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ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

2020 State Rte 146 E, Vienna, IL – 62995

Sun - 10:00 a.m.

Weekdays – Wed 6:30 pm & Fri 12 pm

Parish Council Chair: Steve Pobst

Trustees: Matthew Slife, Jared Bergmann

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH

Mulberry Street, Stonefort, IL – 62987

Sunday - 8:00 a.m.

& First Saturday – 8:30 am

Parish Council Chair: Mary Treat

Trustees: Myron Cole, Stan Treat

Joy in the Lord “I rejoice heartily in the Lord,” the prophet says in the [First Reading](#). And why wouldn't he? He has glad tidings. The poor will be taken care of, the brokenhearted will be healed, the captives will be freed, and the prisoners will be released. Who wouldn't rejoice in these things?

As the winter dark and cold encroach on our days, and the birth of the baby Jesus draws near, we hear these beautiful words everywhere. But the problem is that, for many people, this is a time of depression, not of joy.

Because his love suffuses all our suffering, our souls can proclaim the greatness of the Lord. And why? Well, because the poor are still poor; people are broken-hearted; and the captives and prisoners are not released. The bank forecloses on the house of a person who has lost his job; a friend is treacherous; a spouse succumbs to alcoholism. What has happened to the promise of the beautiful words? How is joy possible?

The answer lies in Mary's words in the Magnificat. “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,” she says. Does anyone think that she took these words back when she stood by the cross as her son was crucified?

How can Mary maintain the words of the Magnificat even at the foot of the cross? The answer is that the greatest love of the Lord was there. The words of joy that Mary spoke before the Lord was born are only more true in the suffering she bears at his cross. His love doesn't take away her suffering at his crucifixion. How could it? But her suffering is enveloped in his great love, and so it is transfigured.

Joy in the Lord is compatible with waiting for the final redemption from our suffering and our sin because Christ is Emanuel, God with us. Even now, because his love suffuses all our suffering, our souls can proclaim the greatness of the Lord, and our spirits can rejoice in God. Our Lord transfigures the suffering of our lives in his love.

Eleonore Stump

Vol 18 # 49 **3rd Sunday of Advent, December 17, 2017**

CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST

Sun	Dec 17	8:00 am	SFD	Rev Vito Lopardo
		10:00 am	SP	Dwayne Bowman
Tue	Dec 19	9, 11 am	DOC Masses, Shawnee, Vienna	
Wed	Dec 20	6:30 pm	SP	General Intention
Fri	Dec 22	12:00pm	SP	For the Parishioners
Sun	Dec 24	8:00 am	SFD	Richard Haase
		10:00 am	SP	Ray Nelson
		6:00 pm	SP	For the parishioners

Birthdays:	
Dec 18	Kaylee Hooven
Dec 19	Elizabeth Zmuda
Dec 23	Fred Deaton
	Gary Hacker
Dec 24	Nick Black

St Paul, Vienna

<p>Sun, Dec 17, 10 am Server: B Bertran, R Slife , Lector: Steve Pobst Gifts: Children Liturgy Ushers:G Tesina, M McMahan R Stoerger, S Hupe E. Minister A Dueker S. Belske, B Bishop Greeter: Bill & Billie Porter</p>	<p>Sun, Dec 24, 10 am Server: R Slife A Webb Lector: Steve Widowski Gifts: Matt, Rhi Slife Family Ushers: J Slife, D. Zmuda sr C Zmuda, Mt Slife E. Minister D Bishop, M. Nelson, F Dueke Greeter: Carolyn Johnson</p>	<p>Sun, Dec 24, 6 pm Server: R Slife, B Bertran, Lector: Joe Nelson Gifts: Alan, Ann Stachowiak UshersMt Slife, S Widowski S Hupe, D Bishop E. Minister S Black Md Slife, Peggy Widowski</p>
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St Francis DeSales, Stonefort

<p>Sun, Dec 17: 8 am Server: Cecilia Parks Lector: LaVonne Herbert Gifts: Treat Family Usher: Myron Cole E. Min: Christine Deaton</p>	<p>Sun, Dec 24: 8:00 am Server: Christine Deaton Lector: Marietta Moore Gifts: R Drone, L Herbert Usher David Parks E. Min: Cecilia Parks</p>	<p>Mon, Dec 25, 10 am Server: B Bertran, A Webb Lector: Keith Felcyn Gifts: Volunteers Ushers G Tesina, F Dueker L Stoerger, R Stoerger E. Minister P Kalicki S Moore, S Belske Greeter: H & X Gruszczczyk</p>
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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

- Sun Dec 17 St Francis DeSales Mass.....8:00 am
- St Paul Mass & Children Liturgy, BP checks.....10 am
- Christmas Pageant, Potluck at SP.....11 am
- Christmas Decoration of Church at SP.....1 pm
- Mon Dec 20 Parish Reconciliation Service, St Joseph Marion 6 pm
- Tue Dec 19 DOC Masses.....9 & 11 am
- Bible Study on Luke at SFD.....5 pm
- Rite of Christian Initiation Session.... 7 pm
- Wed Dec 20 Bible Study on Luke at SP.....3 pm
- Weekday Mass..... 6:30 pm
- SP Parish Council Mt....hall.....7:05 pm
- Thr Dec 21 Confirmation Service Ministry.....lv 8:00 am
- Parish Reconciliation Service at SP.....6:30 pm
- Fri Dec 22 Weekday Mass.....12:00 pm
- Sun Dec 24 St Francis DeSales Mass.....8:00 am
- St Paul Mass10 am
- Christmas Eve Carols, Readings at SP.....5:30 pm
- Christmas Eve Mass at SP.....6:00 pm

Rejoice in the Lord always!



BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS will be offered before and after mass this weekend.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND POTLUCK involving PSR students will be offered this Sunday, Dec 17th following the Sunday mass in St Paul Hall. All parishioners are encouraged to participate. Meat will be provided. Covered dishes are needed. Santa is scheduled for an appearance.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS will be set up at St Paul about 1 pm this Sunday, following the potluck meal. Volunteer helpers will be appreciated.

ANGEL TREE GIFTS Thank you to all who purchased gifts to be shared with needy children.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES AND CHURCH CALENDARS FOR 2018 are available to be picked in the church entrance.

SCRIPTURE STUDY OF LUKE will be offered at St Francis Dec 19th, 5 pm at (Dueker Home) and Dec 20th, 3 pm at St Paul Hall. Study will be led by Arlene Dueker .

CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL FLOWERS Flower memorials in the name of families and deceased members can be made using the Flower Memorial collection envelope. The Memorial insert on Christmas will include all memorials made by December 19th.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING St Paul Parish Council will meet this Wednesday, 7:05 pm in the parish hall. Agenda is available at weekend mass.

CONFIRMATION SERVICE PROJECT Members of the Confirmation class will take part in a service ministry assisting in distribution of toys to children on December 21. Plan to leave St Paul by 8 am.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE Both the 4th Sunday of Advent (Dec 24) and Christmas are considered masses of obligation, fulfilled by participation in each event's mass. Mass for 4th Sunday of Advent will be Dec 24th, 10 am, and Mass for Christmas either Dec 24th, 6 pm or Dec 25th, 10 am. (at St Francis, 8 am Sunday, and 8 am on Christmas Day). A service of Carols and Readings will precede the Christmas Eve Mass beginning 5:30 pm at St Paul..

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION Mon, Dec 19, 6 pm Reconciliation Service at St Joseph Marion; Thr, Dec 21, 6:30pm Reconciliation Service at St Paul, Vienna; Sat, Dec 23, 5-6 pm individual opportunity at St Paul; Sun, Dec 24, 7:15-8:50am at St Francis DeSales, or call rectory for appointment.

HOW WILL I ANSWER? Questions are put to John the Baptist today. Who are you? What do you have to say for yourself? Worthy questions for each of us. · What truth, what goodness will I voice this week? · What will I do to back up these words? · How can I lead this person, _____, to Jesus, the Light of the World?.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11; Luke 1:46-54; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8,19-28

"Who am I?" The question of identity touches the most profound depths of our personhood. The pursuit of personal needs and goals can have a suffocating effect. As we prepare in Advent for the Second Coming of the Lord, we are reminded in the liturgy that we must meet the Lord as a community, not as a collection of isolated individuals.

The prophet we call Third Isaiah, cared for the hurting community in Jerusalem around 500 B.C. As God's specially anointed spokesperson, he identifies with the brokenhearted. As a sign of hope he describes the joy of a renewed marriage between Yahweh and Jerusalem. The drab clothing of the past will be replaced with a robe of salvation and a mantle of justice. Yahweh will bring forth justice and praise in the presence of the Gentiles.

In the responsorial, Luke presents Mary's response to Elizabeth who has recognized Jesus in Mary's womb. Mary sings of her God and God's community. She finds the basis of her joy not within herself but within God. Placing herself within the framework of Israel's history, Mary unequivocally replies to the question: "Who am I? I am yours."

The two opening verses of today's gospel describe John as witness to the light and Jesus himself as the light. The Baptist seeks his own identity in relation to the Lord. John explains that he is not one of the traditional figures of the end of the world (the Messiah, Elijah, or the prophet). He is, however, the herald spoken of in Isaiah 40:3. John's baptism of water envisions the coming one, the Messiah.

Identity begins with family, then we look to community. We must support positive programs for the good of all our neighbors. Allegiance to Church and our brothers and sisters in faith are essential. In all these and similar situations we are encouraged to respond: "Who am I? I am yours."

-- John Craghan, Th.D., S.S.L.

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Isaiah is the first to tell us "to bring glad tidings. ... " Jesus quotes Isaiah next ([Luke 4:18-19](#)) and Pope Francis repeats it again. How important is that message to you? Should the fact that we have "mistakes and infidelities" under our belts hinder us? How could those mistakes help us help others?

How can you ensure that the Spirit has opportunities to work in you? How can anyone "rejoice always" when they are suffering? Do you know people who seem to do that? Do you find that all things work together for you if you love God? If you realize that, could that be "praying without ceasing"?

"There is one among you whom you do not recognize ... " Do you recognize Christ in all the different faces and ways he come to you each day?

NEXT SUNDAY SCRIPTURES: 4TH Sunday of Advent 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8b-12, 14a,16; Ps 89; Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38