



# ST. JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL

38750 RYAN ROAD, STERLING HEIGHTS, MI 48310 586-977-8080 SJFPARISH.ORG



Fr. Tony Sulkowski  
Pastor  
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Ext. 102

*"This is the month, and this the happy morn, wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King, of Wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born, our great redemption from above did bring; for so the holy sages once did sing, that He our deadly forfeit should release, and with His Father work us a perpetual peace."*

—John Milton, reflecting on the feast of Christmas

As you are aware, the fourth week of Advent is a short one. As Advent comes to a close, I would like to share with you one experience that I have enjoyed very much at St. Jane Frances de Chantal. While this year, because of COVID-19, we had to cancel the Coffeehouse Christmas party, I look fondly on how we celebrated this party in years past. I recall my first experience of Coffeehouse shortly after I arrived at our parish four years ago. Coffeehouse is an event that is sponsored by the parish and is put on for those young adults who are mentally challenged. Although they were unable to be with us this year, may we lift them and their caregivers up in prayer.

I wish to extend to all of you, and especially those people who come home for Christmas, a blessed holiday and all the best in the New Year. Christmas is about coming home and recalling those traditions that are memorable to us.

As we heard in the Gospel for the Second Sunday of Advent, John says, "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen [...] his sandals" (Mk 1:1-8). This Christmas, as in Christmases past, Christ is born again into the world to be the Prince of Peace, Wonder Consular, Lord of All.

May the peace of Christ be with you this Christmas season and in the coming year. It is in Christ that we are strengthened and encouraged to bring glad tidings to those we meet along our journeys of faith. On behalf of the staff of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, I extend to you and your family and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year. May we lift up in prayer all those people who are most in need of God's attention this Christmas season.

**Bon mot:** It is all about Jesus.

Carpe Diem,

Fr. Tony



## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

### December 24

at 4:00pm, 6:00pm, or Midnight (with 11:30pm Music Prelude)

### December 25

at 9:00am or 11:30am

### December 26

at 4:00pm

### December 27

at 9:00am or 11:30am

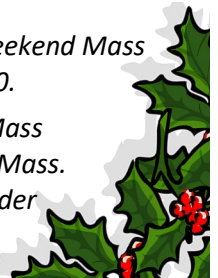
**Video Mass** will also be available.

*Out of love and concern for the health of others, and to accommodate our own COVID-19 capacity restrictions, we ask that you **only attend one Mass** out of these four days.*

*The Archdiocese of Detroit has announced that the normal obligation to attend both Christmas and weekend Mass can be fulfilled by attending **one Mass** from December 24, 2020 through December 27, 2020.*

*Additionally, Archbishop Vigneron has granted a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass **through February 17, 2020**. Thus, you are not under the normal obligation to attend Christmas Mass.*

*When making your Christmas plans, we ask that you keep the dispensation in mind and consider what is best for your own situation. Thank you for your understanding.*



## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00pm  
Sunday 9:00am & 11:30am

### Weekday Masses

Tuesday 7:00pm  
Wednesday & Thursday 8:00am

**Holy Day Masses** As Announced

### Confession

Tuesday 5:30pm

### Rosary

Tuesday 6:00pm

## OFFICE HOURS

### Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday

9:00am—1:00pm & 4:30pm—8:00pm

### Tuesday

2:00pm—8:00pm

### Saturday

3:00pm—5:00pm

### Sunday

10:00am—12:30pm

## PARISH HAPPENINGS

### Monday, December 21, 2020

9:00am Panera

### Tuesday, December 22, 2020

5:30pm Confession

6:00pm Rosary

7:00pm Mass w/ Anointing

### Wednesday, December 23, 2020

8:00am Mass

9:30am Needlecrafters

### Thursday, December 24, 2020

*Christmas Eve; Parish Office closed*

4:00pm Mass

6:00pm Mass

11:30pm Music Prelude

Midnight Mass

### Friday, December 25, 2020

*Christmas Day; Parish Office closed*

9:00am Mass

11:30am Mass

### Saturday, December 26, 2020

4:00pm Mass

5:00pm Divine Mercy Prayers

### Sunday, December 27, 2020

9:00am Mass

11:30am Mass



**Ben Klassen**

Youth Ministry Coordinator &  
Director of Faith Formation  
BKlassen@sjfparish.org  
Ext. 108

Now begins the final stretch!

We now celebrate the fourth week of Advent, in which we focus on the coming of the Christ into the world.

Have you been watchful and alert (as the Gospel from the first week of Advent told us to be) and maintained Hope for what is to come? Have you been at peace with the knowledge that God's plan for us has already been fulfilled, even though we may not be able to see and understand it yet? Did you allow the Spirit to engage with you? Did you rejoice, no matter where you have been?

This year feels as if it is from some sort of dystopian novel, but not one full of excitement and adventure. We know that this pandemic will end. We know more about viruses and pathogens now than ever before in human history. We know the facts about immune responses, and we know what it will take for things to return to normal. We are in the home stretch—but we still need to wait and finish our preparation.

Patience is hard. It does not simply manifest itself. Rather, it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. It needs to be cultivated and cared for. It needs to be learned, practiced, and relearned in every situation. Just as a child gets more excited the closer Christmas comes, so do many of us get excited when we see the end of something before us.

I think back to when I “ran” cross-country in high school. (I put the word ran in quotes, because looking back at it, I really struggle to call what I did running. It was more like loping along and feeling out of breath while doing it.)

While running, you have to do your best to pace yourself, leaving enough energy for that final sprint at the end, but not so much that you end the race with a bunch of energy to spare. My recollection of the races is of those runners (who were much better than I) who had already completed the race. They would jog back along the course to encourage those who were still running.

They gave us their support when it would have been easier for them to just head off on their own and relax. Their patience with me and their encouragement is how I view this final week of preparation in Advent.

We know that God Loves us. It would be marvelous to just step into His glory and be with Him, but it is not our time just yet. We must be like the wise servants, ready for the master to return, and like John the Baptist, continuing in our mission without being swayed or distracted by the temptations that swirl around us.

Even though the end is in sight, we must remain vigilant in our preparation and firm in our resolve. If we are not, it will be very easy to be pulled off course and lose the pace we have worked to maintain the entire race. We stay focused because God first loved us, continues to love us, and wants us to go and love our neighbors as He has loved us.

The seasoned runners I saw backtrack and run alongside me to shout encouragement showed me a very tangible way to “run alongside” others who are on their own journeys. When we accompany others, we spread God's hope, we give each other rest in God's peace, we rejoice in all that God has done for us, and we show God's Love—not just to those directly receiving it, but to the world. We show that God is real and that He Loves each of us!

During this final week, be hope, peace, joy, and love to someone new. Be the wise servant, ready for the master to return, whenever that may be!

## SAINT OF THE DAY: SAINT DOMINIC OF SILOS

*Saint of the Day for December 20, 2020. Adapted from [franciscanmedia.org](http://franciscanmedia.org).*

Our saint today, Dominic of Silos, was born in Spain around the year 1000 into a peasant family. As a young boy he spent time in the fields, where he welcomed the solitude.



He became a Benedictine priest and served in numerous leadership positions. Following a dispute with the king over property, Dominic and two other monks were exiled. They established a new monastery in what at first seemed an unpromising location. Under Dominic's leadership, however, it became one of the most famous houses in Spain. Many healings were reported there.

About 100 years after Dominic's death, a young woman who experienced difficult pregnancies made a pilgrimage to his tomb. There, Dominic of Silos appeared to her and assured her that she would bear another son. The woman was Joan of Aza, and the son she bore grew up to be the "other" Dominic—Dominic Guzman, the one who founded the Dominicans.

For hundreds of years thereafter, the staff used by Saint Dominic of Silos was brought to the royal palace whenever a queen of Spain was in labor. That practice ended in 1931.



## THE 2020 CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

**Rise and be not afraid.**

The Catholic Services Appeal is an annual campaign that raises funds for the Archdiocese of Detroit ministries, programs, and services that serve all the faithful in southeast Michigan. It benefits parishes and people in the Archdiocese of Detroit by helping to fund campus ministries, Catholic school grants, and more. This campaign communicates that the local Church extends beyond the parish.

The CSA is an opportunity for the faithful to **respond to Christ's command** "to love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12) by helping to fund services throughout the southeast Michigan area. This collaborative archdiocesan campaign is a way to demonstrate the unity of the larger Church and to fund these vital programs.

**Our parish goal is \$79,000.** If we do not meet our goal, our parish must pay the difference. If we exceed our goal, the money over and above comes back to our parish.

Please visit [givecsa.org](http://givecsa.org) to make a contribution. We thank God in advance for your support!

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 20, 2020

**Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent:** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

**Monday, Saint Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor of the Church:** Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45

**Tuesday:** 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd; Lk 1:46-56

**Wednesday, Saint John of Kanty, Priest:** Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Lk 1:57-66

**Thursday:** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Lk 1:67-79

*Vigil:* Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 or Mt 1:18-25

**Friday, Feast of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas):**

*Night:* Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14

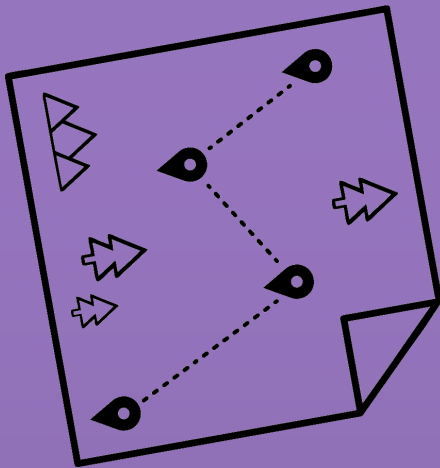
*Dawn:* Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20

*Day:* Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14

**Saturday, Feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr:** Acts 6:8-10, Acts 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17; Mt 10:17-22

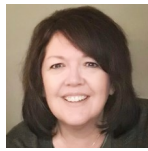
**Sunday, Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Col 3:12-21 or Col 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40 or Lk 2:22, 39-40





Advent is a journey toward Bethlehem.  
May we let ourselves be drawn  
by the light of God made man.

—Pope Francis



**Laurie Hall**  
Pastoral Associate  
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Ext. 104

*“...for nothing will be impossible for God.”*  
(Luke 1:37)

As we celebrate the last Sunday of Advent, our preparations for the coming of Jesus begin to wind down. Our eyes are still on Bethlehem, but the journey is almost complete. We can see the light of God that drew the shepherds, and we feel the pull of that light leading us to the Christ child.

The focus of today’s Gospel is on Jesus and the seemingly impossible way He entered into the world through Mary. We hear today of Mary’s great “yes” to God. We often talk of Mary’s incredible courage and obedience when we hear today’s Gospel. Mary was, indeed, courageous and obedient. I think of Mary also as a very trusting and patient woman.

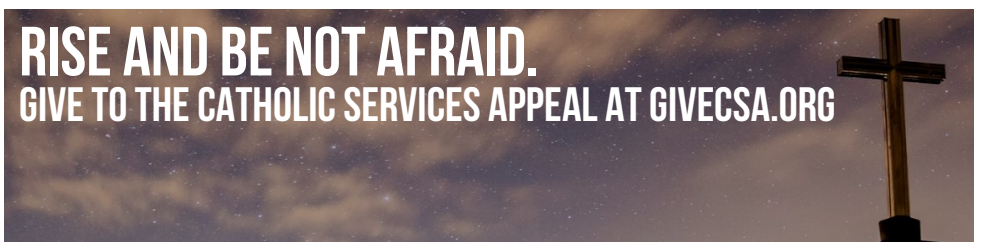
As a mother myself, I remember the time I spent waiting for the arrival of my own children. I was impatient near the end of the pregnancies. I couldn’t wait to see my child—to see what God had accomplished. I couldn’t wait to begin the actual parenting.

I imagine Mary felt many of these same things—yet far more was at stake. How must Mary have felt, knowing she was carrying not an ordinary child, but a child “to be called holy, the Son of God”? She had no idea what to expect: no books, no doctors, no Internet, and no one to give her the gift of their wisdom and experience on how to raise the Son of God.

But Mary had her steadfast love for and trust in God. She listened to the angel. She opened herself up to God’s plan from the beginning. Patience likely came of that listening and opening. On top of all that, she had the power of the Holy Spirit! When the Holy Spirit is allowed to enter into our hearts, nothing is impossible. Mary knew that. Her relationship with God made it possible for her to say yes to an unimaginable future—to trust that God would guide her as she waited for Jesus to be born, and to show her the way as she and Joseph did the work of raising him.

In this year of uncertainty, perhaps we can be reminded that God’s time is different from our time. As we continue to make changes in our lives out of love and care for the common good, can we echo Mary’s “yes” by being patient, obedient, and trusting as God works in our lives? Can we take on the challenges and blessings of this life, knowing that we are not on our own, and that nothing is impossible for God?

Spend some time in this final week of Advent with the Scriptures. Read the first two chapters of Luke’s account of the Gospel. Ponder the work of the Holy Spirit in the story of Jesus’ birth: Mary’s openness to the annunciation, the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, the humble birth, the adoration of the shepherds, the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple, and so much more. In these two chapters, we experience the early years of Jesus—in what little we are given to know about his young life. Like Mary, ponder these miraculous events deeply in your heart.



## HOOKS AND NEEDLES

Even though the Needlecrafters have not met for most of the year, they have stayed busy crocheting and knitting. These wonderful ladies have continued their efforts while at home, making multiple afghans, shawls, hats, and scarves. The wonderful colors of these items are beautiful, and the variety is wonderful!

These items have been donated to various organizations, including Hospice, the Detroit Rescue Mission, Christ Child, and Children's Hospital. A special thanks goes out to those parish members that have taken the time to deliver these gifts to various organizations and for the thoughtful laminated gift tags.

Although the group purchases most of their own supplies, they are extremely thankful for all those who have donated skeins of yarn, and can always use more. If you have yarn at home that is sitting idle, **please bring it in to the Parish Office**, and the group will put it to good use.

The Wednesday morning Needlecrafters have resumed meeting in a socially-distanced and masked fashion. They welcome any new crafters and all donations!

## ADVENT 2020 RESOURCES

Advent is upon us! We offer the following resources for this season:

### Christmas Wafers:

The Christmas wafer commemorates a custom that is many centuries old. Oplatek (from the Latin "Oblatum," meaning Holy Bread) is believed by some to emanate as far back as the "manna" of Exodus 16:31 and is sometimes referred to as the Bread of Angels.

Shared at the Christmas Vigil meal, the breaking of the Christmas wafer offers best wishes to family and friends.

Christmas wafers **are now available** in the Parish Office. A donation of \$1/package of four wafers is appreciated.

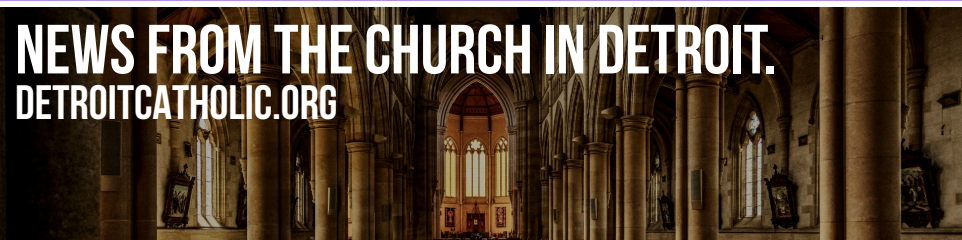
## PRAYER FOR THE FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

*Adapted from [xavier.edu](http://xavier.edu).*

All-powerful God,  
your eternal Word  
took flesh on our earth  
when the Virgin Mary placed her life  
at the service of your plan.

Lift our minds in watchful hope  
to hear the voice which announces His glory  
and open our minds  
to receive the Spirit  
who prepares us for His coming.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



**NEWS FROM THE CHURCH IN DETROIT.**  
**DETROITCATHOLIC.ORG**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## ST. JANE FRANCES de CHANTAL PARISH COUNCIL

### Pastor

Fr. Tony Sulkowski

### Chairman

Craig Smith, [crsgto@live.com](mailto:crsgto@live.com)

### Vice Chairman & Member at Large

Bob Pawlik

### Christian Service

Doreen Corby

### Secretary

Nancy Dufloor

### Finance

Ray Fortier

### Worship

John Martin

### Member at Large

Joe Nida

### Stewardship

Linda Smith

### Worship & Ushers

Leon Soltesz

### Vicariate Reps

Julie & Ray Sroka

### Education

Eric Rzeppa

## INTERCESSORY PRAYER

**Let us pray for you!** Although we are still socially distant, our Intercessory Prayer team is here for you. They are praying for all requests submitted.

Our Intercessory Prayer box remains open on our website. Please visit [sjfparish.org/intercessoryprayer](http://sjfparish.org/intercessoryprayer) to submit prayer requests.

If you have any questions, contact Laurie Hall at [LHall@sjfparish.org](mailto:LHall@sjfparish.org) or call 586-977-8080, Ext. 104.

## RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

On **January 3, 2020**, the Red Cross will be hosting a blood drive **by appointment only**. Temperature checks will be conducted at the door, and a limited number of people will be allowed inside at the same time. Register online at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

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**Pope Francis**  
@Pontifex



Accompanied by the Mother of Jesus on the journey toward Christmas, in these times that are difficult for many, let us make an effort to rediscover the great hope and joy brought to us by the coming of the Son of God into the world.

*Posted on December 11, 2020*

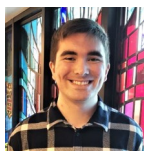


**Detroit Archdiocese**  
@ArchofDet

Over the next year-and-a-half, all parishes in the Archdiocese will join together into groups that will work together, sharing resources and talents, to further advance the shared mission of our local Church to unleash the Gospel. See all groupings: [familiesofparishes.org/list](http://familiesofparishes.org/list)



*Posted on December 9, 2020*



**Lucas Jeffrey**  
Communications Facilitator  
LJeffrey@sjfparish.org  
Ext. 101

The past nine months of the COVID-19 pandemic have been full of waiting. We've waited to return to our social gatherings, pastimes, and the events we used to attend regularly. We've

waited for our lives to return to normal, and unfortunately, there is more waiting on the horizon.

The season of Advent has also been full of waiting. Unlike the pandemic, however, we know when the waiting of Advent will end: when the Christ child is born on Christmas Day.

As we enter the fourth and final week of Advent, we are all too aware of how close we are to Christmas. Although the fourth week of Advent is in less than a week, it can be hard to wait those few short days. We can feel impatient—not only to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but to (virtually) see family for the holiday, to (safely) celebrate Mass, and to feel the sense of community that only Christmas can bring.

The readings from the Second Sunday of Advent remind us that:

*“with the Lord one day is like a thousand years  
and a thousand years like one day.”*  
(2 Pt 3:8-14)

It is important to remember that the Lord has all the patience He needs. Things happen precisely when He needs them to. It is our job to understand what He teaches us—that through Him, we can endure all things and be patient for all things. In times of crisis, of impatience, and of distress, we need only turn to the Lord for all the strength and patience we need.

This may not always feel as easy as it sounds. Instead of looking at the bigger picture, we may instead feel confined to the here and now—that we are ready *now* for Christmas, and that we just can't wait any longer. We must try to see that bigger picture: that Christmas will come precisely when it needs to.

We must also apply that same patience as we wait through the COVID-19 pandemic. Waiting for an end to the pandemic, however, is far more difficult, because there is no end in sight. There is no singular date—like there is for Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup>—that we know the COVID-19 pandemic will cease. Rather, we must wait through an uncertain and unsteady progression as scientists and medical professionals work tirelessly to help us through this difficult period.

Although it is hard to wait, God has a plan for each of us. He will give us the strength and wisdom we need to endure the pandemic as safely and healthily as we can.

As we near the end of Advent, I would like to speak briefly on the digital Mass opportunities we have available at our parish:

**Video Mass** is available every weekend, premiering Saturday at 4:00pm. Watching video Mass is a safe, easy way to participate in worship while at home. Fr. Tony makes an act of spiritual communion for those watching.

As we approach Christmas Day, please keep in mind that **video Mass will be available** for Christmas. If, for any reason, you would like to participate in Christmas Mass from home, video Mass is an easy and safe way to do so.

Video Mass is available on the homepage of [sjfparish.org](http://sjfparish.org) on the day it premieres, as well as on our YouTube channel.



## BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS MANGER OR NATIVITY SCENE

*Adapted from catholiccurrent.org.*

In its present form, the custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas Eve of 1223.

The blessing of the Christmas manger or Nativity scene may take place on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time.

When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another family member.

*All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:*

“Our help is in the name of the Lord.”

*All reply* “Who made heaven and earth.”

*One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example:*

“Listen to the words of the holy Gospel according to Luke (2:1-8):

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enthralled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was one of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.”

*Or Isaiah 7:10-15, the birth of Emmanuel.*

*Reader:* “The Gospel of the Lord.”

*All reply* “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”

*The leader prays with hands joined:*

“God of every nation and people,  
from the very beginning of creation  
you have made manifest your love:  
when our need for a Savior was great  
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.  
To our lives he brings joy and peace,  
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger;  
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,  
and raise our thoughts to him,  
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,  
and who lives and reigns forever and ever.”

*All reply* “Amen.”

## With Deepest Sympathy

The community of  
**St. Jane Frances de Chantal**  
extends support and prayers  
to the family and friends of:

### **Hules Lee Bolton**

Beloved father and husband.  
Dear grandfather, great-grandfather,  
and great-great grandfather.

### **Amelia Maniaci**

Beloved mother and wife.  
Cherished sister.  
Dear aunt and grandmother.

*Eternal rest grant unto them,  
O Lord,  
and let perpetual light  
shine upon them.  
May the souls of all  
the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God,  
rest in peace.*

## OFFERTORY INFORMATION DECEMBER 6, 2020

Registered Families:	1,386
Envelopes Returned:	166
Amount Offered:	\$6,958.00
Loose Offering:	\$742.00
Online Giving Contributors:	110
Contributions:	\$5,447.00
Total Offerings:	\$13,147.00
2020 Budgeted Offertory:	\$11,786.00
Actual Offertory:	\$13,147.00
Difference:	+\$1,361.00

Thank you to those who continue to donate; your contributions help us continue operations during the pandemic. To sign up for online giving, visit [sjfparish.org/onlinegiving](http://sjfparish.org/onlinegiving).

If you have any questions, contact Jody at [JGazo@sjfparish.org](mailto:JGazo@sjfparish.org) or call 586-977-8080, ext 112.

## BEHOLD THY MOTHER: GETTING TO KNOW THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Help of Christians, Star of the Sea—the Blessed Virgin Mary goes by many titles. Sacred Heart Major Seminary is now offering a free, online course designed for the lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Detroit to learn more about the blessed virgin.

This **free** non-credit course is being offered online using the seminary's learning management system, Canvas. Upon signing up for the course, students will receive a username and password for accessing the online class. Register now at [shms.edu/mary](http://shms.edu/mary).

## SPONSOR OF THE WEEK BETH WILLIAMS of ALL PRO HOME IMPROVEMENT

Thank you for advertising in our bulletin! We ask our parishioners to support our advertisers, as they make our bulletin possible.



**Janina Jacobs**  
Director of Music  
[JJacobs@sjfparish.org](mailto:JJacobs@sjfparish.org)  
Ext. 103

Christmas is almost here, what with the lights, gifts, and celebrations surrounding us. 2020 has been a very difficult and trying year—an extremely unusual year—and I trust that none of us wish to experience

another one like it. However, we as Catholic Christians are a people of hope, and we cannot allow anything, especially not COVID-19, to steal our joyfulness.

We wait all year for this special time to celebrate Jesus' birth. I remember as a kid counting down the days to the arrival of Santa Claus, presents, and yes, hearing and singing Christmas carols for a few weeks. I loved going to Church and seeing all the decorations—especially smelling the real Christmas trees!

Yet for many, the days from Thanksgiving to the New Year are dreaded, because someone close to them has either passed away or is about to. As I write this, I think of many we have lost and more who won't make it in 2021. The holiday season, which should be filled with joy, can instead become shadowed by sadness and pain.

How do we get through the holidays when our hearts are heavy and our feelings of grief and loss overwhelm us? Here are some suggestions for making the season bearable, lighter, and even joyous:

**Spend some time alone.** Read the Blue Books we have available in the Gathering Space, and note the phrase at the very end of each reflection: "Spend some quiet time with the Lord." We are never truly alone, because the Lord is with us. Use that strength.

**Reminisce.** Remember the times you and your loved one(s) had together.

**Consider writing a letter or journal.** Coloring books are also popular now, even for adults, and this activity can be calming and healing.

**Go for a walk.**

**Listen to music.**

**Do not run from sadness,** but instead give yourself time to mourn. Dying is a part of living, and we must accept it.

**Spend time with family and friends.** Spending time with others can be particularly challenging for a grieving person, but you can and should accept invitations to be with others. However, drive yourself, so you can make a graceful exit if you need to. Keep stress to a minimum.

**Entertain**—or not. Don't feel like cooking for the entire family? Modify your efforts and order out. But you might also find that cooking a feast takes your mind off of grief.

**Surround yourself with kind and compassionate people.** Grief is an injury, and you want to be with people who understand the tough time you are going through. Joining a support group can help, but some people don't get into that. Don't force it if you don't feel it.

**Create a new ritual in memory of your loved one.** Light a memorial candle, request a Mass intention, or donate to a charity in honor of your loved one. Volunteer to serve dinners to the homeless or collect items for families in need. If your loved one was a veteran, support veterans causes.

Whatever you decide, find the time to give back, as it is very healing and will make you feel better. Have faith in yourself that you can get through these difficult times.



The human heart has a great capacity to heal. Know that you, too, will move forward in your life, sustained by the love and memory of someone who has gone home.

My mom died 35 years ago, and my dad, 11. Do I miss them? Yes. Are there questions I would like to ask them? Yes. Would I have wanted them to live longer, knowing they were suffering? No. I can rejoice in their memories.

Once, at a family party, my second cousin—whom I had not seen since my dad’s funeral in 2009—said that I now look so much like my mother that it’s uncanny. Whenever I sing or play, that’s Mom shining through me—because she is the one who recognized my musical talent and secured me a piano teacher when I was seven. Whenever I play golf or other sports, Dad is right there. Neither parent is far from me.

So yes, you can recover from the passing of loved ones. Remember them, cherish them, and live so that they will be proud of you forever. During the Christmas holidays and the coming year, think of all those beautiful twinkling lights as the brightness of the souls who have gone before us. If you do that, it is easy to look at them, smile, and be at peace.

## PRAYER FOR ETERNAL REST

*Adapted from [connectusfund.org](http://connectusfund.org).*

Almighty and eternal God,  
 who desires not our death and suffering  
 but our conversion and safe arrival  
 into eternal happiness,  
 I ask You to have mercy on us, sinners.

Grant that the sins of those gone before us  
 may be remitted,  
 that the dying may have  
 the gift of final perseverance  
 in their faith and in Your grace,  
 and that us yet living  
 may prepare for a good and holy death,  
 worthy to be welcomed into Your bosom  
 when our day comes.

Let me in this life  
 cleave to Your sacramental presence,  
 the promise of future glory.  
 Never let me separate myself from You.  
 Amen.

## HOW CAN WE BE MODERN CATHOLICS WITH CST?

**Catholic Social Teaching** continues to be our compass as we navigate the modern world. Now that Modern Catholic has introduced us to each of the seven principles, we must ask, “What now?”

We encourage you to email us at [moderncatholic@sjfparish.org](mailto:moderncatholic@sjfparish.org) to share how Catholic Social Teaching will influence your daily life. This is your opportunity to enter the conversation! Which principles stood out to you, and why? And, most importantly, what aspects of Catholic Social Teaching would you like us to cover next?

Want to review what we’ve learned? Visit [sjfparish.org/mcarchive](http://sjfparish.org/mcarchive) to read the full Modern Catholic series. We hope to hear from you via email by today, December 20, 2020 at [moderncatholic@sjfparish.org](mailto:moderncatholic@sjfparish.org)!



## LECTOR SCHEDULE

Tuesday Dec. 22, 2020	Wednesday Dec. 23, 2020	Thursday Dec. 24, 2020	Friday Dec. 25, 2020	Saturday Dec. 26, 2020	Sunday Dec. 27, 2020
7:00pm Chris Bajercius	8:00am Judy Taylor	4:00pm Craig Smith  6:00pm Keith Morris  Midnight Sarah Friedmann	9:00am Denise Dara  11:30am Barbara Milczynski	4:00pm Bill Burr	9:00am Geri Miles  11:30am Annette Mobley

## ARMED SERVICES PRAYER LIST

Robert Bain, *Army*  
 Nicholas Brosowski, *Army*  
 Chris Burley, *Navy*  
 Shaun Chaplin, *Air Force*  
 Winndie Darrow, *Coast Guard*  
 Alexander J. Hendzell, *Marines*  
 Louis B. Kasper III, *Coast Guard*  
 Elijah Kuefler, *Navy*  
 Carmen LaForest, *Navy*  
 Matthew McDowell, *Air Force*  
 Cassidy Kicinski Rose, *Air Force*  
 Jeremy Rzeppa, *Navy*  
 Scot D. Skoczylas, *Navy*  
 Anthony Trotta, *Navy*  
 Kyle Wiegand, *Army*

## PRAYER LIST

Greg Corby  
 Jennifer Paul  
 Nick Paul  
 Annette Pickler  
 June Sadowski  
 Leonard Schaub  
 Theresa Schaub  
 Kenny Solgot  
 Marsha Zanardelli

It is our Christian duty to pray for others. Please call the Parish Office to add or remove a name from the Prayer List. Names added to the Prayer List will remain on the list for a period of four weeks.

## MASS INTENTIONS

**Monday, December 21, 2020** *No Mass*

**Tuesday, December 22, 2020**

**7:00pm** For the Parishioners

**Wednesday, December 23, 2020**

**8:00am** For the Parishioners

**Thursday, December 24, 2020**

**4:00pm** Dec. Arnold & Shirley Putrycus (Putrycus Family)

Dec. Gabriel Durante (Durante Family)

Dec. Pauline Gronowski (Gronowski Family)

Dec. Joseph & Maria Gronowski (Gronowski Family)

**6:00pm**

Dec. Lisa Vrabel (Mom, Dad, & Jennifer)

Dec. Gerald Williams (Williams Family)

Dec. Mbrs. Brown & Hayden Families (Charlene Brown)

**Midnight**

Dec. Will & Shirley Fasczewski (Graziano Family)

**Friday, December 25, 2020**

**9:00am** Dec. Joseph & Wanda Sztaba (Son Dennis)

Dec. Mbrs. of the Florek Family (Sylvia Soldatek)

Dec. Marsha Olson (Family)

Dec. Betty Cianfarani (Family)

**11:30am**

Dec. Susan DeDonatis (Mother, MaryAnn)

**Saturday, December 26, 2020**

**4:00pm** Liv. Elona Lulja (Maria Vacaj)

Dec. Mary Kreft (John Kreft Family)

Dec. Robert Quitter (Tom & Phyllis Harris)

**Sunday, December 27, 2020**

**9:00am** Dec. Diane Bosca (Dolores Baranski)

Dec. Jerome Tortomasi (Roger Kwiatkowski)

Dec. Linda Hurley (Roger Kwiatkowski)

Dec. Candice Dunn (Roger Kwiatkowski)

**11:30am**

For the Parishioners

Dec. Jack Campo (Caradonna Family)

Dec. Maria & Damiano Campo (Caradonna Family)

Dec. Vincent & Bridget Caradonna (Caradonna Family)

Dec. Fr. Ron Milligan (Judy Taylor)

**VIDEO MASS, EVERY WEEKEND.**  
[SJFPARISH.ORG/MASS](http://SJFPARISH.ORG/MASS)

### OUR MISSION

“Nourished by God’s Word & the Eucharist, we strive to be a welcoming Catholic community dedicated to living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

### NEW TO OUR PARISH?

Would you like to join the St. Jane Frances de Chantal parish family? Become a parishioner! You may register anytime in the Parish Office or online at [sjfparish.org/joinus](http://sjfparish.org/joinus). We would love to have you!

# ST. JANE FRANCES de CHANTAL

38750 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights, MI 48310 586-977-8080 [sjfparish.org](http://sjfparish.org)

## STAFF

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FrTony@sjfparish.org // Ext. 102

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*Pastoral Associate & Worship Coordinator*

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*Office Assistant*

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**Linda Smith**

*Stewardship Liaison*

LSmith@sjfparish.org // Ext. 113

## SACRAMENTS

### CHILDREN'S BAPTISM

Do you have a child you would like to have baptized? Please call the Parish Office to make arrangements.

### RECONCILIATION

Available Tuesdays at 5:30pm.

### MARRIAGE

Congratulations! Please contact our Parish Office at least six months prior to your desired wedding date to begin preparations.

### ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Contact the Parish Office to schedule one-time or regular visits.

### RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Are you interested in joining the Catholic Church? Contact Laurie Hall to begin the process. Welcome home!



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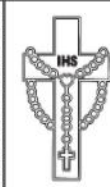
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 Dennis Briston  
 Broski & Schaff Families  
 Brower & Ficaro Families  
 Caradonna & Campo Families  
 Nancy Ann Cardamone  
 Coussens & Petracci Families  
 Desmond T. Cushing  
 Louis & Elvira D'Ambrosio  
 DeHayes & Kulhawik Families  
 Andrew & Eleanor Delie  
 Betty Eschrich  
 Finn & McNamara Families  
 Florek & Soldatek Families  
 Sister Mary Frederick  
 Riley James Frush

Jesus & Mercedes Garcia  
 James Golombek  
 Norbert & Emily Golonka  
 Gurney Family  
 Kay Herrmann  
 Hughes & Przedwojewski Families  
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 Anthony & Jane Klik  
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 Bernard L. Kosnik  
 John & Dorothy Kotulis  
 Ron Kotulis  
 Sandi Kotulis  
 Kulwicki & Spellman Families  
 Kwapis & Krull Families  
 James Kwapis  
 Kwiatkowski & Madeira Families  
 Gerald & Kimberly LaForest

Joseph & Helen Levenski  
 Joann Lichocki  
 Stanley & Dolores Lichocki  
 Maguran & Baglama Families  
 Raymond J. Mandziuk  
 Mandziuk & Skonieczny Families  
 Richard Marshall  
 Thomas & Rose Medved  
 Clara & Stanley Milczynski  
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 Liz & Pam Miller Family  
 Harry & Lottie Musialowski  
 George Muylaert Family  
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 Edward J. Novak & Family  
 Brian Oakes  
 Kenneth Oakes  
 Jack O'Connell  
 Marsha A. Olson  
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 Leandre & Vina Page

Helen & Henry Perliskey  
 Genevieve Perliski  
 Lois Polkinghorne  
 Aniela Poslaiko  
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 Joseph Quitter Family  
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