



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 15, 2024

St. James Catholic Church

*3909 Harrison * Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

"Small enough to know your name, big enough to make a difference."

Reflection from Denise Morris

The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday, which is Latin for "rejoice." This week's readings exhort us to "shout for joy," "sing joyfully," "be glad and exalt," be "confident and unafraid," and "have no anxiety at all."

Ooof. Those are tall orders given a shifting political landscape at home, ongoing wars abroad, increasing division and exclusion everywhere, and personal situations and relationships we're all doing our best to navigate. I have to be honest ... I found myself wanting to admonish today's scripture writers to, "Tone down the positivity, please. People are dealing with tough stuff!"

As I scoured this week's scriptures to gather some practical advice on how to be grounded and glad and, yes, even find reasons to rejoice in the midst of daily drudgery, I unearthed three practical suggestions that I hope you find helpful:

- 1. Find reasons to be grateful.** (*"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God."* –Phil 4:6) Two years ago, I started a five-minute gratitude journaling practice in the morning and evening, and it has significantly shifted where I focus my energy and attention. Whereas before, I focused on the past or future, and what went wrong or what needed to change (in myself, others, institutions, the world), the gratitude practice has helped me focus on the present and what is good in life. Gratitude helps me find God's fingerprints throughout each day. I've noted the deep belly laughter of my students, an awe-filled sunset, appreciation for my body's innate ability to heal, and even the simple coral color of the flowers in my apartment—all of which bring me joy.
- 2. Find others to serve.** (*"Whoever has two cloaks must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise ... Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."* – Luke 3:11-13) In 2015-2016, I lived on the U.S.-Mexico border and crossed into Anapra, Mexico several times a week with religious sisters to volunteer at their clinic for kids with special needs. I will never forget the hospitality that these families offered in return. They generously shared what little they had, and without reservation. There was always room for another mouth at the table, and they never withheld anything. The paradox of service continues to be bafflingly beautiful to me: by focusing on others, we forget about ourselves for a bit, which creates a space for grace and ushers in joy.
- 3. Trust that no matter what happens, God is with you.** (*"...The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you have no further misfortune to fear."* –Zep. 3:15) Life plays by its own rules, and sometimes none at all. I have experienced the sudden loss of a parent, been betrayed by friends, and been indignant at the injustices that so many people in this world suffer. Yet, in my darkness and doubt that things could change, I remember that Jesus experienced the same, and so truly understands the emotions, longing and loneliness that accompany life. And that, perhaps, is the greatest reason for joy in this Advent season: to know that in less than two weeks, we welcome a God who understands and empathizes with us, a God who wants to walk with and beside us. Emmanuel — God with Us — will enter our hearts and homes once again, and that is definitely reason to rejoice!

~ St. James Parish Updates ~

- **ST. JAMES FAITH FORMATION**

To those going on the Nelson Art Gallery:

The Nelson graciously moved the start time of our tour on Sunday, Dec. 15 to 1:30pm. I'm hoping this allows our participants to attend Mass, stay for the meeting, and then migrate to the Nelson. I will provide the "makings" for sandwiches in the Family Room after Mass. We will have cold cuts, bread and condiments, Rice Krispie bars, granola bars and chips. We'll also have some bottled water. A suggestion: as soon as Mass is finished, make your way to the "Family Room" and get your lunch/snack. Then return to the pews for the Parish Town Hall meeting.

Our tour will meet at the entrance from the parking garage. Docents will meet us there. If you have a museum membership, you can park free. You can park on the street or the lot across the street. Parking in the garage is \$10.00. Pair up with membership folks!

Every Sunday after Mass, we extend an invitation to pray to Our Lady, with Philomena leading the Rosary in the Family Room. Feel free to add your prayers and invitation as we pray this beautiful meditative prayer.

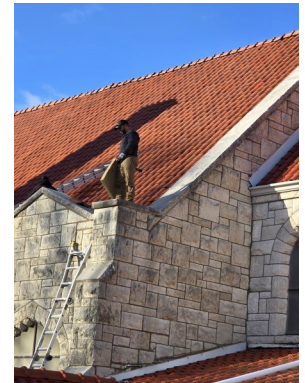
- **ST. JAMES CALENDAR**

December 15—PARISH MEETING AFTER MASS

December 15—FAITH FORMATION TRIP TO THE NELSON

December 24, 4PM—CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

December 29—FIFTH SUNDAY CELEBRATION



- **CHURCH ROOF**

The repair of the St. James roof is finished!

- **BUS STOP ON DECEMBER 27, FRIDAY, 10AM-NOON**

Bishop Sullivan Center is closed for the Christmas Holidays from December 23—January 1.

The Bus Stop Ministry is scheduled for Friday, December 27 from 10AM—NOON. We will make and distribute sack lunches as well as the usual scarves, hats, and gloves. Interested in helping? All of the volunteer slots are taken. Thank you for your willingness to help.

- **LITURGICAL MINISTERS NEEDED**

There are sign-up sheets in the back of church for you to use to volunteer your talents to help with ministries for our Christmas Eve mass, for Mass on Dec. 29th - Holy Family Sunday, and for Mass on Jan. 5th - the Epiphany. Please sign your name so we can provide for our worship on those days.

- **PARISH-WIDE MEETING THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15**

The one-hour meeting includes a discussion about moving from a Parish Administrator-led parish to a more community-led parish. This will be a bold move, and the outcome of Sunday's discussion will reflect the type of leader St. James needs and the type of parishioners we need to be as we continue to Build the Kingdom of God together.

We will meet in the front of the church immediately after 10 am Mass on December 15th. All are encouraged to attend. The Parish Transition Team will conduct the meeting.

~ St. James Parish Updates ~

• **ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL**

Thank you to the twenty-six households from Saint James, fifty-five households from Saint Therese, and eighty-four households from Saint Francis that participated in our diocesan Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) this year. Saint James Parish reached its goal last week and Little Flower accomplished its goal this week! I think Saint Francis Xavier will achieve theirs next week. I know that this is a challenge with all else that is asked of you in being part of a parish that is part of a diocese. Your good works and generous hands allow the chancery to assist service ministries throughout our city and surrounding region. These donations also support our parishes in several ways. I am grateful for your kindness in “going the extra mile” and proud that our parishes do our part—often more than our fair share—in carrying out the work of our local church. Fr. Don



• **STEWARDSHIP CORNER**

St. James continues to be an agent of change in our community every day. **Thank you for your work on behalf of the Kingdom of God.**

We have nearly 70 returned commitment cards for our **Annual Stewardship Appeal**. This is about 32% of our total 220 parish households. After the first of the year, we will be sending reminder letters to those who we have not received a card from. Our goal is to have 100% of our parish households return a card, even if you can't make a financial commitment at this time. This will tell us you have prayed about and considered our request for a 2025 financial commitment to St. James. **We ask that parishioners start to make their new contributions after January 1 so your contributions can be included in the 2025 totals.** If you have already contributed to your 2025 Stewardship Appeal, please contact Martha Belker at 913-515-5789.

~ Stewardship ~

Week 12/04—12/08: **\$4,704**
 Needed each week: **\$4,646**
 Percent of Weekly Budget: **101%**
 Actual this Fiscal YTD: **\$101,093**
 Budgeted this Fiscal YTD: **\$106,858**
 Percent of Budget to Date: **95%**

~ Mass Attendance ~

In-person Attendance
 12/08, 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT **129**
Livestream Attendance
 12/08, 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT **13**

~ Next Sunday's Readings ~

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 Mi 5:1-4a
 Heb 10:5-10
 Lk 1:39-45

~ We Hold in Prayer ~

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| • Ed Pailer | • Beverly Johnson |
| • Amie Miller | • Jeronn Cann |
| • Sarita Cann | • Punch Tuggle |
| • Carole Gary | • Mark Cann, Sr. |
| • Paul DeMerchant | • Sr. Carole Eschen |
| • Ross Beaudoin | • Judith Reed |
| • George Sitterly | • Hartleen Fredrick |
| • Wanda Decker | • Susie Roling |
| • Clare Duffy Laramie | • Teresa Maly |
| • Kate Miller | • Charles Carney |
| • Helen McDonald | • Lisa Looy |
| • Andy Bylinowski | • Pat Durkin |
| • Jermonica Cann | • Nancy Moylan |
| • Pat Marrin | • Bill Moylan |
| • Oscar Shelby | • Doris Dahlstrom |

St. James Catholic Church Mission

We, the people of the St. James community in faith, commit ourselves to building the Reign of God for all people, serving especially our neighbors in Midtown, Kansas City.

St. James Catholic Church Vision

St. James Parish will be a vital Catholic Christian presence at the crossroads of Kansas City, meeting the spiritual needs of our members and impacting both the midtown neighborhood and the larger community. We will be a growing and diverse community where worship and sacramental life are joyful and vibrant; where people are empowered to live the Gospel; and where, especially, the needs of the poor and disenfranchised are lovingly and humbly addressed.

Mass Schedule

Sunday

10:00 am

Confessions

By appointment only

Weddings

Contact the Parish Office at least 9 months prior to the wedding date

Parish Office

(816) 561-8512

PARISH REGISTRATION

Office Hours: 9:00 --3:00, Monday-Friday

Email

parish@stjkc.org

Website

stjkc.org

Address

3909 Harrison St.

Kansas City, MO 64110

P.O. Box Number

P.O. Box 30388

Kansas City, MO 64112

If you would like to register as a parishioner, registration forms are in a folder on the pamphlet rack in the church narthex. Please complete the form and drop it in the collection basket during Mass. The form is also on our website STJKC.ORG under Contact Us.

St James on Facebook

Public, only St James admin team can post - <https://www.facebook.com/stjamesmidtown>

Private, must request to join, members can post - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/157616239340>

Bulletin Deadline: Mondays—Email to parish@stjkc.org

For information/events to be posted on the website: Email to website@stjkc.org

Office of Child and Youth Protection

The Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph is committed to combating sexual abuse in the Church. If you are a victim of sexual abuse, or if you *observe or suspect* sexual abuse:

1. Call the Missouri Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-392-3738 (if the victim is currently under the age of 18), and
2. Contact your local law enforcement agency or call 911, and
3. After reporting to these civil and law enforcement authorities, report suspected *sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult* to the **Independent Ombudsman, Joe Crayon**, at 816-812-2500, if the abuse involves a priest, deacon, employee, or volunteer of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph.

The Diocese has a sincere commitment to providing care and healing resources to victims of sexual abuse and their families. Please contact Whitney True-Francis, the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 816.392.0011 or true.francis@diocesekcsj.org for more information.