

***St. Vital Catholic Parish***

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Pastor: Fr. Les Drewicki

Deacon: Dan Ritchie (778-228-3633)

Secretary: Jeanette Gariepy

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24, 2023**

**Weekend Mass Times**

Saturday 5:00 p.m. (English) Sunday 9:00 a.m. (bilingual) 11:00 a.m. (English)

**WEEKDAY MASSES**

Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup> (9:00 a.m.) Communion Service

Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday's - 11 a.m. – noon or by appointment by contacting Fr. Les

ADORATION- December 29<sup>th</sup> (9:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.)

**CHRISTMAS MASSES 2023**

**DECEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup>  
ADVENT MASSES:  
9:00 a.m. (bilingual)  
11:00 a.m.**

**CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES  
4:00 p.m. *Children's Nativity Pageant*  
4:30, 6:30, 9:00 p.m. & midnight**

**DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>  
CHRISTMAS DAY MASS  
10:00 a.m.**

**NEW YEAR'S MASSES 2023/2024  
*Solemnity – Mary Holy Mother of God*  
*Holy Day of Obligation – January 1, 2024***

***NEW YEAR'S EVE (DECEMBER 31<sup>st</sup>)*  
*5:00 p.m.***

***NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS (JANUARY 1<sup>st</sup>)*  
*10:00 a.m.***

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year**

Check out the website [www.saintvitalparish.com](http://www.saintvitalparish.com) and check it regularly for updates.

**Loan Balance November 30, 2023 \$495,981.73**

No bulletin will be printed Dec. 30th/31st. Regular bulletin will resume January 6/7th.

The Parish office will be closed December 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>.

2024 Donation Envelopes are ready for pickup. If you have not used envelopes previously and would like a set, please contact the parish office.

We welcome you all to St. Vital Parish, parishioners and visitors alike. May you be spiritually fulfilled as you pray with us this Christmas Season. For our many visitors, know that you are among friends and that you are welcome to join us in prayer at any time. Every year we rejoice as look forward to this great feast of Christmas a feast of our salvation. May we welcome Christ, not only as a new-born child in a lowly manger, but as our Redeemer. With gratitude let us recall his humanity and the life he shared with us so we too might have eternal life. *Wishing you a Joyful Christmas Season, May you and your loved ones be blessed with joy, love, peace and happiness.*

**SIDE-BY-SIDE MASS OBLIGATIONS** This year, because Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve fall on Sunday, Catholics are obligated to attend Mass two days in a row in each of two weeks - or maybe two masses on one day. As Father Paul Kavanagh, Director of Divine Worship, explains it, we have an obligation to attend Mass on the following Sundays and Holy Days:

- Sunday, December 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- Monday, December 25: Nativity of the Lord
- Sunday, December 31: Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- Monday, January 01: The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

However, on December 24, we could attend a Sunday Mass in the morning, and a Vigil Mass for the Nativity of the Lord at 4.30 PM or 6.30 PM. 9:00 PM or MIDNIGHT MASS. And on December 31, we could attend a Sunday Mass in the morning, and a Vigil Mass for the Solemnity Mother of God at 05.00 PM. But for those who are wondering, no, we cannot fulfill both obligations on December 24 or 31 with just one Mass.

### **Christmas Meal Prayer**

God of all gifts, we thank you for the many ways you have blessed us this day. We are grateful to all who are gathered around this table. We ask you to bless us and our food and to bless those we love who are not with us today. In our gratitude and love, we remember your humble birth into our lives and pray for those who are without enough to eat. We remember the stable in which you were born and pray for those who have no place to live. We remember your challenging message of caring and giving and we pray for peace in families and nations throughout the world. We bless you and give you thanks in your Spirit who brings our hearts to life this Christmas Day and forever. Amen



### **Scent Free Makes Sense**

We would like the parish to be sensitive to folks with allergies and refrain from wearing perfume and aftershave at Mass. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

### **CHRISTMAS MASS PARKING**

Please remember to be kind, courteous, and thoughtful when parking your car for Christmas Mass.

What can you do to help?

1. Be kind and see Jesus in your neighbor, even the neighbors who are driving.
2. Consider which Mass to attend: Christmas Eve 4PM is always busiest and fills up very early. Don't come just in time for that Mass and expect to find parking in our lot.
3. Arrive early
4. Carpool with your wider family and church friends
5. Consider parking legally in the adjacent neighborhoods and walking. Do not park illegally or in adjacent business parking areas.
6. Do not block the fire lanes, hydrants, or access ways.

Last day of the year is 123123

**YEAR-END AND CHRISTMAS GIVING** As you consider making year-end and Christmas donations to your favorite charities, we hope that you will also consider making a gift to your favorite parish – St. Vital Parish. In order for your donations to be credited towards your 2023 tax receipt, they need to be received in the office or collection by December 31, 2023. Donations made at the masses on December 31 will be considered 2023 donations; however, any cheque dated 2024 will be recorded in 2024. Donations made at the New Year's Day masses on January 1 will be considered 2024 donations. ***PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR YEAR END DONATION IN THE COLLECTION ON JANUARY 1 AND ASK THAT IT BE CONSIDERED FOR 2023***

The Knights of Columbus continue to sell **Keep Christ in Christmas Magnets**. They are available in both French and English. Please consider purchasing a magnet for your car from the same table that you can buy grocery gift cards. They are just \$5.00 each and can be used every year.

### **K OF C FOOD DRIVE**

The Knights of Columbus will hold its monthly food drive in support of the Leduc Food Bank the weekend of December 30, 31, 2023. Please drop your donation in the bin in the Church vestibule. Donations not only benefit the needy of Leduc County but also help out the needy residents of Beaumont as well. Thanks to all the Parishioners who have been supporting this effort over the months.

### **BIBLE STUDY**

Bible Study THE EUCHARIST resumes on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

For information or questions please call Claire Connell 780 887-0468.

**DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS?** If you have recently moved, please contact the parish office with your new address. Any tax receipts not picked up at the parish will be mailed to the address on the database.

### **Alpha**

Alpha is finished for 2023, but we want to invite you (and your friends and family) to Alpha in January 2024. Alpha is a place to explore the Christian faith with others. Each session has time for connection, a talk, and space to discuss and ask questions. - It is designed for people without a church background or who wouldn't call themselves a Christian but everyone and anyone will get something from these engaging talks  
There are 4 sessions left plus the retreat on the Holy Spirit!! Even if you missed the first sessions, please still join us! The dates are Jan 22 and 29 and Feb 12 and 19th with the retreat Saturday Feb 3! We will meet from 6-8 pm. We meet in the Parish Basement and it is a **Potluck Dinner**.  
Please come! No registration is required. Email Theresa at [jordan.theresa@gmail.com](mailto:jordan.theresa@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

### **CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP ESSAY CONTEST**

The Knights of Columbus are sponsoring a Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest for the first time. The contest is open to Grades 8 through 12 students. The essays are to be 500-750 words on the topic: "How Can the Church Evangelize in the Digital Age?" Judging is based on a point system up to 100 based on Content, Grammar and Style. We will be offering 1st, 2nd, and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes of \$100.00, \$50.00 and \$25.00 respectively. Winners will be eligible for further District, National and International competition. Contest Entry Forms are available at the back of Church and on the Parish website under the Knights of Columbus tab. **Final submission date is January 15, 2024.**

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

“Heavenly Father, Thank you for sending Your Son Jesus to earth. We not only celebrate His birth in the manger, but also the reason for His coming -- His death on the cross. We thank You for providing eternal life for each person who will accept His free gift of salvation. “Father, I thank you for my family. Life is not always easy for us, but we know that You are always with us. As Your Word says, You will never leave us nor forsake us. Thank you for the love that holds us together and for always meeting our needs. Draw us closer together through this coming year. We love You and want our time of celebration to be memorable today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

### **What does the Solemnity of Mary mean?**

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God is a liturgical celebration observed on January 1st. It is a holy day of obligation for Catholics, meaning that Mass attendance is required. (The use of the word “Solemnity” here is not a statement about Mary’s personality. It is a designation used for certain days within the liturgical (church-based) calendar of the Church. Solemnities are the highest rank of liturgical celebration, higher than feast days or memorials. By celebrating a solemnity dedicated to Mary’s motherhood, the Church highlights the significance of her part in the life of Jesus and emphasizes that he is both human and divine. Though New Year’s Day may seem more like a day for football and hangovers than for Mary, there’s a beautiful spiritual significance in celebrating her during the heart of the Christmas season. Pope Paul VI, in his apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus* (1974), called the Solemnity of Mary “a fitting occasion for renewing adoration of the newborn Prince of Peace, for listening once more to the glad tidings of the angels (cf. Lk 2:14), and for imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace.”

### **Baptism Preparation Course**

Are you expecting a child in the near future? Consider taking Baptism Preparation now while you are waiting for the birth of your son or daughter. **The classes are for parents and sponsors (godparents).**

Attending now eliminates the need to find baby-sitters, rearrange feeding schedules etc. plus it adds to the joyful anticipation of your new arrival.

Parents wishing to register for the **next courses** which will be held on **Mon, January 15th at 7:00 pm** please call the parish office.

### **MARRIAGES**

To be married at St. Vital’s Church, you must notify Fr. Les at least 6 months prior to the wedding date. A marriage preparation course is required.

### **Stewardship Corner Fourth Sunday of Advent Weekend of December 23/24**

In today’s Gospel reading we hear proclaimed the story of the Annunciation, when the angel of the Lord announced to Mary that she would give birth to Christ through the intercession of the Holy Spirit. Mary allowed God’s messenger to speak to her. She was attentive, not afraid to enter into a dialogue, then unconditionally obedient. Mary’s acceptance of this mystery is a stewardship model for us. Good stewards remain open to the incursions of divine life into the normal course of their daily lives. How open are we to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our own lives? What might we do this last week of Advent to be more attentive to the Lord?