

GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025



Mission Statement

“Good Shepherd Parish, under the guidance of the true Shepherd Jesus Christ, is a Catholic faith based community seeking to proclaim and live the gospel message. Recognizing our diversity, we strive to bring together a church family, welcoming all people as we grow together in faith, hope and love.”

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SERVED BY
Rev. Valentine Ugwuanya Pastor
Denise Perry Secretary

For more information on our parish
please go to:
Goodshepherdnj.com
Or email us at
gsirvington@comcast.net

4TH SUNDAY IN ADVENT PASTOR'S CORNER DEC.21, 2025.

We are at the end of Advent season and as we make our final preparations for Christmas, we may wonder how we should spend these last three days preparing our hearts. We are at the threshold of Christmas. In three days from now, we will be celebrating the memory of that great event. The incarnation, which we're about to celebrate in two days' time – the birth of a baby who is fully human yet fully divine – crystallizes this paradox of the ordinary and the extraordinary-I will not go into the paradox, but one of the paradoxes in Christianity deals with the humanity and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, throughout Advent, we have heard of God's promise to send a Liberator- a Savior into the world today; we catch a glimpse of how that is to be accomplished and to some extent, we can associate with the greatest joy of the Blessed Virgin Mary who awaited the coming of the baby-Jesus into the world. Anticipation and preparedness are the watch words for this Sunday of Advent.

When we have to look at the history of humanity, people haven't changed, human beings since the time of Ahaz are still like their patron saint-doubting Thomas are still doubting. They are always pragmatic and looking for signs, but all these signs come from and point to one great sign. Right in the middle of history, in space and in time, a woman conceived and gave a birth. Her son was no ordinary child, but was call "Immanuel"- God-is -with-us. Before the birth of Jesus, all the signs pointed forwards; since his birth, many of them pointed backwards. Though the birth of Jesus is in the past, his presence is in our midst; the sign has not passed; it is before us.

When we look for a sign, we are drawn to this sign. There is no other to compare. The sign of the Christ-born for us is not merely one which announces something or points to something; it is much more. The sign of the child Jesus born for us to interpret reality: our own lives, helps us make sense of our world. When we encounter suffering, we look to Christ, who suffered and died out of love for us. When we are confused or anxious, he offers us consolation and peace. When we are weighed down by cares of life or guilty and shame, he shares our burden. When we face our own death, or the death of a loved one, he is our assurance of everlasting life. So, the sign given once in Bethlehem is relevant to all places and all times.

Therefore, as we prepare during these few days in Advent, let us reflect first the sign give to us, our families, relatives and friends, those around us we meet daily, the poor, the suffering, the refugees and migrants, the homeless who are suffering in this cold weather and your joys and woes. Let us pray for peace all over the world and reflect and make the child Jesus the center of your meditation. Let us clear way the clutter in our minds and hearts and make room for the Messiah and say to Him "Maranatha- Come Lord Jesus" do not delay.

Good Shepherd Parish Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)

Saturday (anticipated) 5:30pm
Holy Day TBD.

Sundays —9:00am, 11:00am
Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:45-5:15pm

National Holidays —9:00am
Adoration Mo-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm

Mass Intentions For the week of Dec 20– Dec 27, 2025

Saturday 5:30pm For the Repose of the Soul of Belen Carluen

Dec 20

Sunday 9:00am For God's Blessings on the People of Good Shepherd Parish

Dec 21 11:00am For God's Blessings on the People of Good Shepherd Parish

Monday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of Sandi Mosley

Dec 22

Tuesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Alfred Tatyrek

Dec 23

Wednesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Catherine Perry

Dec 24 9:00pm For God's Blessing on the Birthday of Nora Gonzaga Cortez

Thursday 9:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Albert Matthews

Dec 25 11:00AM For the Repose of the Soul of Roger Gonzaga

Friday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Rene Victor

Dec 26

Saturday 8:30am For the Repose of the Soul of Elizabeth Cassata

Dec 27 5:30pm For God's Guidance and Protection of Eloise Dorleans

Kindly keep our parishioner's family, with health and other challenges, in your prayers

Let us always remember in our prayers the sick members of our Parish

Paul Kocum Sandi Mosley Debbie Watson Rihanna Scott Venus Matthews

Curtis Richards Carlos Quinones John Valfour Corizon Abuzied Margarete Victor

Bob and Barbara Nezlick Patrick Roylance Graylan Banks Aloysius Patrick Osuji Avenelle Samaroo

* Please advise if any names should be added or delete from the list

Hospital Privacy | Please remember that current privacy laws regarding patients in hospitals do not allow hospitals/ pastoral care offices to contact parishes. If you or a loved one are in the hospital and want a priest to visit, please call the office at (973)375-8568

We will be getting new Missal/Hymnal books on the week of November 30th First Week of Advent)

Please, take this opportunity to honor a loved one (living or deceased) or commemorate a special event, like the birth of a child, anniversary, etc., by sponsoring a Missal book for just \$20.00

Please Contact Fr. Valentine or call the office, if you are interested in requesting mass intentions, intentions of a Sanctuary Lamp, Chapel Lamp, Altar Bread, or Altar Flowers.

ANNUAL APPEAL 2025

The Annual Appeal is ongoing, your contributions to the appeal will help so many lives.

Faith Formation Corner:

Good Shepherd Faith Formation classes have begun:

If you would like your child to attend the classes, please see the registration forms in the Hall of the Church

| Collection Report | DEC 7, 2025 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Weekly Target | \$6,500.00 |
| Collection (Offering+ Fuel & Energy) | \$ 2,548.00 |
| Surplus (Deficit) | \$ 3,952.00 |
| Fiscal Year to Date | |
| Budget: | \$379,864.00 |
| Actual: | \$ 48,226.00 |
| Surplus (Deficit) | \$331,638.00 |
| Rolling 4 Week Averages | |
| Average Collection: | \$2,525.00 |
| Average Surplus (Deficit) | \$3,975.00 |

Minister Assignments Dec 27—Dec28, 2025

| Saturday | Lectors | Eucharistic Ministers | Presiding |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| 12/27 5:30pm | Denise Perry | Denise Perry Barbara Banks Nellie Bate | Fr. Augustine |
| 12/28 9:00AM | Paulette Anderson- Spence | Augustine Boakye Stanislaus Egeolu- Obimezie Lorita Onyegbule | Fr. Augustine |
| 12/29 11: 00am | TBD | Pedro Burbano Denise Perry Jacqueline Uzouh | Fr. Augustine |

GSP EVENT CALENDER

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|--------------------------------|
| Sunday Dec 21 |
| Fourth Sunday of Advent |
| Monday Dec 22 |
| Tuesday Dec 23 |
| Saint Joun of Kanty |
| Wednesday Dec 24 |
| CHRISTMAS CAROLS 8:00PM-9:00PM |
| CHRISTMAS EVE MASS 9:00PM |
| Thursday Dec 25 |
| THE NAVTIVITY OF THE LORD |
| MASSES 9AM & 11AM |
| Friday Dec 26 |
| Saint Steven |
| Saturday Dec 27 |
| Saint John Apostle |

Good Shepherd Parish Information

RECTORY HOURS: Monday Thru Wednesday 10:00AM-2:00PM; Thursday / Friday 9:00AM-12:00PM

Parish Registration Forms can be found at the back of the church or call the rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION Saturday 4:45PM - 5:15PM

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM In order to have your child baptized at Good Shepherd, the parents must be registered and active members of our parish. Godparents or sponsors must meet qualifications as to have received both sacraments of Communion and Confirmation, attend Mass regularly and been a registered parishioner at a Catholic Church. Baptisms will be held the third Sunday of the month. For more information please call the Rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY Couples who are planning a wedding should call the parish office to meet the priest, to choose the date of the wedding and before any other arrangements are made call (973)375-8568

PASTORAL OF THE SICK Notify a priest of all who are hospitalized, home-bound, or Emergencies call (973)375-8568

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS, RCIA. Adults interested in becoming members of the Catholic Church and Catholics in need of Sacraments, Confirmation or Eucharist; inquire at the Rectory. To register please call the rectory at (973-375-8568

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Sunday of October-April from 10:00-11:00 am in the Church building. For more information please call the Rectory at (973-375-8568. Children's mass will be every second Sunday of the month, at the 11AM mass.

POPE FRANCIS ON THE 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

Saint Peter's Square

4th Sunday of Advent Year A, 18 December 2022

Dear brothers and sisters, buongiorno!

Today, the fourth and final Sunday of Advent, the liturgy presents the figure of Saint Joseph to us (cf. Mt 1:18-24). He is a just man who is about to get married. We can imagine what his dreams for the future are – a beautiful family, with an affectionate wife and many wonderful children, and a dignified job – simple and good dreams, the dreams of simple and good people. But all of a sudden, these dreams come up against a disconcerting discovery. Mary, his betrothed, is expecting a child, and the child is not his! What would Joseph have felt? Shock, pain, confusion, perhaps even irritation and disappointment.... But... He experienced his world was falling apart all around him! And what was he supposed to do?

The Law gives him two options. The first is to accuse Mary and make her pay the price for her alleged infidelity. The second is to secretly annul their engagement without exposing Mary to scandal and to harsh consequences, taking upon himself, however, the burden of shame. So, Joseph chooses this second option, which is the way of mercy. And behold, at the height of his crisis, right when he is thinking and evaluating all this, God gives him a new light in his heart – he declares to him in a dream that Mary's motherhood did not come about because of a betrayal, but was the work of the Holy Spirit, and the baby to be born would be the Savior (cf. vv. 20-21), and Mary would be the Mother of the Messiah, and he would be His guardian. On waking up, Joseph understands that the greatest dream of every devout Israelite – to be the father of the Messiah – was being fulfilled for him in a completely unexpected way.

To accomplish this, in fact, it was not enough to belong to David's lineage and to be a faithful observer of the law, but he would need to entrust himself above and beyond all else to God, welcome Mary and her Son in a completely different way than was expected, differently than had ever been done. In other words, Joseph would have to renounce all reassuring certainties, his perfect plans, his legitimate expectations, and open himself to a future that was completely to be discovered. And before God, who disrupts his plans and asks that he trust Him, Joseph says "yes". Joseph's courage is heroic and is exercised in silence – his courage is to trust, he welcomes, he is willing, he asks for no further guarantees.

Brothers and sisters, what does Joseph say to us today? We too have our dreams, and perhaps we think of them more, we talk about them together at Christmas. Perhaps we lament over some dreams that have been shattered and we see that our best expectations often need to be put together with unexpected, disconcerting situations. And when this happens, Joseph shows us the way. We do not need to give in to negative feelings, like anger or isolation – this is the wrong way! Instead, we need to attentively welcome surprises, the surprises in life, even crises. When we find ourselves in crisis, we should not make decisions quickly or instinctively, but let them pass through the sieve, like Joseph did who "considered everything" (cf. v. 20), and base ourselves on the underlying certainty of God's mercy. When someone experiences a crisis without giving in to isolation, anger, and fear, but keeps the door open for God, He can intervene. He is an expert in transforming crises into dreams – yes, God opens crises into new horizons we never would have imagined before, perhaps not as we would expect, but in the way He knows how. And these, brothers and sisters, are God's horizons – surprising – but infinitely more grand and beautiful than ours! May the Virgin Mary help us live open to God's surprises.