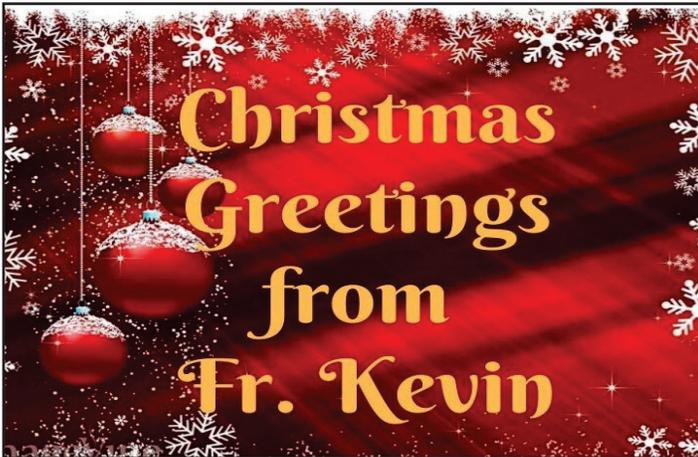


The WINGED LION

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2019



May peace be
on our
lips and in our
hearts

My dear parishioners,

In the Gospel of St. John for Christmas Day, we are invited into the great mystery of faith “And the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” We are about to celebrate the birth of Christ soon after you read this Christmas letter. God’s presence in our midst is cause for a continuous celebration, one that has no ending.

During Advent we have opportunities to prepare spiritually for the birth of Christ. We are also invited to live in a state of continued preparation so that we can live eternally with the Father. Most importantly we are called to a preparation and readiness to participate in “the Word being made flesh every day.”

We are called to daily holiness to be a sign of the presence of Christ in our world every day. My prayer is that we can find time during this Advent season and during Christmas to have time to reflect on and consider the presence of God in our world. We will give and receive gifts during this Christmas season, no gift is greater than the gift of understanding that God came to dwell with us. Emmanuel – God with us.

God blessings and a happy and holy Christmas to all! Kevin S. Ryan

Have Your Best Advent Ever

1. Know that it won't be perfect.

Remind yourself right now that your goal is to grow in holiness during this Advent season— not have the perfect tree, host the perfect party, or buy the perfect gifts. Bring this spiritual goal to prayer and ask for the grace you need to do it.

2. Add something spiritual to your daily routine.

Advent is a mini-Lent, but too often we don't look at it that way. Is there some sacrifice you might consider giving up? Some prayer you might add to your routine, in the morning or at night? Look for ways to add something spiritual to the things you and your family do every day.

3. Add something fun to your daily routine.

There is so much to do and so much to stress about, make sure you take the time to enjoy something simple, by yourself or with your family. You might take a drive and look at Christmas lights, attend a concert, or a play, or spend an evening playing board games. Find something simple and fun that will be memorable and meaningful. Maybe add some music to your days.

4. Plan a gift for Jesus.

Look for a way to prepare your heart for Jesus in a special way during this Advent season. Is there a charitable project you might consider? Or a surprise act of kindness for someone? Are you holding onto resentment and need to forgive someone in your life—or ask for forgiveness? You might need to go to confession. Plan a gift for Jesus by preparing your heart for his coming.

5. Let go of control.

It's an illusion anyway. Let go of the idea that you need to make Christmas special for your family. December 25 is going to come and go, whether you ever bake those cookies or not. Stay focused on the fact that the one who makes Christmas special is Jesus—not you. Leave a little space, in your calendar and in your heart, for God to control your Christmas.

By Danielle Bean CatholicMom.com host of CatholicTV

Christmas Eve Masses

4 PM - 7 PM - 10 PM

Christmas Day Masses

10 AM - 12 PM

LESSONS AND CAROLS
AT ST. MARK
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13 AT 7 P M
MAIN SANCTUARY
FREE ADMISSION

A sing-along of your favorite Advent and Christmas Carols with the Music Ministers of St. Mark!

Advent Wreath Prayer

*First Sunday of
Advent*
Micah 5:2

Lord, we know what it's like to wait. We squirm uncomfortably with impatience and anticipation. Christmas is coming! Some relish the opportunities to celebrate and spend time with friends and family. Others may dread the painful memories that accompany the holidays. Whatever our moods from day to day, whatever our perspectives. Lord, remind us what we truly anticipate. We prepare for the coming of the Savior, the ruler of all.
Amen

*Second Sunday of
Advent*
Isaiah 61:1

Who better to release us from the captivity of sin, O Lord? Who has heard the chains that bind us to our past, the sinful deeds we wish we could forget? You, Jesus, hear the clanking of the metal and know how to save us from every sin that weighs us down. We were prisoners to sin. No matter what we tried, we could not escape. but you came to liberate us. You broke our chains. We are free!
Amen

*Third Sunday of
Advent*
Luke 2:6-7

Lord, you have given us so much to look forward to this Christmas. In many ways, it's like any other year, but the special time of Jesus' birth is still just as amazing as it was on that first Christmas Day. The time has come for us, Lord, to see the coming of Jesus in such a humble manner and know that he comes to us today in humble ways as well. Ordinary, earthly, a human, he came to meet us in our sinful circumstances. that is extraordinary!
Amen

*Fourth Sunday of
Advent*
2 Corinthians
4:17

As the days get colder and darker, we enter into the depths of winter. Lord, these are the times when we feel it in our bones. We miss the warmth and light. We crave it! O Lord, bless us as we crave your warmth and light, looking forward to the days when we will never be cold and dark again in your eternal light. Wrap your comfort and love around us like a quilt on a cold evening. Your Word is like a warm winter fire, Kindling our faith and illuminating the truth.
Amen

Prepare for the Coming of our Savior

By Scott Byers

Think about every relationship you are in. Go back to the very beginning of each relationship and you will find two things: a look and a word. A mother sees her baby for the first time, calls them by their name; a lifelong bond is formed. A young man notices a cute young girl, musters up the courage to say hello and a romance is blossomed. A person at school watches as a classmate is about to walk into something, calls out a warning. . . a friendship begins based on appreciation. A look and a word. How many stories can we tell about the people in our lives and how we saw them, spoke to them, and a relationship was built upon that connection?

And so it is with God. In Genesis 1 we read about the most important relationship we will ever have, the relationship with our Creator and how it began with a word and a look. "And God said. . .", "And God saw. . ."

Without these, we would not exist. Without the loving, creative power of God and His desire to know us fully, we would not be. "God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . and God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."
(Gen 1: 26,31)

As easy as it would be to make this an article about looking up from our phones to see each other and speak to each other in person, I want to go deeper. Let's look at the root desire of every heart. . . to be known, fully known; and to be loved, to be accepted, and to belong. That look and that word take us there. In Psalm 139, God sees us and knows us (v1) and such knowledge is too wonderful for me (v6). In Luke 7 we read about the sinful woman in Simon's home. Jesus sees her and speaks to her the words she longs to hear, "Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you, go in peace." (v48,50) She is fully known and loved for who she

is. Later, in Luke 19, as Jesus walks down the street, he sees a short-statured man in a sycamore tree and says, "Zacchaeus, today I must stay at your house." (v5) Because Jesus goes out on a limb to invite himself to the sinner's house, Zacchaeus is known and feels loved and makes amends for his wrong-doings and like the woman hears Jesus' message of salvation.

Are you seen? Or are you hiding like Adam because of the nakedness of your sin? Do you hear? Or are your ears closed like the deaf man in Mark 7? Be seen. Listen. Ephphatha. . . be opened. Let your eyes meet Christ's gaze and let your ears hear his voice and let your hearts be filled with the loving presence of the Holy Spirit as we prepare for the coming of our Savior this Advent.

*Scott Byers is the lead of the
Theology of the Body study at
St. Mark the Evangelist.*

Advent Reconciliation Services North Central Urban Deanery

Shrine of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina | Monday December 2 @ 7:00 pm
3843 Bulverde Pkwy
San Antonio, TX 78259

Holy Trinity | Wednesday, December 4 @ 7:00 pm
20523 Huebner Rd
San Antonio, TX 78258

St. Helena | Tuesday, December 4 @ 7:00 pm
14714 Edgemont
San Antonio, TX 78247

Our Lady of Perpetual Help | Monday, December 10 @ 7:00 pm
16075 North Evans Rd.
Selma, TX 78254

St. Mark the Evangelist | Wednesday, December 11 @ 7:00 pm,
and Saturday, December 14 @ 9:00 am
1602 Thousand Oaks Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78232

St. Joseph Honey Creek | Thursday, December 19 @ 6:30 pm
25781 Hwy 46 W.
Spring Branch, TX 78070

2019 December Calendar of Events at St. Mark the Evangelist

Advent Evening Prayer
Wednesdays, December 4 & 18 | 7:00 PM

Reenactment of the Miracle of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Saturday, December 7 | 5:00 PM
Meal follows in St. Mark Community Center Gymnasium

Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception Mass
Monday, December 9 | 8:15 AM & 6:30 PM
(Moved to Monday, Not a Holy Day of Obligation)

Parish Reconciliation Services
Wednesday, December 11 | 7:00 PM
Saturday, December 14 | 9:00 AM

Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Thursday, December 12 | Rosary 6:00 AM | Mass 6:30 AM

La Posada
Sunday, December 15 | After 2:00 PM Mass
Program and Supper

Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass (Holy Day of Obligation)
Tuesday, December 31 | 5:00 PM

Mary, Mother of God Masses (Holy Day of Obligation)
Wednesday, January 1 | 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM

O ANTIPHONS

By Kim Long

After 18 years of working for the Church, I have deemed Advent the season of quiet desperation. Our Church tells us to be reflective and prepare, while secular society is already booming about Christmas, the season following Advent. The O Antiphons are not really well known among many of my Catholic friends and co-workers until I reference the easily recognized Advent hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." With genuine relief they say "Oh right, yes I know that song." But those prayers hold so much more for us.

It is at this moment in our "brand new year," that the "O's" offer us a bridge from the last few days of Advent into the Christmas season – a bridge from the wreath with four candles, all in different heights due to the celebratory "burn" of the previous weeks observance, to the stable. They bring us from promise



to fulfillment, leaving behind the frenzied rush, offering instead the opportunity to stay connected to the anticipation of Christ's birth. And if we "bridge the gap," we can live out those last few days of Advent with some semblance of peace rather than greeting Christmas Eve and mid-night Mass with sheer exhaustion, or even worse, with the silent battle cry, that "it will be over soon and life can get back to normal."

History: The "Great O's," as they are called, have been around since roughly the sixth century. Prayed in the octave of Advent from December 17 through 23, they precede the recitation of the Magnificat during Vespers. By the eighth century they were regularly used in Rome. Although they have been used more in monastic settings, the laity has full access to these prayers, both in

private devotion (there is an O Antiphon chaplet) and publicly during Vespers.

Meaning: An antiphon is a verse or psalm to be sung responsively. They have a dual meaning. First that each of these antiphons is a title of the Messiah, and secondly they point us toward Isaiah's prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. They also form a Latin acrostic, "Ero Cras" meaning "tomorrow I will come." Acrostics are formed by using the first letters in a sequence of phrases. Practice: What would our Christmas wish list look like if we, as adults, really gave some thought to what we are asking of God? After all, don't we want what we ask for? Don't we ask for what we want? In these prayers we are asking for, waiting for, hoping for the Messiah to come. What would that look like? How would He arrive? Would we recognize Him?

Article taken from *The Catholic Connection* <http://www.thecatholic-connection.org/?p=8584>. Picture by Elena at www.flickr.com

Summer Camps and Events Meeting Success

By Elizabeth Herring

Some would say, "Isn't it too early to start talking about summer camps and events? I disagree. Now is the perfect time to do so. On October 27th, the Youth Ministry Department held a well-attended parent meeting where we discussed cost, dates, and registration for all our summer events. It was our mission to get the information out to parents in a timely manner, and we accomplished our goal. We encouraged parents to begin planning their teens' summer schedule and provided specific deadlines for each registration.

These summer events are not just opportunities to keep your teens involved during the summer months, but a way for them to connect with their peers in their community and strengthen their faith. As a parent of

a teen, I have experienced this first hand; watching my own teen come back after an event filled with the Holy Spirit and with the desire to share it with her community.

Teens that participated in these events last summer and their parents have shared some of their wonderful experiences, as well as the spiritual rewards from attending these events. These included making life-long friendships, becoming closer to God through Adoration and worship, pride in sharing their spirituality and religion with others in community, and inspiration to continue their faith journey in college and as missionaries. The rewards are abundant.

We are aware and understand that these activities can be very expensive, and for that reason we are reaching out to you early so you can

plan in advance. The Youth Department has set up a payment plan for the different summer camps and events to make these events more accessible. If you register early, there is an early bird incentive. There are limited spaces for the various camps. For more information, please email me at eherring@stmarkevangelist.com or call (210) 494-1606 ext.331 or stop by the Youth Office to pick up information.

Elizabeth Herring is the Director of Youth Ministry at St. Mark the Evangelist.



Youth Ministry showing the Christmas Spirit

By Madonna Gil



This time of year always fills my life with joy! As we enter, Advent our hearts are patiently (or not so patiently) waiting to celebrate the birth of Christ with our loved ones. But what about those who can't? Every year, thousands of United States Military personnel deploy to foreign countries, remote sites, and ships/subs all over the world. They willingly sacrifice time with their families so our country will have the freedom to enjoy these religious holidays. Being separated from your fam-

ily is always difficult, but the heart aches even more during this holy season. To help with the heartache, the youth ministry comes together to make dozens of cards to ship to our soldiers. These cards show the love, support and prayers we send to them all!

Even though this activity has passed, you can still show your support to those who are lonely/isolated by lending your voices for our Christmas caroling trip to Brookdale Senior Living. The youth ministry will make their yearly visit on December 20th at 5:45 pm. Seeing the seniors faces light up as they sing along with us shows how much they appreciate the visit. Besides their smiles, we are gifted with amazing conversations. Remember those who may not have families, and continue to spread the love of Christ during this Christmas season and all year long.

Madonna Gil is the Middle School Faith Formation Coordinator.



Will you be a 2020 high School graduate?

Planning to attend a certified vocational school, college, university, junior college, or community college?

A \$1,000 Scholarship may be yours!

The St. Mark's Women's Guild and Knights of Columbus are giving

10 scholarships for further schooling

Selection is based primarily on Church, as well as school and community activities.

For further information, go to stmarkevangelist.com/events-2 or contact

Deacon Steve Marques at

(210) 269-1339 or

Kathy Faucher at

(210) 496-7221

Fun Times With Young at Heart

By Juanita Sanchez

The St. Mark Young at Heart Ministry is a group that for many years now has brought happiness, fellowship and a sense of community to seniors that might not have anybody at home to talk to or keep them company. Young at Heart provides them with friendship, love, attention, someone to talk to, and fun through games and parties throughout the year. For some of these seniors these meetings are the only opportunities they have to talk to someone, therefore, they look forward to every meeting and anticipate what each meeting will have to offer.

The members also support each other through prayer during illness and in case of a death, we send cards to the members that are ill as well



as sympathy cards to the families of the deceased. We feel that it is very important to show our seniors how much we care for them, that by being a member of our group, they gain a family a group of people who love them in this season of their life.

We also try to keep the seniors informed of programs that are available to them by bringing speakers who will provide this information.

Games are a major part of our meetings, in order to be “young at heart” we have to feel “young at heart” and games are what makes us feel happy, makes us have fun, we tell jokes and laugh a lot. We feel rewarded by making our seniors happy. Holidays are of course celebrated in a big way, we celebrate Valentine’s Day, Fiesta, 4th of July, Halloween and Christmas, we dress up and have a lot of fun.

Young at Heart meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. bring your own lunch. If you would like more information, please call Juanita Sanchez at (210) 276-0269.

Juanita Sanchez is the Young at Heart Ministry Lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.

Stewardship a Way of Blessing Others

By Danette Hernandez



In 2008 when my daughter and I moved to San Antonio from Atlanta, Georgia we didn’t have a home parish because

we had never lived here before. Finding a Church to worship at was very important to me. We started going to several Churches but never felt like home there was something always missing.

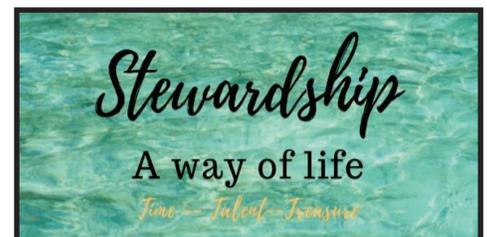
One cold winter Sunday, we came to St. Mark, as I entered the sanctuary, the sincere greetings at the door honestly made us feel so welcomed. As Mass was ending, I realized that

my 2 year old daughter had fallen asleep and was wrapped up tightly in my arms. I thought to myself “How am I going to get my coat and my purse on without disturbing her?” As we stood for the final blessing, the person behind us reached down and placed my coat over my shoulders as well as my purse. I smiled, thanked her and looked at the Crucifix and that is when I knew I was home.

The day my daughter made her First Holy communion, she was approached by our good friend Don and he asked her, “so will you now be one of our altar servers?” she looked back at me and asked “I don’t know. . . Mom, what are you going to do?” I was already helping as a Catechist, but I thought of this as an invitation to offer more of myself to the Community that had given me so much, so I replied: “I will be a Eucharistic Minister.” It was then that both of us began to give back by giving our time.

As a single parent my finances are limited, but my time and talents, my daughter and my blessings are what I can offer back to the Lord and to the community of St. Mark and that is what makes it a full circle, to give back in any way possible. I want to be the person that helps others in need. I want to give back the way I was given and much more. Stewardship to me, is not a check mark showing that I have accomplished something, Stewardship is a way of life and my way of blessing others as I have been blessed.

Danette Hernandez is a parishioner at St. Mark the Evangelist.



ST. MARK WELCOMES

Desiree Mesch & Michael Anderson
 Andrea De La Cruz and Family
 Abigail De La Rosa and Family
 Brandon & Stephanie DuBose
 Derrick Flores
 Jesse & Diana Galindo
 Dimitrius & Elizabeth Garcia
 Juan Garcia & Maricela Vasquez and Family
 Dimitrius & Elizabeth Garcia
 Amy Garcia
 Austin Garcia
 Isabel Orozco Garcia
 Joan Gluys
 William & Martha Hawkins
 Jose & Linda Jurado and Family

Arturo & Grecia Montoya
 Patrick & Olivia Notini and Family
 Jose & Jemini Penaflor and Family
 Christopher & Cindy Salas and Family
 Jose & Cindy Serra
 Bill & Tracey Souza
 Adam & Micaela Vogel and Family
 Szymon & Ashley Wacławiak and Family
 John Zubcic & Simena Huerta Medina



The Lion's Pride Enriching SMCP Experience

The Lion's Price Committee is the campus involvement group for St. Mark Catholic Preschool. Our mission is to help enrich the SMCP experience and we are dedicated to building and strengthening our preschool community.

Our first community building event this year was Grandparents Breakfast. Our grandparents and preschool families were able to enjoy a quick breakfast with their student before the school day started.

We had a huge turnout and heard a lot of great feedback. We wrapped up our first month of school with an Open House and Family Night. Food trucks from Vero Wood Fire Pizza and Kona Ice helped give our preschool families an opportunity to enjoy a meal, foster our community bonds, and support the preschool. Our students loved the chance to show off their classrooms to their families.

October brought cooler weather

and a lot of hustle and bustle. The crew of SAFD Station 14 stopped by to teach our kids about fire safety. We hosted a Fall Discovery event. Through a variety of fall-themed stations, our students learned about math and physics, worked on gross motor and fine motor skills, and received a plethora of fall-themed sensory input. We rounded out the month with the world's cutest Halloween costume parade. Our students did an amazing job and our parents took a ton of pictures.

Looking ahead to December, the Lion's Pride Committee will be hosting our 3rd Annual Breakfast with St. Nick on December 14th. We will have a pancake breakfast, professional photography, several crafts, games and activities, and even a hot cocoa bar. Tickets will be available for purchase through the preschool office beginning December 1st. Keep an eye on the bulletin for further details. It is an immersive holiday experience you will not want to miss!

St. Mark Catholic preschool

serves children who are 18 months to 4 years old,
 on or before September 1st.

ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR CONTINUES

Priority Enrollment for the 2020-2021 School Year will take place from January 27, 2020 to February 2, 2020 and is open to all families with children currently enrolled at St. Mark Catholic Preschool and their siblings in addition to registered members of

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church.

Open Enrollment will begin for the community at
 9:00 am on February 3, 2020.

*Article submitted by the SMCP
 Lion's Pride Committee Chairs.*

ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

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The Winged Lion Publication Policy

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church reserves the
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submissions for form and content.

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

The
WINGED LION

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2019

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Kevin E. Ryan | Pastoral Administrator: Dot Hamlin

Mass Schedule

Saturday 5pm
Sunday 8am, 10am, 12pm,
2pm (Spanish) & 5pm
Monday 8:15am & 6:30pm
Tuesday 6:30am
Wednesday 6:30am & 8:15am
Thursday 6:30am & 8:15am
Friday 8:15am

Holy Days

8:15am & 7pm

Eve of Holy Day

7pm

Communion Services

Monday 6:30am
Tuesday 8:15am
Friday 6:30am
Saturday 7:30am

Reconciliation

Saturday 4-5pm

Adoration

Tuesday-Thursday, 9am-9pm
(*last hour of adoration is from 8pm-8:45pm)

He said to them, "Go into the whole world
and proclaim the gospel to every crea-
ture..."
Mark 16:15



Our mission:
TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS
OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL GOD'S
PEOPLE BY WORD AND ACTION.



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