



# ADVENT

**Saints Peter and Paul Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA**  
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**December 2017 Parish Bulletin**

**Parish Web Site: [www.sspp-eccusa.org](http://www.sspp-eccusa.org)**

**Parish Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Sts-Peter-and-Paul-Ecumenical-Catholic-Church-USA-196106814053967/timeline/>**

**National Church Web Site: [www.ecc-usa.org](http://www.ecc-usa.org)**

**National Church Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/eccusa2001>**

## **Pastoral Staff:**

**Pastor:** +Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div., 314.800.3456, [pastor@ssppaul-eccusa.org](mailto:pastor@ssppaul-eccusa.org)

**Associate Pastor:** Fr. Bill LaGrand, M.A., 314.650.9214, [associate@sspp-eccusa.org](mailto:associate@sspp-eccusa.org)

**Associate Pastor and Diocesan Bishop:** +Fr. Carl Swaringim, Ed.D., 636.240.7839, [domcarl@ecc-usa.org](mailto:domcarl@ecc-usa.org)

## **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.

## CLERGY MASS SCHEDULE

**ALL MASS TIMES ARE 4:00 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

December 3, 2017: First Sunday of Advent	+Fr. Bob
December 10, 2017: Second Sunday of Advent	Fr. Tom
December 17, 2017: Third Sunday of Advent	+Fr. Carl
December 24, 2017: Fourth Sunday of Advent & The Nativity of Our Lord	Fr. Bill
<b>Mass Time: 2:00 PM</b>	
December 31, 2017: Feast of the Holy Family	+Fr. Bob

### Sunday Gospel Reflections Fr. Bill LaGrand, M.A.

December 3, 2017 – 1st Sunday of Advent: Advent is a time for hopeful anticipation. We hope in a God who has done great things for us. We anticipate by readying ourselves for God's entrance into our lives. We are encouraged to watch, be vigilant and have confidence. (Mark 13: 33-37)

December 10, 2017 – 2nd Sunday of Advent: The ancient Jews longed for the arrival of the Messiah. Early Christians anticipated the second coming of the Lord. Do we look joyfully to the things God has in store for us? (Mark 1: 1-8)

December 17, 2017 – 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday): Today's readings are insistent about rejoicing in the gift of God's grace in and around us. The rose colored candle of the advent wreath reinforces the joy we celebrate today as we get closer to Christmas. (John 1: 6-8, 19-28)

December 24, 2017 – 4th Sunday in Advent: Both Mary and Elizabeth epitomize the expectation that characterizes the season of Advent, for each played a role in the coming of the Messiah. Do we mirror the response of Mary in our own lives? (Luke 2: 1-14)

December 25, 2017 – The Nativity of the Lord: A child is born to us, which is a great joy and summons us to hope. Jesus' birth often gets buried beneath the glitz of the season and the headlines of the day. Let us not allow these things to drown out the Gospel message. (Luke 2: 1-14)

December 31, 2017 – Feast of the Holy Family: Let us look at our own families. Are we well connected with each other? Or are we disaffected by prior hurts and negativity? We should look to the Holy Family as an example for us today. (Luke 2: 22-40)

From the Presiding Bishop's Desk  
+Fr. Carl Swaringim, Ed.D.

**OUR CONGREGATION CELEBRATES  
CHRISTMAS, 2017**



**DURING ADVENT:** By attending the Sunday Masses of Advent, we prepare ourselves for Christmas. We celebrate the "three comings (advents, arrivals) of Christ": the coming of Christ in Bethlehem, the coming of Christ in glory at the end of time, and the coming of Christ now in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.



**BEGINNING A NEW LITURGICAL YEAR.** We begin the new Liturgical Year on Sunday, December 3rd. A new Liturgical Year is another opportunity for each one of us to add depth to our life of following Jesus from his birth through his early childhood; through his three-year Public Ministry; through his Death and Resurrection; and finally to end up with him in his triumphant enthronement as Christ the King on the last Sunday of the liturgical year. This year let us again commit ourselves to making an in-depth effort to learn more about living our lives as followers of the Lord.

This year the four readings at Mass (First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Epistle [as the Second Reading is called], and Gospel) will be from Lectionary Cycle B.

A bit of history: From the earliest liturgies in the Catholic Faith tradition, scripture readings have been an integral part of the Mass; in the earliest times, someone would be assigned to make a selection from the Sacred Scriptures. However, with the Council of Trent (1570 AD) both the format for the Mass became more formalized as did the scriptural reading assigned to the Sunday liturgy. These Epistle and Gospel readings were repeated every year on the same Sunday from the time of the Council until 1969. Thus, the congregation's exposure to Sacred Scripture was indeed limited and repetitious.

In order to provide more readings from a wider selection of the books of the Holy Bible, the Roman Catholic Church's Vatican Council II (1963-68 AD) increased the cycle of readings for Sunday Mass to a three-year cycle consisting of assigned readings for each Sunday. The liturgical book of readings is called the Lectionary and provides in that three-year cycle a total of three readings for each Sunday Mass.

In terms of content, Year A presents readings from Matthew's Gospel; Year B from Mark; Year C from Luke; and all three cycles use Gospel readings from John for Masses during Lent, Easter, and some other major feasts. The first reading of the Sunday Mass is most often from the Old Testament and is thematically connected to the Gospel; the second reading is an excerpt from one of the other-than-Gospels New Testament books.

Statistically in the three annual Sunday cycles, only 3.7% of the Old Testament is included; minus the Gospels, 25.4% of the New Testament is included; and 57.8% if the Gospels are included.

Mark's Gospel is the shortest of the four Gospels and is likely the first to have been written; it often tells of Jesus' ministry in more detail than either Matthew or Luke. Mark recounts what Jesus did in vivid style, one incident follows directly upon another in an almost breathless style. Mark stresses Jesus' message about the kingdom of God now breaking into human life as the "good news" and Jesus himself as the gospel of God. Mark in his book describes that Jesus is the Son of God whom God has sent to rescue humanity by serving and sacrificing his life.

Although attributed to "Mark," the authorship is uncertain. The Gospel of Mark seems to have been written shortly before 70 AD in Rome and before the destruction of Jerusalem; it apparently was written to the Gentiles who were unfamiliar with Jewish customs. "Mark" is possibly John Mark in whose mother's house at Jerusalem Christians assembled for worship. John Mark was a cousin of Barnabas; traveled with Barnabas and Paul on a missionary journey; and possibly was Peter's interpreter. Surely such relationships coupled with written and oral stories about Jesus have influenced the author's teaching goals in this *Book of the Gospel According to Mark*.

Happy (Liturgical) New Year!  
+Fr. Carl

**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:**

December 2: Bob & Cindy Catlett

**ANNUAL DINNER:** Continuing our congregation's tradition of celebrating the Christmas Season, we are planning to have our annual dinner on Gaudete (Rejoice!) Sunday, December 17, right after our 4 pm Mass at Granite City Grill, 11411 Olive Boulevard (Olive Boulevard and Craig Road), Creve Coeur, Mo. We hope everyone will attend. Individual checks and ordering from the menu will be available. Please contact Rosann Swaringim, (636) 240-7839, [rosannms@charter.net](mailto:rosannms@charter.net) or Marie Harbers, (314) 882-2083, [mdharbers8500@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mdharbers8500@sbcglobal.net), or tell them at church, if you will be able to attend — by Friday, December 15.

**CHRISTMAS MASS:** Our Christmas Celebration will be on Sunday, December 24, at 2:00 pm. It will be a combination of the Fourth Sunday of Advent and the Christmas Vigil Mass. We have decided not to have Mass on Christmas Day afternoon in deference to family Christmas gatherings.

**SHARING THE BLESSINGS:** Our priests, Fathers Bob, Carl, Bill, and Tom, extend to you and your family the blessings of this sacred time of God's grace to each one of us and to humankind. We hope you will join us for dinner on December 17 and for our Christmas Mass on December 24. Our Christmas Mass on Sunday, December 24, would be an especially good time to invite a relative or friend to attend Mass with you.