

Week of December 31, 2017

Monday

Nm 6:22-27 * Ps 67:2-3,5-6,8 * Gal 4:4-7 * Lk 2:16-21

TUESDAY →NO Word/Com

1 Jn 2:22-28 * Ps 98:1-4 * Jn 1:19-28

WEDNESDAY 8:00am Mass

1 Jn 2:29 – 3:6 * Ps 98:1-3,6 * Jn 1:29-34

THURSDAY 8:00am Mass

1 Jn 3:7-10 * Ps 98:1,7-9 * Jn 1:35-42

FRIDAY

1 Jn 3:11-21 * Ps 100:1-5 * Jn 1:43-51

SATURDAY 4:30pm Mass

1 Jn 5:5-13 * Ps 147:12-15,19-20 * Mk 1:7-11

SUNDAY 9:30am Mass

Children's Liturgy of the Word & Nursery
Is 60:1-6 * Ps 72:2,7-8,10-13 * Eph 3:2-3,5-6 * Mt 2:1-12



THE HOLY FAMILY

Parish Activities

Mon., Jan. 1	Parish Office closed
Tues., Jan. 2	6:30pm RCIA
Wed., Jan. 3	School Resumes
Thurs., Jan. 4	7:00pm Baptismal Prep

Dispensed: When any Holy Day, with the exception of the Immaculate Conception (which is the patronal feast of the U.S.A.) appears on a Saturday or a Monday, the bishops have dispensed from the obligation to attend. New Year's Day is like that – it is not a Holy Day this year.

The Great Bible Timeline series starts on January 8. It will meet on Mondays, 6:30-8pm in the Parish Center. Sign up on the sheet at the CAFÉ Kiosk by [January 3!](#)

Lost & Found: A pair of glasses with purple rims was found in the parking lot on Christmas Eve. If they are yours, you can claim them at the Parish Office.

A huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped make our Advent and Christmas Masses great: the choir, the children who gave us a wonderful prelude on Christmas Eve, the Worship Commission and three school families who helped decorate the church for Christmas in a matter of hours, the lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, ushers, servers, the families who lit the Advent candles, and all the other parishioners who helped make the Masses not only run smoothly, but be a truly beautiful time of celebration!

Arrival: Not only did the child Jesus arrive in the Bethlehem scene, the Lady of Fatima arrived as well. The shrine from St. Anthony's has been transferred completely and placed in an enhanced setting on the west side of the Church. Those who almost always enter and exit via the main entrance should take a look (provided it's not covered by snow!).

Stewardship

Weekly Target: \$11,538.47 * Offering: \$17,508.48
Christmas Flowers: \$10.00 * Religious Retirement: \$480.00

Children's Good Deeds: My Good Deed was...

...giving a toy away. ...I did the cat box.
...helping bake brownies & clean the basement with Jack.
...shoveling the driveway and sorting recycles.

Auburn Area Catholic School

► **What's Happening at AACs:** The staff and students will be blessing the doors on Wed., Jan. 3. Thank you to Mrs. DesJardins for assisting us with the Door Blessings.

Education/Formation

Family Talk Time Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee

Why do we go to Mass? Why is your religion important to you?

► **Reflecting on the Word:** We can look at Mary and Joseph as parents who took the time to observe the practices that are part of their faith. Passing on the faith was important to the Holy Family. Often, parents feel too busy to take their children to Mass and teach them their prayers. But Mary and Joseph took a break from their routine to observe the practices of Judaism.

► **Living the Word:** Discuss with the children the value your family placed on the faith while you were growing up. Tell them about some of the ways your household practiced the faith. Determine a new way that your family will do so. Perhaps you will begin to pray before or after meals or say an evening prayer together.

FINDING HOPE IN THE NEW YEAR Family Faith on the Go, Jan. 2018

With January comes the first annual section of Ordinary Time and a chance for regrouping after the holidays. This year, instead of feeling letdown after the excitement, start the year by focusing on the virtue of hope. The season of Ordinary Time is not meant to seem unimportant, but rather is meant for us to grow in habits of discipleship. A key ingredient we can work on is finding hope in our lives – the virtue that lets us know as Christians we can trust God's grace and gift of salvation each and every day. Make a **HOPE JAR** and write down the ways you are seeing God each week, and then put the slips of paper in the jar. When you are feeling in need of a hope boost, read what has been put in the jar!

Four Ways to Be Hopeful This Year: Did you ever see the text abbreviation H.O.P.E.? It means "have only positive expectations" and is a quick way to give someone encouragement. What if we worked on hope as a long-term way to exercise our trust in God and joy as Christians with a four-part H.O.P.E. plan for the year?

Happiness: Jesus taught us the way to be truly happy is to live the beatitudes. These eight happiness, or blessing, statements can be found in Matthew 5:3-12 and help us focus on having the right attitude as Christians. As a family, learn one beatitude each week and choose one way to live out the beatitude this year. For example, for "Blessed are the peacemakers" (v.9) come to an agreement that you will avoid loud arguments and make time to talk about disagreements together.

Openness: Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us have the strength to follow him. As a family, talk about the Holy Spirit who comes as fire, wind and dove, and the ways you can see the Holy Spirit guiding you. Agree to be open to the Holy Spirit in a special way this year. Once a week, have each family member share all the different ways they have seen the Holy Spirit at work in nature, at church, at school or work, and in other people.

Prayerfulness: Jesus showed us how to pray, giving us the Lord's Prayer. But he also encouraged people to ask God for what they may need as a way to build up trust and reliance on God. Set aside time at least once a week to share needs you have noticed in family, friends, neighbors or the world at large. Make a list of these petitions and pray for God to help the people involved. Read the list aloud each week after making additions and then take a few minutes of silence and pray in your hearts for trust in God's will.

Enthusiasm: Jesus encouraged us to live fully as children of God. The word enthusiasm comes from a Greek word meaning to live in God or to be inspired by God. If we are really living in God and seeing Christ in others, we will have a spirit of God's grace and love when we interact with them. This year agree you will greet new ideas and people with enthusiasm – with a willingness to participate and work together. Also agree to greet difficulties that come up with the same spirit – a hopeful trust that God will bring about good.

Feast of the Holy Family

Patricia Sanchez, [Celebration](#)

Parents are the primary mentor of their children. They help their children to develop their own personalities, cultivate their social skills and educate their children at every level of their physical, emotional and intellectual development. By word and especially by example, parents also initiate their children into the life of faith. Good parents in every way, Mary and Joseph saw to the needs of Jesus. In today's Gospel, they are portrayed as handing on the rich traditions of their faith to their son by adhering to the law. Their presence in the temple was required in Exodus that days after his child should be presented to the Lord and in Leviticus the ritual of the new

In addition to the sincere Jesus' earthly had further include this his Gospel. ing in the acquiesce to Mary and

the scene for the actions of Simeon and Anna, both of whom Luke describes as "awaiting the consolation of Israel." Both Simeon and Anna focus the reader's attention of Jesus and on the future that will be profoundly impacted by his presence.

Through all the ups and downs, the dying and rising of their life together, Mary, Joseph and Jesus supported one another through their mutual love and shared faith in God. Today they reach out with gentle hands in support of all families who wish to follow their example.

The Family Circle

Mary Matestic, [Connect](#)

Family life cannot exist on linear activities and frenetic calendars that bypass meals together, vacations together, talking together and all the ways that family life in its best sense is sustained. It is the rituals of family life, the interdependent relationships that help us to cooperate in the small ways: cleaning our room, emptying the garbage, grocery shopping. Those are the bricks of the great framework of family life that create meaning systems for kids to move out into the world with fundamental values that will sustain them. Meaning and purposeful living become the foundation of faith. That is what makes the traditions of Christmas so powerful.

That is what we see in Mary and Joseph, following the rituals of their day, coming to present their child. It is here in the Temple that the voice of a God who has no voice is heard in the presence of an old man, Simeon, and an old woman, Anna. Juxtaposed against the youth of Mary and Joseph, we see the generations of faith in the aged ones now being passed on to the young ones. The sense of wonder they feel at seeing this child is contagious and the hearts of the two elders race as they behold the very promise of God. They are so overwhelmed with it all, they speak prophetic words to the new parents. What an awesome moment in the Holy Family's life!

Though the days of winter are dark, the light of Christ breaks into history in every generation anew. The light of Christ shines brilliantly



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in every chapel and cathedral around the world, and choirs gather to sing "Glory to God in the Highest," Christmas trees are lit and hot mulled cider warms us. It is still within the family circle where the foundations of faith are caught by the wide-eyed little ones. It is the elders who sing new canticles of wonder and awe, songs of enduring faith.

Honoring Fathers & Mothers (Sirach)

[Celebration](#)

As one who was steeped in the rich traditions of his people, Jesus the son of Sirach was eager to share his enthusiasm for their shared heritage. This excerpted text is part of a longer commentary on family life and on the commandment to honor one's parents (Ex 20:12). Honoring one's parents and caring for them were regarded not only as familial responsibilities but also as sacred duties that brooked no violation. To do so would breach not only family bonds but also the law, which bound Israel to God.

Sirach's son was not only convinced of the legal obligation to honor one's parents; he even proposed that doing so could atone for sin. Contemporary believers accept this exhortation in the general sense in which it was made, as an incentive to obedience, and not as an absolute guarantee of forgiveness. Our wise ancestor in the faith was well aware that wholesome activities were inspired by holy intentions. In their hearts, the ancients who lived the law cultivated a holy intent that issued forth in observance of the commandments, including the one that urged the care of one's parents. This humble, trusting faith in God that begins in the heart and is expressed in one's life – *this* is what atones for sin. Full atonement for sin was, of course, effected by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the loving and faithful son of his earthly parents as well as his heavenly Father. By virtue of that atonement, every member of the human family, without exception, also belongs to the family of God. If only we could allow this belonging to permeate our being and guide our regard for every one of our brothers and sisters.

Household Rule (Colossians)

[Celebration](#)

"Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" (v. 17) constitutes a summation of the rules of Christian conduct. If this summary rule were to be realized, then the believer's every word and work, every thought and decision would have to prove itself worthy of Jesus. In spelling out the relevance of this rule in everyday living, the ancient writer gave practical advice to all family members. Martin Luther referred to these rules as *Haustafeln*, or household rules. Underlying every rule is an element of submission, first to Jesus Christ and then to one another because of Jesus. Although some contemporary readers may be offended by what has been interpreted as patriarchy and chauvinism, careful readers will realize that all that is being advocated here is a simple altruism whereby each family member values and places the other ahead of self. This same altruism continues in those healthy and holy families that aspire to reflect the divine family template of our own triune God.

Gather as Family

[Faith Works](#), Dallas TX

Family is all around us and, in the most important way, within us. We take our family with us wherever we go. We hear our parents' instruction about right and wrong long after we have become adults. We instinctively hug a friend who's having a difficult day because someone when we were young hugged us. We sit at a table almost anywhere and remember those special tables where we sat when all the family was together. And yes, we gather here today at a table – a family table – grateful for this faith that says and sings, lives and believes we are the **Family of God**.

