



Saints Peter and Paul Chapel
A Ministry of the Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA
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December 2023 Parish Bulletin

Parish Web Site: www.sspp-eccusa.org or www.peterandpaulchapel.org

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MASS SCHEDULE

LITURGIES ARE CELEBRATED AT 2:00 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

December 3, 2023:	First Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023:	Second Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023:	Third (Gaudete) Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023:	Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve
December 31, 2023:	Feast of the Holy Family

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor: +Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div., 314.800.3456, pastor@ssppaul-eccusa.org

Founding Bishop: +Fr. Carl Swaringim, Ed.D., 314.650.1487, domcarl@charter.net

Prayer Intentions

If you would like us to remember a special intention for you at Mass, please contact one of our priests.

If you or someone you know is in need of spiritual assistance (prayers, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.), please contact one of our priests.

Inquiries regarding the administration of Sacraments or services (Baptisms, First Communion, Marriages, and Funerals) are welcomed.

Sunday Scripture Reflections **+Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div.**

December 3, 2023 – 1st Sunday of Advent: The opening theme of Advent is Christ's second coming. Today, both Isaiah and Jesus encourage us to be *mindful of God in my ways* and *watch* for him. The end of time is approaching, and so is the end our lives. If we try to live uprightly, God will do the rest: He is my Father, Isaiah reminds us; He is faithful, declares St. Paul. (Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:33-37)

December 10, 2023 – 2nd Sunday of Advent: "John the Baptist appeared," states St. Mark, "proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." St. Peter reinforces the theme that the Lord desires everyone to come to repentance. Advent is a good time to see how this affects us. What mountains do we need to level and what valleys do we need to fill? (Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11, 1 Peter 3:8-14, Mark 1:1-8)

December 17, 2023 – 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday): "Do not quench the Spirit," St. Paul tells the Thessalonians. "Test everything; retain what is good." Like the bearer of glad tidings in the Book of Isaiah, let us bring what is uplifting to those around us. Take our cue from John the Baptist, we want to do this with humility, remembering whose messenger we are. (Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28)

December 24, 2023 – 4th Sunday of Advent/The Nativity of the Lord: The Son's generosity in coming into the world is foreshadowed by the events in today's readings: David's generous offer to build a temple for the Lord, God's generous response regarding David's dynasty, and Mary's wholehearted acceptance of her role as the Savior's mother. Do we pray to be generous? St. Paul reminds us that the Lord can give us strength. (2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38). *From the Vigil Mass:* The Son of God, descended from the house of David, is about to espouse his people. We know we are unworthy to receive him, as John the Baptist was unworthy to unfasten his sandals. Holy Spirit, purify our hearts, that we may joyfully welcome God-with-us. (Isaiah 62:1-5, Acts 13:16-17, 22-25, Matthew 1:1-25)

December 31, 2023 – Feast of the Holy Family: God promises Abraham countless descendants – like the stars in the sky. Abraham *puts his faith in the Lord*. Marveling, Mary and Joseph place *their* faith in Simeon's prophecy about Jesus. Is there something in *our lives* that we need to accept with faith? (Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3, Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19, Luke 2:22-40)



Advent Gospels

ON THE four Sundays of Advent, the Catholic lectionary presents a series of Gospel readings that prepare for the celebration of the Birth of Christ. The Sunday Advent readings all rotate on a three-year cycle, but they always follow the same pattern.

The Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent always tells of the reign of Christ at the end of time. It echoes the theme of the previous Sunday, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Advent starts with the message that we await the Second Coming of Christ. This entire season is not just a reminder of a past birth but also an anticipation of future glory.

The Second and Third Sundays of Advent always have Gospel readings about John the Baptist. John is an adult in these passages, proclaiming the nearness of the Kingdom of God and serving as the prophet who bridges the Old and New Testaments. John foreshadows Jesus in his birth, his preaching, and his death. John's message on these two middle Sundays of this season inspires us to follow Christ.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent always tells part of the story that just precedes the Birth of Christ. These familiar episodes set the stage for one of the Bible's best-known passages, the story of Christmas.

The Gospel readings of the four Sundays of Advent come to us in reverse chronology. We start with the end of time. We continue to the period when Jesus was an adult. We end in the days before his birth. Like a funnel, Advent opens with a giant theme, the grandness of Christ the King, and it ends with a specific one, the child lying in a Bethlehem manger.

From the Pastor's Desk
+Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to members of our congregation who celebrate special days this month:

Birthdays:

December 4:	Rosann Swaringim
December 17:	Dr. Nathaniel Murdock

Anniversaries:

None this month

Masses on Facebook Live! Just a reminder...we are now able to livestream our Sunday masses on our Chapel Facebook page. If you are unable to attend in person, join us virtually...we would love to "see" you! You do *not* have to have a Facebook account to join us. Just go to our Facebook page www.facebook.com/ssppECCUSA at 2:00 PM on Sunday afternoons.

Bulletin Inserts (page 3): We continue "getting to know the church, its practices and other pressing issues" with *Bulletin Inserts for the Liturgical Life of the Parish*. The short bulletin inserts provided in this resource cover a variety of liturgy-related topics that aim to assist the parish in the liturgical formation of the assembly. The author, Fr. Paul Turner, provides short catechesis on a wide variety of topics to help the reader gain a better understanding of the "what, how, and why" of the liturgy. Each insert is designed to help the reader engage the liturgy and manifest it in their lives. Fr. Paul Turner is pastor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Kansas City, Missouri, and director of the Office of Divine Worship for the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph. He holds a doctorate in sacred theology from Sant'Anselmo in Rome. ***This month, we learn about the Gospels on the Sundays of Advent.***

Christmas Mass: At the request of our parishioners, we will have a combined Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas liturgy on Sunday, December 24, 2023, at 2:00 PM. There will be no liturgy on Christmas Day.