!" And may God bless you!

Father Nico



**PS** I am going on a 2-week vacation right after Christmas to visit my family in the Philippines. Please pray for me as I pray for all of you. Always. And, may you all have a happy Christmas and a blessed New Year!

## PLEASE NOTE

There is **NO** 9 AM Mass on Christmas Eve.  
Confessions will not be heard on Christmas Eve.  
Please plan accordingly.

The Parish Office will be closed on Friday,  
December 23rd, and Monday December 26th.

## CHRISTMAS AT ST. PHILIPS

### Christmas Eve Masses

#### *Saturday, December 24*

4 PM - Fr. Nico (*Youth Choir*)

7 PM - Fr. Kevin (*Handbell Choir*)

10 PM - Fr. Monteleone (*Adult Choir*)

### Christmas Day Masses

#### *Sunday, December 25*

8 AM - Fr. Monteleone

10 AM - Fr. Jared (Broadcast)

12 PM - Fr. Nico

### Solemnity of Mary,

#### **Mother of God**

#### *Saturday, December 31*

Vigil Mass

5:30 PM - Fr. Monteleone

### Solemnity of Mary,

#### **Mother of God**

#### *Sunday, January 1*

8 AM - Fr. Monteleone

10 AM - Fr. Kevin (Broadcast)

12 PM - Fr. Jared

## ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

All the “elves” at our school have been working very hard to prepare for this glorious time.



From Advent wreaths to gingerbread men, to the Christmas Show.



The holiday spirit is running throughout our school, and everyone is having a good time.



The staff and students of SPPS wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy, very blessed New Year!



## WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS...

Thank you for helping with our annual **Giving Tree**! If you have not already returned your gift, make sure to drop it off in the vestibule by the NOON Mass on Sunday, December 18th. Don't forget to attach the tag to the gift! If you are making an online donation, please do so by this evening!



And, thank you for your generosity to the **Fr. English Food Pantry** last week. Two cars were loaded with food!

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## KIDS KORNER



### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YOU WILL NAME HIM JESUS



"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

MATTHEW 1:21



## WE PRAY FOR...

*May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace...*  
Anna Mazierski

### *A Time to be Healed...*

Susan Stierlen, Jill Festa, Sylvia Shami, Edward Kovacs, Dominick Cappello, Todd Daigneault, Cheri Albanesius, James Jablonowski, Elmer Rodriguez, Michael Barbetta, John Hughes, Bernadette Menzaco, Janet Jelenski, Adelaido Cuasay, Peter Weber, Msgr. Herbert Tillyer, Lorraine De Bellis



## PARISH GIVING

SUNDAY COLLECTION: DECEMBER 12, 2021	\$18,877.00
SUNDAY COLLECTION: DECEMBER 11, 2022	
WEEKLY COLLECTION	\$ 9,713.00
ONLINE GIVING DONATION	\$ 6,594.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 16,307.00</b>
SECOND COLLECTION - PROJECT FAITH	\$ 2,300.00

**Upcoming Second Collections:**  
**December 25 - Project Faith**

## MASS INTENTIONS

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022

- 8:00 Santiago Quintana Santana  
Michael Joe Landers
- 10:00 Catherine "Kitty" Makowski  
Deceased members of the Kerner Family  
Elena Parillo Bridi - 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Josephine Pagano
- 12:00 All the People of the Parish

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2022

- 9:00 Dr. Daniel Conte  
Stefan Ulczak

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2022

- 9:00 Robert Hammer - 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Claudia Pugliese

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2022

- 9:00 Irene Marschalk - 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Victoria Walker

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022

- 9:00 Thomas Turner - 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2022

- 9:00 Salvator Monteleone  
Encarnacion Conero

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2022

- 4:00 Manuel Moran - 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary  
Roberta Soccol
- 7:00 Charles Marvin  
Marci Francoise
- 10:00 Joseph Scafidi  
Andrew and Emily Sokerka  
Patricia Hassert

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022

- 8:00 All the People of the Parish
- 10:00 Louise Zanetti  
Joseph Payne  
John Michal  
Josephine and Domenick Pagano
- 12:00 Jose Navarro  
James Scancarella

**Candle for the Week of December 18th**  
In Memory of Irene and Paul Marschalk  
-From MaryBeth Marschalk



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