



**4TH Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023**



*Don't be afraid Mary, for You
have found Favor with God*

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
Ed Stolarz Director of Music Ministry
Denise Perry Secretary

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

4th Sunday of Advent Pastor's Reflection Dec. 24, 2023.

The question is: Where will you find God this Christmas? Where do you look for the love and presence of God? In this modern time and day, many people say that, I find God in nature and in creation. It is true, all of creation reflect the beauty of God who created it, but still remains only a veiled hint of God. It is not God. To try to find God in nature is like looking for Leonardo da Vinci in his painting of the Mona Lisa. The painting is intriguing and beautiful, but it is not Leonardo. All creation made by God is intriguing and beautiful but it is not God.

What we have to know is, God's plan is filled with surprises that may be different from our own expectation. God's way is not our way and His thought is not our thought. The Annunciation is one of the moments in God's plan and Mary's response is a perfect example of how we should welcome God's surprise. Our Lady- MARY heard God's voice through the message of an angel- the messenger of God and accepted to be the theotokos - the Mother of our Savior, and her "Yes" was a Universal yes.

God our Father did something only God could do. He always surprises us, He chose something unimaginable, unexpected, unthinkable almost incredible. God is saying today as He said, I will reveal myself in a much clearer way. I will completely humble myself and come to my people and say to my them all that I desire to say to them until the day I get them on that Holy Mountain in heaven.

I will send my only begotten Son who will take upon himself the human flesh and nature. To have seen him is to have seen God the Father Himself and He will reveal to all the nations and humanity the fullness of my Being. He will teach all people what I command from the beginning of the world. Indeed, St. Paul tells us in our second reading that the "revelation of the mystery was kept secret for long ages" but is now manifest in the birth of Jesus, the Son of God. "Maranatha- Come Lord Jesus do not delay."

Learn more at formed.org



THE CATHOLIC FAITH.
ON DEMAND.

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 December 23—December 30 2023

Saturday Dec 23	5:30pm	Birthday Memorial of Susan G. Reynaldo
Sunday Dec 24	9:00am	For the Protection of Babies in the Womb and Their Families
	11:00am	H&WB of Oguh, Ngobili, & Agwunobi Families and Relatives
	9:00pm	Birthday Memorial of Norma Gonzaga
Monday Dec 25	9:00am	In Memory of Albert Matthews
	11:00am	For the Protection of Babies in the Womb and Their families
Tuesday Dec 26	7:00am	Bernabe Ladre +
Wednesday Dec 27	7:00am	Junifer Flores RIP
Thursday Dec 28	7:00am	For the Repose for the Soul of Deba Chapman
Friday Dec 29	7:00am	For God's Protection and Guidance of Leon Davis
Saturday Dec 30	8:30am	For Repose of the Soul of Alfred Tatyrek
	5:30pm	For God's Protection and Guidance of Curtis Richards

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

Kingsley Oba	Paul Kocum	Sandi Mosley	Debbie Watson	Leon Davis
Elizabeth Cassata	Pope Francis	Frank Rocchi	Camile Laidlaw	
Frederick Hamilton	Curtis Richards	Carlos Quinones	Venus Matthews	

* 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 I office at (973)375-8568

Announcement
Our Church now has an Adoration Room. All are invited to visit the room, Mon-Fri 7:30AM-5:00PM.
To gain access to the adoration room, reservations are required. Please visit the rectory to reserve your date and time.

Please contact Fr. Valentine or call the rectory if you are interested in Intensions, of a Sanctuary Lamp, Alter bread and wine or Alter Flowers



Ministries: If you're interested in ministries of service either as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister, please call the rectory at 975-375-8568 or fill out the Information below and place in the collection basket.

Name : _____

Telephone #: _____

Lector _____ Eucharistic Minister _____

REPORT ABUSE
 Protecting God's Children

The Archdiocese of Newark takes very seriously any and all credible complaints, and encourages anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct by the clergy, religious and lay staff to tell us immediately, so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to sexual abuse victims.

Individuals who wish to report an allegation may do so by calling the Child and Youth Protection. 201-407-3256, Fax: 973-497-4001. Or In person, 171 Clifton Avenue. Newark, NJ 07104.

Collection Report		December 17,, 2023
Weekly Target		\$6,500.00
Collection (Offering+ Fuel & Energy)		Data Not Available
Surplus (Deficit)		
Fiscal Year to Date		
Budget:		\$346,811.00
Actual:		
Surplus (Deficit)		
Rolling 4 Week Averages		
Average Collection:		
Average Surplus (Deficit)		

Minister Assignments

Saturday Sunday	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Presider
12/30 5:30pm	Denise Perry	Denise Perry Barbara Banks Nellie Bate	Fr. Val
12/31 9:00am			Fr. Val
12/31 11:00am			Fr. Val

GSP EVENT CALENDER

Sunday Dec 24
4th Sunday of Advent - Christmas Eve - 9:00PM Vigil mass
Monday Dec 25
Christmas Day Nativity of Our Lord -Rectory closed 9:00am and 11:00am Mass
Tuesday Dec 26
Saint Stephen First Martyr Rectory Closed
Wednesday Dec 27
Saint John Evangelist
Thursday Dec 28
The Holy Innocents
Friday Dec 29
Saturday Dec 30

Good Shepherd Parish Information

RECTORY HOURS: Monday / Wednesday 10:00AM-2:00PM; Thursday / Friday 9:00AM-12:00PM; Tuesday 1:00PM-4:00PM

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 4:45-5:15 pm

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 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

THE O ANTIPHONS FOR ADVENT DEC. 18 & 22. DECEMBER 18, O LEADER OF NATIONS.

In so many ways, societies around the world cry out and groaning for good leadership. In this age and modern time of unprecedented crisis, violence, wars and a growing inability to discuss disagreements without being disagreeable as we have seen today what is happening today- between the Israelis and Palestinians- Hamas, or President Vladimir Putin, his selfishness destruction of lives, infrastructures and acquisition of empire to the people of Ukraine, or Saudi Arabia to the people of Yemen and around the world. It is harder and harder to find leadership, or to find the types of political leaders people are able to follow. Of course, if we seek solutions in political discourse or in arguments about politics, we will fall short. There is an important place for civil leadership and politics. But if we are seeking to be rescued from our sinfulness, then we need more. Today's "O Antiphon" being December 18th provides us something more- O Leader. To be rescued from the dominion of darkness and corruption we found ourselves today, requires the perfect leader, the shepherd leader, and it is only in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who humbled himself to be born of the Virgin Mary, that we have such a perfect leader, the humble and shepherd leader. Of course, he sometimes leads us where we might not wish to go, it may be sickness, misfortunes, loss of loved ones, sufferings we are incapable to handle, but he always leads us to good to the green pasture. During these uncertain times, we need to take a knee, to reflect, to pray that Jesus, our Lord, may rescue us from this dominion of darkness, the world has embraced, that Jesus will save us and bring us into his own wonderful light all of us longed for, to be with the God of Host, on that Holy mountain where the Good Shepherd will provide the choicest wine and food for all peoples and nations and wipe away every tear and remove the veil that has woven all nations. On that day we shall say and shout "Behold this is the God whom we looked to save us, let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us. For the hand of God (Yahweh) rests on this mountain" (Isaiah 25:6,9).

O king of all the nations

Dec 22, 2022

Since our country and our Founding Fathers fought against tyranny and monarchy from England, we refused to be ruled by a king, but embraced democratic government and rule. But we have only One King of all Nations.

"In a word, the kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness. The kingdom of God is not a concept, a doctrine, or a program subject to free interpretation, but is before all else a person with the face and name of Jesus of Nazareth, the image of the invisible God" (*Redemptoris Missio*, 15, 23). In the early Church one significant challenge the apostles faced was how to treat Gentile, non-Jewish converts to Christianity. This prompted the original apostles and early disciples to radically re-think the mission of Jesus and the Kingdom of God and of the Church. The Messiah was to be a king not just for the Jewish people, but for all people. He is the Universal King and God wills everyone to be saved not just for a selected few or nation. This can also be a challenge for us to imitate today. Too often we can be tempted to exclude others. The temptation can be to think only of our own country, our own tribe and ethnic group. Or, we can be tempted to exclude those with whom we disagree. We can want to limit contact with those we view as "sinners." But this is not the plan of God. Salvation is open to all, especially to those of us who need it most. Jesus is a Universal King and wished all to be save, that's why he commanded his apostles "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." This is because Jesus is not just a king for those who already believe. He is radically different. He is different because unlike the past kings he does not have flaws, he cannot turn away from God, and he always and everywhere has the desire for people to be good and be saved. As such, this is a universal event. The Incarnation is not simply about an event that started Christianity. It is about our desire to believe in the goodness of all people, knowing that all people are made in the image and likeness of God. At the heart of the missionary message given to all of us to proclaim is "the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matthew 10:7). Literally, it is within everyone's reach. In his encyclical, Pope Francis put it in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*:

"To evangelize is to make the kingdom of God present in our world" (EG176). Enthronement of Christ as King in every area (domain) of our lives is the task of every Christian, and the reason we are here on earth at all. We cannot spread Christ's Kingdom to others if we have not enthroned Him ourselves. First, he rules with gentleness and humility. He himself told the disciples: the Gentiles lord it over each other, but it must not be so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the least, and the most important serve the needs of all. This beautiful equality of service and love is the identifying characteristic of the Kingdom of Heaven of which the Lord is Leader and Master. Second, this King will judge the actions of all, and will reign with a new kind of power unlike what we know in the secular world. The readings from Isaiah prophesy: For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. (9:5), and He shall judge between the nations, and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. (2:4) The goals of this Ruler are to judge and to usher in a new, everlasting peace. No one shall not train for war again! What could sound sweeter to our ears today, when we hear so much of violence, war and strife? This is what we long for today, as we pray: Come, King of the Nations, Desire of Human Hearts, save those you've fashioned! The verse in song recaps it perfectly: O come, Desire of nations, enkindle in our hearts the fire of your love and remove the divisions among us, the hatred that engulfed the hearts of the faithful and our world, Prince of Peace come and give us your Peace. Amen.