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Mr. James Marrocco Lay Trustee

# St. Philip the Apostle Parish

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# Second Sunday of Advent December 7, 2025



#### **CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST**

Saturday Evening	5:30 PM
Sunday	8:00 AM, 10:00 AM (Broadcast) & 12:00 PM
•	9:00 AM

#### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

<b>Every Saturday</b>	•••••	.4:30 PM

# **HOLY HOUR**

Every Friday ......9:30 to 10:30 AM

For a Communion visit and/or Anointing of the Sick, please contact the Parish office.



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

Think about the person you miss most in your entire life. Picture them. And then think of the time you missed someone more intensely than you've ever missed anyone—during a deployment, a long trip, when a child moved away, whenever it was. Recall the longing, and the joy of reunion. This longing is the engine behind half the books and movies on the market—every Nicholas Sparks plot runs on it. Two people fall in love, circumstances wrench them apart, they pine for one another, obstacles arise, twists unfold, but the pull of the relationship wins in the end. Why does that story sell? Because we're made for relationship. Something in us comes alive when the one we love is present, and something in us aches when they're gone.

Hold that person in your mind, the one whose absence unsettles you, whose presence brings you peace.

Here's the real question, and I mean this sincerely: Is your longing for Christ anything like that? Would you describe your desire for the presence of Jesus the way you describe missing that person?

For many of us, the honest answer is no. We often reduce our faith to "going to church," because that's how many of us were raised. And going to church is essential. But how many of us would describe our relationship with Christ as an intense longing? How many of us speak of him the way we speak of the person we miss most?

My greatest fear is that Jesus has become for many of us a distant memory or a distant judge—someone who lived 2,000 years ago, is now far away, and is mainly concerned with handing out verdicts. My fear is that our faith becomes duty alone: "I go to church because you're supposed to. If I don't, I might go to hell."

But my greatest hope is the opposite: that you would encounter Jesus Christ as alive, present, active—a real person who knows you and can transform your life. That your faith would move from obligation to relationship.

That was my own journey. I was the good Catholic kid doing everything right, avoiding sin out of fear, even entering seminary out of a sense of duty. On the outside it looked perfect, but inside there were fractures, because my faith had never become a real, personal relationship with the living Christ. The question that changed everything for me—and the question for each of us this Advent—is simple but life-altering: How real is the person, the presence of Christ to me? If the answer is "not

very," then faith becomes ideas, rules, customs—true, but unable to change us.

This brings us to our readings and to John the Baptist. He dominates Advent because he prepares us for the Messiah. His first words are: "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Shouldn't he say, "Bake cookies and clean the house—my cousin Jesus is coming"? No.

The Fathers of the Church insist the "kingdom" is not politics, laws, or social programs. The kingdom is Jesus himself. Origen even coined a word for it: autobasileia— "the kingdom-inperson." Jesus is the kingdom. John isn't announcing a movement; he's announcing a person.

Think again of the person you miss. When they're absent, life feels off; when they're present, everything steadies. So too with Christ. When our relationship with him is real and healthy, peace and wholeness reign, even amid chaos. That's what Isaiah poetically describes: wolves with lambs, leopards with goats—inner places of conflict finally at peace. In Christ's presence, everything changes.

So, what holds us back? John tells us in one word: repent. Not just "stop sinning," but turn around. Turn your heart away from the things you've decided will give you happiness and toward the One who can. We all cling to idols—finish the sentence: "I can't imagine my life without..." Repentance is loosening our grip on those things so we can turn toward Christ.

The same things that ruin relationships with people also ruin our relationship with Christ: taking him for granted, growing distant, investing our time elsewhere, breaking trust, letting someone or something else become more important. If those things break earthly relationships, why wouldn't they break our relationship with Jesus? John calls us to repair what's broken—through confession, prayer, adoration—through renewing time and attention.

So, ask yourself this Advent: How real is Christ to me? Do I long for him the way I long for the people I miss most? If I lost Christ's friendship, would it hurt me more than losing a friend—more even than losing a spouse or a child? Is my relationship with him in need of repair? If so, please come and talk to me. I want to help.

We look forward to Christmas for cookies, gifts, and music. But maybe this Christmas we can desire something deeper: to experience Christ as he truly is—real, present, alive, active. Maybe this year, our longing for him could outweigh everything else.

Peace, Fr. Monteleone

# **ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2025**

# **Advent Penance Service**

Tuesday, December 9 7 PM

# Filipino Simbang Gabi

Friday, December 19 6:30 PM

### **Christmas Eve Masses**

Wednesday, December 24 4 PM, 7 PM and 10 PM

# **Christmas Day Masses**

Thursday, December 25 8 AM, 10 AM and 12 PM

# Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass,

Wednesday, December 31 5:30 PM

# Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Thursday, January 1 9 AM

# **HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION**

Mass Schedule for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is as follows:

Monday, December 8th, 7 AM and 9 AM

# ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

We are very excited about entering into the season of advent. Students throughout the school are preparing their hearts for Jesus, learning about advent traditions emphasizing on themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. The joy of the season is already audible throughout our hallways as students are practicing for the Christmas show.

# **PLEASE NOTE**

Marian Hall and the Auditorium are reserved exclusively for Parish and School activities, including Religious Education programs and Parishaffiliated organizations. We kindly ask for your understanding that these facilities are not available for public rental. At this time, we do not rent out the Auditorium or Marian Hall for private events.

#### **BAMBINO SUNDAY**

Please bring your Baby Jesus to Mass on the weekend of December 13-14 to be blessed by father after all the Masses. This is a great custom in Italy. Pope Benidict wrote "The blessing of the "Bambinelli" [Baby Jesus figurines] as they are called in Rome, reminds us that the crib is a school of life where we can learn the secret of true joy. This does not consist in having many things but in feeling loved by the Lord, in giving oneself as a gift for others and in loving one another. Let us look at the crib. Our Lady and St Joseph do not seem to be a very fortunate family; their first child was born in the midst of great hardship; yet they are full of deep joy, because they love each other, they help each other and, especially, they are certain that God, who made himself present in the little Jesus, is at work in their story. And the shepherds? What did they have to rejoice about? That Newborn Infant was not to change their condition of poverty and marginalization. But faith helped them recognize the "babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" as a "sign" of the fulfilment of God's promises for all human beings, "with whom he is pleased" (Lk 2: 12, 14).

A beloved annual tradition at the Basilica in preparation for Christmas, the Blessing of the Bambinelli was first instituted by St. John Paul II. On the Third Sunday of Advent, the children of Rome are encouraged to bring the baby Jesus (Bambinelli) from each of their Nativity sets to St. Peter's Square. Following the Sunday Angelus address, the Pope blesses the figurines. Now celebrated in other churches around the world,

this Advent tradition is a way for children to connect their Nativity scene at home to the celebration of Christmas at their church.



# **SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **BOY SCOUTS**

Boy Scout Troop 21 is having their Annual Wreath Sale after all masses this weekend. The scouts will be selling fresh wreaths as well as grave blankets and grave pillows outside of the church. Please support Troop 21.

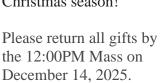


# **GIVING TREE**

Pope Francis challenges us to answer God's call for us to be protectors "showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about."

The holidays give us the perfect opportunity to answer the call to help people in our very own community in need of help. After Mass today,

please stop by the church vestibule to pick up a gift tag off our **Christmas Giving Tree** - or visit our parish website to make a donation - to benefit a local organization during this Christmas season!





#### **YOUTH CHOIR**



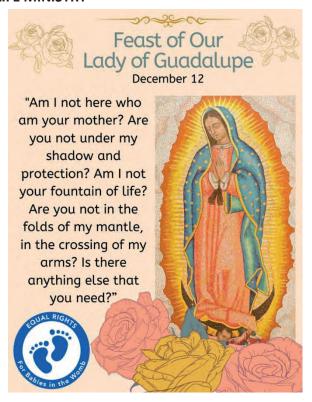
### **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

### FR. ENGLISH GLOVE COLLECTION

We cannot all do great things. But we can do small things with great love. Mother Teresa says it best and her quote describes the outpouring of love that was demonstrated for the recent Glove Collection. Over 600 pairs of warm new gloves were donated not to mention numerous socks, hat/mitten sets, scarves and hats. Thank you so much for your generous spirit! Each pair will be distributed personally.

Blessings, Mary Ann

#### **LIFE MINISTRY**



# SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

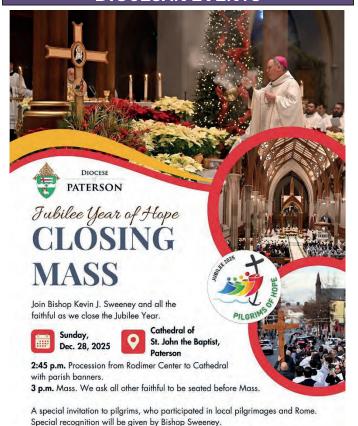
FR. EMERSON'S APOLOGETICS CLASS



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#### **DIOCESAN EVENTS**



# "WHY, FATHER?" by Fr. Emerson

Q: Father, in this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 3:1-12), why does John the Baptist appear with such thunderous warnings—"Repent!" "The axe is at the root!" "Unquenchable fire!"? Advent prepares us for Christmas... so why does it feel more like Judgment Day than a cozy holiday season?

A: Because Advent has always been more than a countdown to Christmas <u>A</u>—it is a **prophetic** season, and John the Baptist is its voice crying across the centuries.

From the earliest Church. Advent wasn't meant to be sentimental. It was meant to shake the soul awake

because it prepares us for **two** comings of Christ:

1 His first coming at Bethlehem 😓,

2 His second coming in glory www 6.



Here's the thrilling part: John the Baptist isn't "doom and gloom"—he is the **herald of hope** \*. His warnings show that God takes salvation seriously. Real love warns when eternity is at stake. A firefighter doesn't whisper  $\rightleftharpoons$ . A doctor doesn't stay silent \( \frac{1}{2} \). John sees souls in danger—and he cries out because mercy refuses to be quiet .

Look deeper: John can expose sin 0, but not heal it. He calls for repentance, but cannot give grace. He baptizes with water  $\Diamond$ , not with transforming fire △ . His announcement—"One mightier than I is **coming!**"—explodes with hope \*: "I cannot change your heart... but He can."

Jesus brings the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire —a fire that purifies, not destroys; burns away sin, not the sinner; turns fear into freedom  $\displayskip$ .

This is why the Church gives us John in Advent: he tears down illusions so Christ can build something eternal  $\blacksquare$   $\longrightarrow$   $\not \succeq$  . He clears dead wood so Christ can plant new life \(\frac{1}{2}\). He wakes us so we don't sleep 

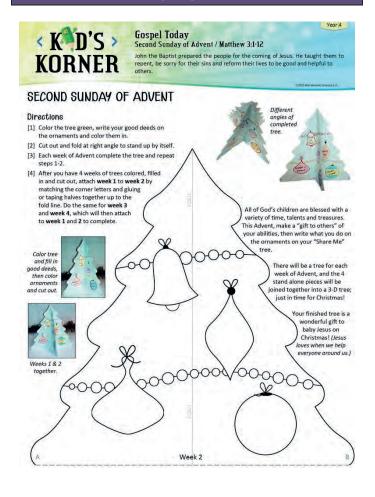
Advent is not sentimental—it is **supernatural**. Not cozy—it is **cosmic** . A season of divine interruption.

John's voice is fierce—but it is the fierceness of a friend who refuses to let us miss the One who comes as Child, King, Judge, and consuming Fire of Love 😂 www 🙆 🖤 .





# **KIDS KORNER**



# **PARISH GIVING**

SUNDAY COLLECTION: DEC. 1, 2024 \$16,957.00 SUNDAY COLLECTION: NOVEMBER 30, 2025 WEEKLY COLLECTION \$11,010.00 ONLINE GIVING DONATION \$5,947.00 TOTAL \$16,957.00 \$3.047.00

**UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTIONS:** 

December 14- Project Faith

#### **WE PRAY FOR...**

#### Recently Deceased...

Jill Festa, Carole Costabile

### A Time to be Healed...

Marge Sikora, Robert Rup, Fran Kobernick, Rosanna Hampton, Philip Kutzenco, Angelo Torres, Nina Sova, Nicholas Magrogan, Antonio Bussanich, Rosemarie Carlee, James Jablonowski, Terry Kolenc, Wilson Torres, Arlene Pompeo, Tom Wilkinson, Lee Welch, Maya Hilario

# **MASS INTENTIONS**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025		
8:00	Marie D. and Henry F. Marrocco	
	Terry Pivirotto	
10:00	Christine Hadinata	
	Rosario Llames- 5 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	
	Sarah Lombardo	
	Theresa Pivirotto	
12:00	Salvatore Capriglione	
	Aquile R. Valencia	

# **MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025**

7:00 AM All the People of the Parish 9:00 AM Ivor Duggan

# **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2025**

9:00 AM Jerry Jaucian- 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary F. Paul Marschalk

#### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025

9:00 AM Alfredo Julao Dalmacio Menesis

#### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025

9:00 AM Joseph Torres Dominick Azzolini

#### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2025

9:00 AM Daniel Mutter Cathy Lucianin

#### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025

9:00 AM Richard DeMarco
Freddy Pacheco- 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
5:30 PM Garry DeVos
Jimmy and Sonia Bozios
MaryAnn Helm

#### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025

8:00	All the People of the Parish
10:00	Elena Parillo Bridi
	Thomas Mullin
	Deceased Members of Sieminski and
	Farrelly Families
	Stanislawa Skorupa
12:00	Deceased members of the Kerner
	Family
	Torquato and Mary Trasente

# CANDLE FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 7th

In memory of F. Paul Marschalk



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