



December 5 – 6, 2009 Second Sunday of Advent

"The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 5th

Vigil: Second Sunday of Advent

4:00 PM Ethel Cascio
Requested by her children

Sunday, December 6th

Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM William V. West
Requested by his family

10:30 AM Quintino Rollo, MD (13th Anniversary)
Requested by his wife Claire & family

Monday, December 7th

St. Ambrose, bishop & doctor

7:00 AM Mary & James DiConza & son Nicholas
Requested by Connie & Tony Tessi

Vigil: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**5:30 PM Deceased Members of the Cormier
& Orlando Families**
Requested by their families

Tuesday, December 8th

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:00 AM Angelo & Anna Casella
Requested by Francis LeClair & family

2:00 PM School Mass

Wednesday, December 9th

St. Juan Diego, hermit

5:30 PM Ida Montville
Requested by M/M Alexander Ruberti & family

Thursday, December 10th

7:00 AM Rita Gallant
Requested by M/M Aquila Boucher

Friday, December 11th

St. Damasus I, pope

7:00 AM Mary Celona
Requested by Sally Westbrooks

Saturday, December 12th

Vigil: 3rd Sunday of Advent

**4:00 PM Deceased Members of the Weldon
& Chausse Families**
Requested by Betty & Dennis Anderson

Sunday, December 13th

3rd Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM Madalena & Donato DiZuzio (Anniversary)
Requested by the Pennetti family

10:30 AM Filippo Salamone
Requested by his three daughters & family

READ AND PREPARE

Next week's Scripture readings:

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14 – 18a

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4 – 7

Gospel: Luke 3:10 – 18

November 29th Offerings

Needed to Meet Budget	\$4,889.00
Sunday Offerings	\$3,888.00
Children's Collection (\$30.00)	\$3000
DEFICIT this week	\$971.00
TOTAL DEFICIT Year to Date	\$5,781.50

Campaign for Human Development Collection totaled \$1,319

The Giving Tree has been set up and decorated with the names of children or senior citizens who are in need of services through Catholic Charities and Montachusett Home Health Care. Please consider taking an "ornament" and purchasing something for someone in need. **Be sure to return your wrapped gift with the tag attached to the church or office no later than Monday, December 14th.**

SHARE IN THE CARE – NEXT WEEKEND DEC. 12th & 13th THE RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS COLLECTION

This is an excerpt from a letter from Bishop McManus urging your support for this most worthy cause:

I encourage your generosity in this special collection which assists our retired religious priests, brothers and sisters who have offered their lives to the Lord in service to the Church. Through their ministries they founded Catholic schools and hospitals and launched initiatives that continue to support the neediest among us. In our often troubled world, they remain a visible sign of Christ's love.

Religious women and men cared for others and did so with little concern for themselves. Today, tens of thousands of them are now elderly, frail and in need of assistance. Their communities struggle to provide adequate care. The current economic downturn has affected them just as it has all of us.

The Retirement Fund for the Religious, with its theme, *Share in the Care*, supports these men and women who continue to shape the lives and the faith of millions of Americans. It is important that we offer our thanks to these religious who have influenced us so deeply.

Please be generous in this appeal. It represents an opportunity to bring together our diocesan family in support of those who have served the Church as well our local communities. I am very grateful for your support in the past. I ask you to bless our religious with your gift again next weekend.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester

This week's St. Anthony Devotional Candle donated by:
MaryAnn Michaelian for the sick & dying

Dear Friends,

The excitement is building! My wreaths are on the doors and there are candles in the windows. The tables are covered and prepared for my Nativity set. The tree is up – almost. The special season of Advent is here and Christmas is coming. I am not ashamed to say that I still a huge fan of Christmas and all the preparations. I'll never say "Bah, humbug!"

The wreath is round to symbolize eternity and evergreen to remind us of the endless life in Christ Jesus. The lights in the windows guide the way for Mary and Joseph. The star or the angel on the top of the tree point the way to heaven, for at Christmas, heaven came to earth in Our Savior. Why shouldn't we rejoice?

Today's readings emphasize that joy. "Up, Jerusalem! Stand upon the heights; look to the east and see your children gathered from the east and the west at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that they are remembered by God." God has not forgotten us. God is with us. Emmanuel. As we prepare for Christmas, we prepare with *joy*. Let that joy into your hearts and into your lives. Don't let the crass commercialism of advertisements or the efforts to remove any mention of Jesus Christ from Christmas get you down.

Rejoice! God has not abandoned us. Keep Christ in your heart and know a joy that no one and nothing can take away from you. May the blessing of a good Advent season prepare us for a wonderful celebration of the birth of our King.

Pace e Bene,

ALTAR SERVERS, LECTORS, EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sign up sheets for ministers at the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses are in the sacristy. Sign up after Mass. Due to suspension of Communion from the Chalice during the flu season; we will need fewer ministers, so sign up now!

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, December 27th 1-5 PM CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AT THE RECTORY

Everyone is welcome to stop by at the annual Christmas Open House and share the Christmas spirit with fellow parishioners and friends. We will be having some surprise guests as well. (No, not Santa Claus. He will be resting up at the North Pole!)

Interested in RCIA? Please call Matt Gauvin at 978-343-8552 for questions and general information.

MARRIED COUPLES: By offering Married Couples the beautiful experience of a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend, the Catholic Church is affirming and supporting you in your chosen vocation – Marriage. Take advantage of this great gift to enhance your relationship and enjoy a love-filled weekend away together. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends in New England are January 8-10. For more information call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-WWME or visit our webpage at www.wwmeMA.org

Holiday Concert – The Montachusett Chorale will present its Holiday Concert on **Sunday, December 6th at 2:00 PM** in Tata Auditorium, Leominster City Hall. The concert will benefit the Montachusett Interfaith Hospitality Network. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Under 18 are free. For tickets call Kathy Cullinan at 978-342-3363, Colonial Florists 978-534-9187 or MIHN 978-840-9500.

Sparkling Seniors Christmas Party is this **Wednesday, December 9th at 12:00 Noon in the church hall**. Advanced reservations have ended. We have approximately 70 people signed up for this event. We look forward to seeing all of you!

40 Hours Devotion at Immaculate Conception, Fitchburg
Immaculate Conception Parish will hold **Forty Hours Devotion on December 6-8** as follows: Tuesday, Dec., 8th, Feast of the Immaculate Conception: 7:30 PM Sung High Mass (Latin) and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; Wednesday, Dec, 9th: Noon: Holy Hour of Reparation; 6:30, PM, Mass (English); Thursday, Dec. 10th: 8:15 AM Mass (English); 10:45 AM Benediction; 11:00 AM. Low Mass (Latin). Masses noted in Latin will be according to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite.

Fertility Care System – Discover what every couple needs to know, and what every woman has a right to know. The Creighton Model Fertility Care System helps married couples mutually value, respect and understand their combined fertility by promoting shared responsibility and marital bonding. This natural system for planning and avoiding pregnancy views children as gifts and empowers women to manage PMS, menopause, infertility and other health problems. For more information or to sign up for a free introductory session, call Barbara Meier, RN, FCPI at the Fallon Clinic Fitchburg. 978-343-2775 or 609-457-0108

ARE WE FORGETTING St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry?
New items added to the food pantry wish list are: canned meat, canned fruit, baked beans, jam or jelly, Jello or pudding, bathroom tissue, cereal, Rice-a-Roni, juice and coffee. Many people rely on this weekly service that St. Francis provides. **Please try to bring one item a week.** Thank you!

Item of the Month – The Youth Group is accepting donations for Our Father's House and the Veterans' Homestead. **This month's items are shampoo and conditioner.** Items can be placed in the marked boxes at the entrances of the church. Thank you for your support.

Johnsonia Cultural Series – Thursday, Dec., 17th @ 7:00 PM - "Celebrate the Seasons," a hooked rug exhibit by artist Beverly Hollows accompanied by harpist Rosemary Reynolds, at the Johnsonia Art Gallery, 516 Main Street, Fitchburg. Free, open to the public, serving wine, cheese, soft drinks, and sweets.

Country Christmas Fair Update:

St. Anthony School would like to thank all the parishioners, school families, friends and neighbors who supported them in their annual Country Christmas Fair. The school realized a profit of \$16,286, a tremendous increase over last years' figures! All of this money is used directly for school purposes. We can't thank you enough!

Main Raffle Winners:

\$500 – Susan Haigh
\$250 – Don Lassila
\$100 – Carol Ann Crowley

Thank you for your continued generosity to our school. May God continue to bless you during this advent season and all throughout the New Year.