



St. Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church

The Fourth Sunday of Advent- December 23, 2018 - Volume 10, Issue 51

"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

— Luke 1:42

O Holy Night

Christmas

December 25, 2018



*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel. -Matthew 1:23*

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Church Website: www.alphonusus.org

Church Facebook: St. Alphonsus Catholic Church

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School Cafeteria— 225-261-4157

School Website: www.stalphonususbr.org

School Facebook: St. Alphonsus Catholic School



The Joy of Christmas is Shared By Many Countries and Customs

By Fr. Mike Moroney

In the past, I have shared some reflections on the customs of other countries that bring great joy and meaning to the event of Christmas. Many of them are ancient in origin, not specifically Christian in origin, but today are a central part of what the celebration of Christmas brings to our lives.

Some Christian countries have very different traditions than the United States. In Ireland, for example, we celebrate Christmas much like what we do in the U.S. and the U.K., but the Irish do have some of their own customs. For Irish people who are Catholic, Christmas lasts from Christmas Eve through the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th, which is called little Christmas or women's Christmas. Part of the Irish tradition is to place a candle on each window in the house after sunset on Christmas Eve and leave it burning all night, which represents a welcoming light for Mary and Joseph. In Irish or Gaelic culture, Christmas is called Nollaig and Santa Claus is known as San Nicocia or Saint Nicholas. Merry Christmas is "Nollaig Shona Dhuit." The traditional meal for Christmas is turkey and a round cake full of caraway seeds. Beef spiced over several days is also served by many.

The day after Christmas, St. Stephen's Day is also very important in Ireland. Like in England, football games and horse racing are traditional sports the days following Christmas. Wren boys play music and go from home to home collecting money for a neighborhood party which will be held later. People dress up in costumes, and they sing and dance in each house they visit. The custom is ancient and has much history to it.

In Germany, a big part of Christmas is Advent, especially with different types of Advent calendars and cards. Christmas trees are very big in Germany. Traditionally, the tree is brought into the home on Christmas Eve. The family would decorate it and read Bible verses. Christmas Eve is when families would exchange gifts. They have a different custom on St. Nicholas Day, December 6th, when Santa Claus brings little gifts to children in the form of sweets, etc. However, larger gifts are not brought to children until December 24th.

In Italy, the most important way of celebrating Christmas is using the Nativity crib to help tell the story, which was made popular by St. Francis Assisi. The city of Naples is world-famous for cribs and crib-making. The tradition goes back before St. Francis to 1025. In Italy, the cribs are traditionally put out on December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, but the Christ child is not put in until Christmas Eve. Naples is home to the largest crib in the world with over 600 pieces. A long tradition in Italy was that no food was eaten until after Midnight Mass.

In France, a Nativity crib was often used to decorate the house. Many French cribs have clay figures in them, not wooden ones. There is a tradition in France where cherry logs are often sprinkled with wine to make the log smell nice while burning. The log and candles are left burning with food and drinks in case Mary and baby Jesus pass by during the night. Again, like in Italy, the main meal is eaten after Midnight Mass.

Many of our American traditions come our way from English Victorian Christmas, such as described by Charles Dickens in "A Christmas Carol." Singing carols, giving gifts, and wishing of good cheer to all come from this period. From the British, we get the story and custom of hanging stockings on the mantel. Most of the popular Christmas carols that we sing today were written in the nineteenth century. The hanging of greens and holly ivy are all British traditions, many of them having origins before the Christian era.

From the customs of these countries, we are reminded of the sacredness of the season and its purpose in our lives. While many of these customs may have a non-Christian origin, all of them were introduced in order to express awe and respect for God's love and His entry into our lives. On behalf of the staff, I wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

God Bless,

Fr. Mike

PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 23-30, 2018

Sunday	Fourth Sunday of Advent	
	8:00 AM	Mass
	9:00 AM	Coffee & Donuts- S.F.
	10:00 AM	Mass
	11:00 AM	Coffee & Donuts- S.F.
	12:00 PM	Mass
Monday	Christmas Eve	<i>Church Office Closed</i>
	3:00 PM	Chancel Choir Concert
	4:00 PM	Christmas Vigil Mass
	5:30 PM	Bell Choir Concert
	6:00 PM	Christmas Vigil Mass
	8:00 PM	Christmas Vigil Mass
Tuesday	Christmas Day	<i>Church Office Closed</i>
	8:00 AM	Christmas Mass
	10:00 AM	Christmas Mass
Wednesday		<i>Church Office Closed</i>
	8:30 AM	Communion Service
	5:30 PM	Bell Choir- C.R.
	6:00 PM	Youth Board- Lighthouse
	6:30 PM	Cub Scouts- F.C.
	6:30 PM	TMIY- S.J.
	7:00 PM	Chancel Choir- C.R.
Thursday		
	8:30 AM	Mass
	6:00 PM	Middle School Youth-Lighthouse
	6:30 PM	RCIA Catechesis- C.R.
Friday		
	8:30 AM	School Mass
Saturday		
	4:00 PM	Mass
Sunday	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph	
	8:00 AM	Mass
	10:00 AM	Mass
	12:00 PM	Mass

S.C.- St. Clare S.J.- St. Joseph S.F.- St. Francis
C.R.- Choir Room MPB- Multi-Purpose Building

Solemnity of Mary- Holy Day of Obligation

St. Alphonsus Church will hold two Masses on Tuesday, January 1, 2019:

8 AM
10 AM



MISSION STATEMENT

We are a faith-filled community who, through prayerful discernment, call forth the gifts of the Spirit given to each individual, that Christ may be known in our community and in our world.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil 4:00 PM
Sunday 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM & 12:00 PM

Daily Masses

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:30 AM
Novena on Tuesday 8:30 AM

Communion Services

Wednesday 8:30 AM

Holy Day Masses

As Announced

J.A.M. (Jesus and Me)

During the school year for preschool ages 3-5 at 10:00 AM Mass.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

During the school year at the 10:00 AM Mass.
For children kindergarten through 2nd grade.

SACRAMENTS & RESOURCES

Baptism

Contact Robin Debetaz at the Parish Office in the early months of pregnancy for dates and preparation requirements.

Reconciliation

Saturday 3:00 PM and by appointment

Christian Initiation of Adults

If interested in becoming Catholic and want more information on the process, call the Formation Office at 225-261-4644.

Marriage

Contact Sara Patrick at the Parish Office six months to one year prior to projected wedding date for information concerning preparation programs.

Anointing of the Sick

You can receive this sacrament during a serious illness, before a major surgery, or for spiritual and mental healing. Contact the Parish Office for more information.

Funerals

Contact Robin Debetaz at the Parish Office for arrangement information.

Formed

Go to formed.org and enjoy access to this free online Catholic gateway with our parish access code- 9R9K3M.

Prayer Lines

Mary Frederick 225-261-5145
Adam Landry 225-261-8854

WORSHIP

Readings for the Week

Monday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
Tuesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
 Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
 Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
 Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
Wednesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
Thursday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Friday: 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt 2:13-18
Saturday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35
Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Ps 128:1-5 or Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10; Col 3:12-21 [12-17] or 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24; Lk 2:41-52

OUTREACH

Rest in Peace

Essie Summers- *Mother of Jo Summers Singleton and Terry Summers.*

Pray for the Sick

Please note: Names are removed after eight weeks. List also on our website. Call the office to put name back on the list.

Bruce Mayeaux, Barbara Flake, Beth Creel, Pat Spiller, Karen Rabalais, Patsy Sagona, Mildred Smith, Hymel "Buddy" Doming, Hope Broadus, Brenda Guerin, Datz Family, Schittone Family, Ronnie Collette, Jane Mizell, Marlene LeBlanc, Catherine Willis, Edna Ellis, Lynette Shaffett, Tiffany Penton, Larry Bueche, Ashley Smith, Chris Dickerson, James Mercer, Gia Gouchaux, Naomi Messina, Mary Beth Browning, Fisk Morris, Jean Firmin, Lisa Graffeo, Mollea Hood, Ashlea Hood, Michael Morales, Dana Rogers, Gloria "Jinkie" Phillips, Theresa Ognibene, Adrian Kaiser, John Larkin, Savannah McNair, Briggs Elliser, Anita Bueche, Anna Kirby, Jamie Samson, Louis Lamar Bordelon, Thomas Stewart, John Riely, John LeGrange and Family, Mike Millet, John Stubbs, Elizabeth Jenkins, Mildred Faul, Charlie Firmin, Kathy Madere, Paden Mouton, Krystal Feltman, Melanie Way, Sandy Dares, Ashlynn Ferguson, Barbara Simoneaux, Millie Strickland, Wayne & Carolyn Rogillio, Nancy Hill, Patsy York, Courtney Brock, Dustin Baker, Ashley Nix, Sharon Atkinson, Nicholas Mixon, Holly Hart, Jeff Ferguson, Anthony Rodriquez, Liam Thistlewaite, Al Felps, Ben Crifasi, Jr., Nicholas LaCroix, Kenny Achord, P.H. Zito, Carolyn Watts, John Durrett, Clyde Gremillion, Scarlet Kaiser, Billy Stears, Luke Allen, GiGi Chenevert, Dr. Stephen Speeg, Betty Castor, Blanche Hoover, Emily Bonano, Jason Langlois, Vince Dileo, Jr., Drew Mascona, Peter Lamonte, Joyce & Tommy Quinealty, Mario Marretta, Patricia Fagot, John Freeman, Pat Matthews, Joy Lonibos, Phyllis Lasserre, Sharon Loeb, Margaret Smith, Laurence LeSage, Jaycee Richard, Gary Saucier, Darrell Firmin, Alexander Landry, Sally Stears, Allan Eddy, Cassie Sheehan, Catharine Jacobson, Fannie Schittone

Living Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who helped set up the Giving Tree this year, and thank you to everyone who generously purchased gifts for our local families this year. Have a Merry Christmas!



Church Tour & History

Have you ever wondered about the history of St. Alphonsus Parish? Have you ever wondered what it takes to get ready for a Mass in our church? Or wondered about the meaning behind some of the things that you see in the church? Do you know what the Sacristy is? Or did you know that there is an engraving on the back of the Tabernacle? Join us for a church tour on Sunday, January 27th following 12:00 Mass for answers to all of this! The tour will start in the rear of the church.

Serving Our Country

If you have a family member serving in the military, please call 261-4650, and let us know the name, rank and branch of military.

ARMY: Captain Chad A. Alford, Warrant Officer Jody K. Hunt, Captain Brian C. Greco, Specialist Sam Lockwood, Specialist E-4 Charles N. Garner, Specialist Ryan Smith, Lt. Col. Keith Madere, Private First Class Dylan Verbois

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U.S. MARINE CORPS: Captain Blaine Ballard

A Minute with the Deacon

How can a saint in heaven, like Mary or any other saint, hear and understand the prayers of millions of Catholics in many different languages being offered at the same time?

Only God is omnipotent (all-powerful), but those in heaven share in His divinity. They are not limited by our time and our space; nor are they limited to understanding one language. In this article “How Can the Saints Hear Us? Because God is Able!” Msg. Charles Pope indicates that we must not think that the saints in heaven hear the way we hear or think the way we think. Their bodies have not yet risen [with the exception of Mary], so they no longer have ears like we have or minds like ours. Referring to those in heaven, he states, “While we do not know all of the aspects of a glorified humanity, we will surely not have the forgetful and slow minds we have now. Neither, ought we presume that our hearing will be limited as it is now.”

While on earth, the saints performed many good deeds helping their neighbors. Would God want these acts of love to stop with their death on earth? I doubt it. The saints are closer to God than we are, so they can intercede for us. St. Thomas Aquinas in his Summa Theologica states that the souls of the saints retain the love of their neighbor, and “it is to be believed that they help their neighbor very much by interceding for him [or her] to God.”

If God can create this world out of nothing, certainly He can give those in heaven the ability to listen to and understand a finite number of prayers at the same time.

FORMATION

Parish Advent Mission

The Parish Advent Mission with Mike Patin on December 2-4 was a success. Thank you to everyone who came out to hear his messages. Some highlights from each topic can be found on our website.



Kid in Ministry's Breakfast with Santa

St. Alphonsus Kids in Ministry hosted their annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 8th, 2018 from 9:30-11:30 AM in the Multi-Purpose Building and Gym. The event featured Breakfast with Santa, games, crafts and a photo opportunity with Old Saint Nick!



First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation books are due the week of January 4, 2019. The date for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is: Thursday, January 24, 2019 in St. Alphonsus Church at 7:00 PM

Learning Group

Learning Group classes resume on Sunday, January 6, 2019. Have a very Merry Christmas and safe New Year.

Adult Confirmation

Adult Confirmation preparation will begin soon. If you or someone you know is interested in Confirming contact the Faith Formation Office for more information 261-4644.

ADMINISTRATION

Gifts of Stewardship

The Gospel today tells of the Virgin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stewardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior gave her time and love to others as well.

For December 8-9, 2018
your *Stewardship* resulted in:

Weekly Collection

Envelopes	\$	22,373.00
Unidentified	\$	1,482.00
WeShare	\$	2,685.00

Building/Maintenance Fund

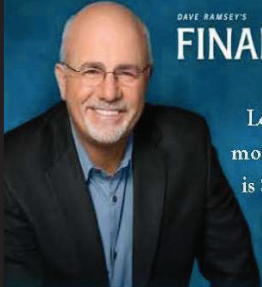
Envelopes	\$	1,132.00
WeShare	\$	830.00

Children's Collection	\$	27.00
Immaculate Conception	\$	1,971.00
St. Joseph Abbey Flood Relief	\$	3,163.00
Christmas Flowers	\$	815.00
Christmas Offering	\$	56.00
Mission/ Mike Patin	\$	2,045.00
Campaign for Human Development	\$	1.00
All Saints Day	\$	78.00
Propagation of the Faith	\$	3.00
Total Received	\$	36,634.00

COMMUNITY LIFE

St. Alphonsus School Open House

St. Alphonsus School will be hosting a new student open house on Sunday, January 27, 2019 from 1:00-3:00 pm. Tours of our Pre-K3 through 8th Grade classrooms and campus will begin in the cafeteria. Please spread the word to any interested families. Come and explore our great school! Questions? Call 225-261-5299.



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Nine weekly classes begin @ 6:30 pm January 15, 2019 at St. Alphonsus School in the Middle School Building

Personal finances can be stressful! It's time for a change. Free yourself from the financial burden of debt so you can live and give like never before. Learn how to eliminate debt, manage your money, and save for your future. Do what millions of families have already done. Let Dave Ramsey's FPU change your life today. For info and sign up, visit <https://fpu.com/1073487> Or Contact Jason Kroll 225-892-0382.

Thank You from Earlene Brown Family

The family of Earlene Patin Brown would like to express their appreciation and gratitude for the parishioners of St. Alphonsus, the Knights of Columbus Council #2807, and CoffeeBreak association. Thank you for your prayers, cards, recitation of the rosary and phone calls. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated, now and during the time of her illness.

Milestone Wedding Anniversary Couples

On Saturday, February 2 at the 4:00 PM Vigil Mass, we will be honoring couples married in the Catholic Church who are celebrating special wedding anniversaries, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 55th, 60th, and above, in 2019. A reception will follow for the honorees, their family and friends. Couples celebrating are asked to RSVP to the church office, 261-4650, by January 4, 2019. If you are celebrating one of the above milestone anniversaries and have not received an invitation letter, please call the church office to request one.

Pray for our Expectant Families

Pray for expectant families who have been entrusted with a new life to nurture and love: **Rayleigh Landry, Justin & Lindsey Dalier, Eric & RaeAnn Antoon, Trent and Mackenzie Thibodeaux, Ross & Ashleigh St. Germain, Clint & Cheree Case, Ryan & Lauren Blanchard, and Stokka & Camille Brown.** If you know someone who is expecting a child, please call the Church Office at 261-4650 and let them know the couple and when they are expecting.

Ladies Altar Society Luncheon

The Ladies Altar Society had a great time at their annual Christmas Luncheon/Meeting on Tuesday, December 4th, 2018, at 11 AM at City Cafe on O'Neal Lane.



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