



Saint Matthew CATHOLIC CHURCH

DEEPENING OUR CATHOLIC FAITH TOGETHER

DECEMBER 12, 2021 + THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“John answered them all, saying, ‘I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.’”

- Luke 3:16



MASS SCHEDULE

MASS

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. | 8 a.m.
Wed. | 7 p.m. (Adoration at 6 p.m.)
Saturday Vigil | 5 p.m.
Sunday | 8:30 a.m., 11 a.m.

CONFESSION

Wednesday | 6 - 6:50 p.m.
Saturday | 4 - 4:45 p.m.

PARISH INFORMATION

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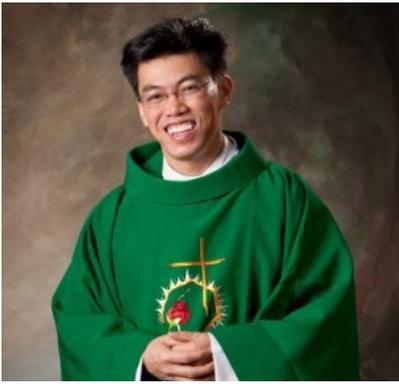
Father Mark Sappenfield

ASSOCIATE PASTOR:

Father Tien Tran

DEACONS:

Lachlan Cameron & Bill Forte



A REFLECTION FROM FR. TIEN TRAN

ADVENT AND THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

Advent is a time to prepare ourselves to celebrate the mystery of God as he humbles himself to become man. The Church has given us the lives of biblical witnesses like the Prophet Isaiah, John the Baptist, and the saints. During Advent, it is valuable for us to read about their faith and beliefs about how to prepare for the coming of the Son of God.

It wouldn't be right if we didn't mention Mary waiting on the Lord to come. Mary lived Advent season like everyone else; however, more than anyone else, the experience of Advent season for Mary is always calling to us, urging our hearts toward the Mystery of the Lord coming into the world.

Christmas brings joy and good wishes. Christmas is the time to exchange our gifts with each other—the joy of giving gifts and receiving gifts. And with that, let us take a moment to contemplate this Christmas Season on what gift I want to give to God, to others and to myself?

There was a story at Bethlehem ...

At that time, there was a fox that the people called Gosh Fox. Gosh Fox was very much disliked. He was sad and lonely, as he had no friends. Because of this, he would only come out at midnight, when the people and animals were asleep. He often asked himself, “*Why was I born like this?*” One night, Gosh Fox was seeking something to eat when he came across a manger. Gosh Fox knew that the baby laying in the manger was Baby Jesus, the Son of God. Gosh Fox wanted to visit Him, but he was afraid the animals and shepherds would chase him away. Gosh Fox waited and waited until midnight, when both the humans and the animals were asleep—even the sheep. Gosh Fox gently trotted toward the manger. It was the middle of the night, and the weather was colder than normal. So Gosh Fox used his breath to keep the Baby Jesus warm. Gosh Fox saw Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus smile at him. At dawn the next morning, Gosh Fox quietly walked out of the cave. Although hungry, he was very pleased, because he knew God had silently received small gifts from Gosh Fox.

While everyone is busy wondering what gifts to give and what they'll receive, make time to stop and think: What gift do I want to give to the Lord, and what do I want for myself this Christmas?

**LITURGY SCHEDULE
(DECEMBER 13-19, 2021)**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- ✙ Ann Larko
 - Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a
 - Mt 21:23-27

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- ✙ Anne Carol DiBisceglie
 - Zep 3:1-2, 9-13
 - Mt 21:28-32

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15

- 7:00 p.m. Mass
- ✙ Hugh McKee
 - Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25
 - Lk 7:18b-23

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- ✙ For John DeSilvia
 - Is 54:1-10
 - Lk 7:24-30

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- ✙ Warren LeJeune
 - Gn 49:2, 8-10
 - Mt 1:1-17

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 5:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass
- ✙ Paul Matthew Doersam
- 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass
- ✙ Scott Dawson
- 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass
- ✙ For the People
 - Mi 5:1-4a
 - Heb 10:5-10
 - Lk 1:39-45

✙ **Special Intention**
✙ *May they rest in peace*

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

- FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 5, 2021 -	
PARISH, VISITORS, AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWALS, ONLINE GIVING, AND LOOSE CASH	\$26,250
SECOND COLLECTION: CAPITAL NEEDS	\$577

PARISH NEWS

FAMILY SOCIAL MINISTRY COLLECTION FOR THE HOMELESS

Saint Matthew's Family Social Ministry is collecting items for Catholic Charities to benefit the homeless. We are collecting items between now and January 4. Items can be new or gently used. Suggested items are included on the Amazon List link below. The collection box for these items is located under the table outside of the training chapel. We will be organizing the items and making Blessing Bags for the Homeless at the St. Gianna Circle Moms Group meeting on Tuesday, January 4 at 7 p.m. in the Cohan-Hansom Building. All moms are invited! View the Amazon List: amzn.to/3EW5sMs

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Christmas at Saint Matthew has always been a special time of beauty because the flowers decorating our church have been a memorial to our loved ones. We are again offering the opportunity to participate in a special way by having our loved ones remembered at the 10 a.m. Mass on Christmas Day. To participate, please fill out the "Christmas Flowers" offering found in your December envelope packet. Please enclose your offering and place it in the collection by December 20. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

VISIT WITH MARK & RACHEL JANSEN

This weekend, we are excited to welcome back the Jansen family! Mark, Rachel are back from their mission trip and are in town for a short visit before embarking on another mission trip, this time to Costa Rica. In honor of their return, we will be hosting a Meet & Greet after the 11 a.m. Mass this Sunday, December 12 in the Parish Conference Center. Mark and Rachel will share photos and stories from their trip to Puerto Rico, as well as spend time in fellowship with our community. Donuts, coffee and juice will be served. We hope to see you there!

RESPECT FOR LIFE ROSARY

Won't you come pray with us? The body of Christ is being called to peacefully and prayerfully stand against abortion. Step out of your comfort zone, help these women in crisis, and save lives. We gather to pray the rosary every Tuesday at noon outside of Planned Parenthood in downtown Nashville. Register online at bit.ly/smcrosary.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

Our Advent Penance Service will be held on Tuesday, December 14 from 7-8 p.m. Please make plans to attend.



ON JORDAN'S BANK

Our Gathering Song this weekend will be *On Jordan's Bank*. The original Latin text, *Jordanis oras praevia*, was written by Charles Coffin for the Paris Breviary published in 1736. The text we will sing was originally translated by John Chandler for the *Hymns of the Primitive Church* published in 1837 and has since been altered to more closely resemble Coffin's original Latin text.

The tune to which this text is set is WINCHESTER NEW. It was composed by Georg Wittwe and

first published in *Musikalisches Handbuch der geistlichen Melodien* in 1690. It was adapted by William J. Havergal into Long Meter (four phrases of eight syllables each) and published in *Old Church Psalms* in 1864.

As are many hymns, its content is derived from Scripture, particularly referencing Isaiah 40:3, 7, & 9.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ST. CECILIA JUNIOR HIGH UPDATES

Do you know of a 7th or 8th grade girl who would be interested in attending SCA in the inaugural 2022-2023 classes? Encourage them to visit the SCA Junior High page for information and Q & A. We will provide updates here and on our admissions page with details of our new program. The application process will be open soon! Learn more at www.stcecilia.edu/junior-high.

WHAT'S ON NASHVILLE CATHOLIC RADIO

The programs aired Monday-Thursday from 11 a.m. to noon are produced locally from the studio of Nashville Catholic Radio located at the Catholic Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Nashville. The programs are about the Nashville Diocese, its programs, ministries, and its parishes and their parishioners. You can listen in on your radio at 100.5FM within the coverage area, stream it at NashvilleCR.com, or ask your smart speaker to "Play Nashville Catholic Radio."

FORMED

PICK OF THE WEEK - DECEMBER 12



Both St. John of the Cross and his dear friend St. Teresa of Avila lived heroic lives of prayer. In honor of these spiritual masters, enjoy this film depicting the Carmelite way of life and the virtue of perseverance.

If you have not signed up for FORMED, visit signup.formed.org, enter our parish zip code (37069), enter your name and email, log in through your email, and start watching!

FATHER RYAN YOUNG ALUMNI LUNCH

Father Ryan invites members of the Classes of 2018-2021 back to campus for the annual Young Alumni Lunch, including the Christmas Cookie decorating contest. The luncheon is Monday, December 20 at 11:30 a.m. in the Father Ryan Dining Hall. To register for this free event, visit fatherryan.org/youngalumnilunch.

FATHER RYAN LEGACY GALA

Father Ryan's 2022 Legacy Gala will honor Father Charles Strobel, a 1961 graduate of the school and the Founding Director of Room In The Inn. All are invited to join us on February 5 at Music City Center for dinner, dancing, and a silent and live auction. Visit fatherryan.org/gala to purchase tickets for this celebratory evening.

NCWBL CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

Every year we ask our retired sisters what they would like for Christmas and we work to make their wishes come true. The Dominican Sisters are requesting a new blood pressure machine for the Infirmary that costs \$500. The Sisters of Mercy asked for: postage stamps; sets of blank note cards; thank you cards; gift cards to Michaels, Joann Fabric, or Hobby Lobby; towel sets; chocolates. To contribute, please bring your donations to the Christmas Party on December 15. You may also mail a check to help pay for the requested items: payable to NCBWL, specifying "Christmas Gifts" in the memo, and mail to PO Box 50994, Nashville TN 37205. For more information, contact Claudia Weber, claudiaweber1946@gmail.com.

NCWBL CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 15, 5-8 p.m. RSVP by Dec. 12 at www.ncbwl.org. Beverages will be provided. Please bring your favorite dish to share (appetizer, salad, sides, meats, sandwiches, or desserts). Also, remember to bring your gifts for the retired sisters.



PARTICIPATION Challenge

Get ready, Saint Matthew! It's time for the *Legacy* Campaign Participation Challenge!

Thanks to your generous support, we have raised \$894,730 in the *Legacy* Campaign, which is 48% of our total goal. To help us push past the halfway point, we need YOU to participate in the campaign!

The only way to participate in this challenge is by turning in your completed pledge cards. Everyone should have received their campaign packet, which includes a pledge card and a letter from Bishop Spalding with a recommended pledge amount. All you have to do to participate in this challenge is submit your completed pledge card to the church office by Friday, December 17.

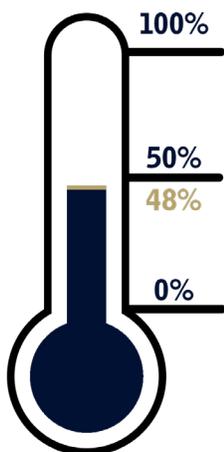
We will have a special collection box set up in the Narthex at each of the Masses this weekend. To participate, simply slide your pledge card into the box either before or after Mass. Think you misplaced your pledge card? No worries! We will have extra pledge cards available on the bulletin table. If you aren't able to submit your pledge card this weekend, you can drop it off at the church office next week.

Please remember that the initial pledge amount is an invitation to participate, not an expectation. Fr. Mark invites everyone to participate in this challenge. Every gift—large or small—helps us get closer to our goal!

Our goal is to receive 200 additional pledge cards this week! This is a lofty goal, and can only be achieved with your help.

Thank you in advance for your support! And, as always, please continue to pray for the success of the campaign.

WE'RE OVER THE \$800,000 MARK!



Thanks to your generous support, we have crossed the \$800,000 in the *Legacy* campaign!

Saint Matthew's goal for the campaign is \$1,846,698. We are currently at 48% of that goal with a total of \$894,730.

The best way to see our thermometer continue to rise is by submitting your pledge decisions! If you have not already made your gift, please complete your pledge card and submit it to the Church Office.

Thank you for your continued support of Saint Matthew Catholic Church and the Diocese of Nashville!

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

A NEW SERIES THIS YEAR



Revamp your New Year's resolutions towards the faith. This January we will start a new series in-between the Sunday Masses (during Religious Education classes). Our series is called "The Search." The Search shows us that our most pressing human questions in life are best answered by the Catholic Church. If you are interested in joining this series, please fill out the form at bit.ly/smthesearch.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR CONFIRMATION RETREAT



We are in need of adult and college age volunteers for our 8th grade Confirmation retreat on January 8th. This event is a great opportunity to grow in your faith and impart

your understanding and experience to our youth. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks. To sign up, please visit bit.ly/smconfirmationretreatvol to fill out the volunteer registration form.



TONY JESSE
Director of Religious Education
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Want to learn about the faith? Visit
<http://bit.ly/SMCFaithFormationInterestForm>

TONY'S REFLECTION

SCROOGE'S TRANSFORMATION

In Charles Dickens' story, *A Christmas Carol*, we witness the conversion of Ebenezer Scrooge. Despite having considerable wealth, Scrooge underpays his clerk and hounds his debtors relentlessly while experiencing a cheap and joyless life. Most of all, he detests Christmas, which he associates with reckless spending and annoying cheer.

Despite his rather miserable state, Scrooge experiences a dramatic transformation when he is visited by three spirits. The final spirit shows Scrooge where his greed and selfishness will lead him – a corrupt version of the person he was created to be.

Scrooge begs the spirit for another chance, promising to change his ways – and wakes up on Christmas Day. Overjoyed, Scrooge commits to being more generous and compassionate. Here, Scrooge becomes the embodiment of the Christmas spirit.

Scrooge's transformation from being consumed by pride and greed to becoming drenched in humility and generosity was kick-started when he saw the full view of his sinful state. After this, charity flowed through him.

One way to reinvigorate our spiritual senses this Advent is to practice small acts of charity. In today's Gospel reading, John the Baptist gives us a challenging plea – to take our goods and to bestow them to others. This spiritual formula is on full display in the Christmas story as God was given to us. Here, we stand as wretched sinners in need receiving the immense gift of Jesus into our world. From receivers, we then transition into givers. And when we do, our soul's will be altered to experience the fullness of the faith – much like Scrooge felt like when he awoke on Christmas morning.

TOMMY'S REFLECTION
LOWERING AWARENESS

Wait, what? Isn't it a virtue to "raise awareness" about things? Well, for certain things, of course it is good to know about them! But we often fall into a mindset that believes that it is good to know *everything about everywhere in every moment*. Nowadays, in a click of a button, we can know all the drama, politics, rumors and events thousands of miles away from people whom we will never meet and places we will never see. Let us ask ourselves: is this a good thing?

This is shocking to us: we want to "be in the know" or remain "woke" and never have our "head in the sand." School is all about eliminating our ignorance, right? Shouldn't we stay "up-do-date" on all we can get our hands on: news bites, controversial tweets, celebrity drama, entertaining comment section battles and awaiting season 2 of Squid Game? We are more anxious than ever before; but is it any wonder when we stay up to date on tragedies we'll never be able to help, shows that we'll never not binge, game scores we'll never beat, celebrities we'll never meet, or arguments we'll never stop? We may be "up-to-date" with the happenings of online life, but how up to date are we with our siblings? Our parents? Our best friends? How about our lonely and elderly next door neighbor who needs help rolling out her trash cans?

The answer isn't to remain ignorant. Rather, in remaining aware of *what* we should be aware of. Our imaginations only have so much room or "bandwidth." Maybe it's giving up the news, or social media, or just a single app for a little. Maybe it's a Netflix show or obsessive sports scores. Whichever it is, be aware *first* of all of the things in *your* life.

YOUTH MINISTRY

GET PUMPED! END OF YEAR BASH

Sunday, December 12 | 5-7 p.m. | Gym + PCC



Boccer, pajamas only, white elephant gift exchange, and slow-cooked meat. And a gingerbread house showdown. Bring a dessert, a small \$5 gift, and a friend. RSVP! bit.ly/3pozHVP

COME TO THE MOST HISTORIC MARCH YET

As the Supreme Court of the United States deliberates (fancy for decides) on a very decisive case that could significantly help protect the lives of the unborn in our country, this will likely be the most lively, exciting, victorious and historic marches to date. And Tommy has been to almost every March for Life since he was 6. Join Tommy and other Saint Matthew High School students in this pilgrimage standing up for the sanctity of life and dignity of every human being. We will be marching with Father Ryan and Saint Cecilia at the rally and doing a full schedule of activities in our nation's capital with high school students throughout the Diocese. This will be an incredible opportunity to have fun, meet students your age, and grow in your faith. The deadline to register this coming Friday. Register: www.soundscatholic.com/pro-life

TOMMY KILLACKEY
Director of Youth Ministry
tkillackey@stmatthewtn.org





OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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PRE-K: 615-646-1361

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