

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE FOURTH WEEK IN ADVENT

Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

MONDAY 12/19

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25
Luke 1:5-25

TUESDAY 12/20

Isaiah 7:10-14
Luke 1:26-38

WEDNESDAY 12/21

Song of Songs 2:8-14
Luke 1:39-45

THURSDAY 12/22

1 Samuel 1:24-28
Luke 1:46-56

FRIDAY 12/23

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24
Luke 1:57-66

SATURDAY 12/24

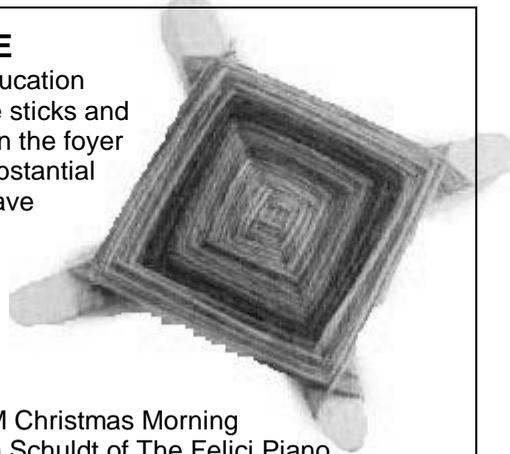
2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-11, 16
Luke 1:67-79

Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:

Wednesday, Peter Canisius; Friday, John of Kanty;

ORNAMENTS FOR YOUR TREE

The children in this year's Mammoth Lakes religious education classes have made Christmas ornaments from Popsicle sticks and yarn. These whimsical ornaments are being displayed in the foyer of St. Joseph Church. Your generous and, we hope, substantial donation entitles you to take one home! The children have dedicated all the money earned from the sale of these ornaments to be used to help local families in need. So make your big check payable to St. Joseph Church and take home your one of a kind ornament.



CHRISTMAS MUSIC

The 9:00 PM Christmas Midnight Mass and the 8:00 AM Christmas Morning Mass will feature the music of Rebecca Hang and Brian Schuldt of The Felici Piano Trio, along with their immensely talented students. At the 6:00 PM Christmas Eve mass a children's choir from our Mammoth religious education class will perform "Away in the Manger." We look forward to a Christmas celebration filled with the sounds of the season.

FIRST FRIDAY MASS & EUCHARISTIC DEVOTION

Every First Friday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM in St. Joseph Church, Mammoth Lakes.

PRAYERS

Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, Antonio Salinas, Josefina Flores, Jim Rothe, John Wallis, James Patrick Hawkins, and Beatrice Tomko

DAILY MASS

Weekday Mass is celebrated Monday through Saturday in St. Joseph's Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don't ring the bell. Everyone is welcome to stay after for coffee and fellowship.



THE MONO COUNTY CATHOLIC

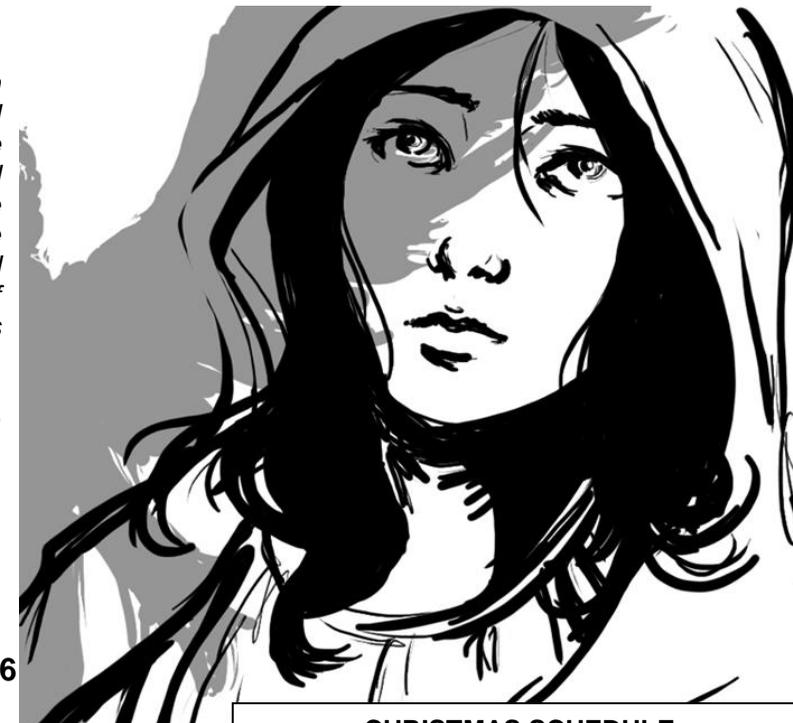
Before the mountains were born, the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity you are God. Psalm 90:2

December 18, 2011

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

Luke 1:31-33



**SAINT JOSEPH PARISH,
MONO COUNTY, CALIF.**

**P.O. Box 372,
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Phone: 760-934-6276**

Rev. Paul Boudreau, pastor

CONFESSIONS

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, y en español a las tardes del domingo de 5:00 a 5:15; and upon request before mass at Our Savior of the Mountains and Infant of Prague missions.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

**Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church –
Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM,
Midnight Mass: 9:00 PM
Christmas Day: 8:00 AM
La Misa en Español: 5:30 PM**

Lee Vining:

**Our Savior of the Mountains Mission -
Christmas Day 10 AM
Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission -
Christmas Day 12 Noon**

FIRST READING:

2 Samuel: 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

When King David was settled in his palace, and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies on every side, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!"

Religion in its essence is an unlikely enterprise. We finite creatures wish to make contact with the infinite. With our tangible rituals we try to touch spiritual reality. In our theology, we seek to define what cannot be confined. We try to put God in a box, and there is no vessel immense enough for Divinity.

And because we have rituals, catechisms, tabernacles, we can understand King David's desire to build God a house. It is natural for human beings to use what poor resources we have to honor God. David was willing to put the most precious materials in his kingdom to the task of creating a worthy space. And God, knowing David's good heart well, sends the prophet Nathan with a reply. God, hearing of David's wonderful plan, laughs.

God's counter-offer is to build a house for David; a house that will last forever. God has the resources to make such a proposal work. And the House of David will become the hope of all the tribes of Israel and the Kingdom of Judea. And when those tribes vanish and the kingdom succumbs to the relentless pressure of history, the House of David will continue and be the salvation of all people till the end of time. That is some house. David wanted to build a home for God, but God designs a home to shelter all humanity.

David and his son Solomon, who became king after him, did not abandon the

idea of a temple and built a mighty fine one, the remains of which you can view to this day.

Christians, too, continue to designate a sacred space for worship. But a church is not so much the house of God as it is the gathering place for the People of God. The real church is not defined by bricks and mortar, wood and

human understanding of divinity and has come about through the person of Jesus Christ. The revelation of Christ is a reality-shattering event; a game changer. God breaks into time, the curtain between divinity and humanity is lifted, the conflict between God and Man is reconciled.

La doncella de Nazaret es el mejor modelo



El lugar de María surge de nuevo en las lecturas de hoy, pero de una forma diferente: dentro del contexto de la promesa de Dios a su pueblo y, en particular, a la casa del Rey David (primera lectura). En este nuevo contexto aquellos que son llamados por Dios despliegan una fidelidad a la alianza mucho mayor que aquellos que, en el pasado, recibieron el mismo llamado, incluso el Rey David. Entre aquellos, la doncella de Nazaret es el mejor modelo. Ella se someterá con alegría a la voluntad de Dios y confiará en su compañía durante su jornada. Y nuestra fe, ¿qué podemos decir de ella? ¿Está madurando o refleja nuestro deseo de manipular a Dios, como algo de magia? Tenemos que seguir creciendo y tomar una decisión muy pronto.

glass. God's dwelling on earth is in the hearts and minds and bodies of those who believe and live and celebrate the mystery of God in us, our hope of eternal fulfillment.

SECOND READING: Romans 16:25-27

To the only wise God through Jesus Christ be glory forever.

The closing doxology of Saint Paul's letter to the Romans is solemn, and full of words like "mystery" and "secret"; "revelation" and "manifestation"; "proclamation" and "command". What has remained hidden for ages is now brought to light, and not only revealed, but declared aloud and mandated! This is a BIG CHANGE in the

This revelation, presented by Saint Paul, is the thesis of the epistle: that salvation is for everybody, not just one group. That God is no one's property, and will not be held captive by religious agenda. This may not seem reality-shattering now, but it is still the most challenging message for many of us who prefer salvation to be parceled out to those we choose, and withheld from those we condemn. Even though God's business has been to set us free from the start, we cannot seem to return the favor. It is very, very hard for us to set God free, in our conception of things, to be God.

The secret is out. Jesus showed us the way, forgiving sinners, dining with them, calling them to be his followers. Jesus offered his healing and teaching to outsiders as well

as his friends. He did not snub a child, a poor woman, a dying criminal. Christ put no barriers to his welcome, and if we do, then we are choosing not to hear what manifestation and proclamation have been shouting for two millennia.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary

A specific angel goes to a particular town to the home of a woman engaged to a certain man of a specified family, and the woman's name, we are told, is Mary. There is nothing vague, fuzzy, or indefinite about God's plan! God didn't say, "Somebody, get me a virgin." There was a bull's-eye painted on Mary's roof, and Gabriel zeroed in on it.

We may feel irrelevant to the current of salvation history, but God doesn't pin the tail on the donkey when it comes to choosing actors for divine purposes. Each of us is mindfully conceived, gifted, and chosen. Our being here is no accident. The note we play is vital to God's symphony, and if we withhold it, it will be missed.

Mary becomes God's uniquely chosen dwelling place, her fragile womb sturdier than the thick stone walls of the temple. One day the temple would be torn down, but this woman would be the ark of God for all time. Mary's attentiveness to God's word made her, a girl of Nazareth betrothed to Joseph of the house of David, the one and only Mother of God. Yet each of us, with a name and lineage, hometown and history, are invited as well to bear Christ within us in a unique way. The bull's-eye is drawn on our roofs as well, and who knows what angel stands before us even now with something to say.