



ST.
FRANCIS XAVIER
CATHOLIC PARISH

December 24th, 2023

*In Thee, O Lord, have I put my
hope. Let me never be confounded.*

- St. Francis Xavier, S.J.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christmas Schedule



Christmas Eve Sunday 24th

4:00pm English Mass (St Patricks)

Christmas Day Monday 25th

8:00 am Mass (Saint Francis Xavier)

10:00am English Mass (St Patricks)



No daily Mass this week.

May God bless you and your family during this Christmas season.



A COMMENTARY FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE MYSTERY KEPT SECRET

What is announced to Mary in today's Gospel is the revelation of all that the prophets had spoken. It is, as Paul declares in today's Epistle, the mystery kept secret since before the foundation of the world (see Ephesians 1:9; 3:3–9).

Mary is the virgin prophesied to bear a son of the house of David (see Isaiah 7:13–14). And nearly every word the angel speaks to her today evokes and echoes the long history of salvation recorded in the Bible.

Mary is hailed as the “daughter Jerusalem,” called to rejoice that her king, the Lord God, has come into her midst as a mighty savior (see Zephaniah 3:14–17).

The One whom Mary is to bear will be Son of “the Most High”—an ancient divine title first used to describe the God of the priest-king Melchizedek, who brought out bread and wine to bless Abraham at the dawn of salvation history (see Genesis 14:18–19).

He will fulfill the covenant God makes with His chosen one, David, in today's First Reading. As we sing in today's Psalm, He will reign forever as highest of the kings of the earth, and He will call God “my Father.” As Daniel saw the Most High grant everlasting dominion to the Son of Man (see Daniel 4:34–35; 7:14), His kingdom will have no end.

He is to rule over the house of Jacob—the title God used in making His covenant with Israel at Sinai (see Exodus 19:3) and again used in promising that all nations would worship the God of Jacob (see Isaiah 2:1–5).

Jesus has been made known, Paul says today, to bring all nations to the obedience of faith. We are called with Mary today to marvel at all that the Lord has done throughout the ages for our salvation. And we, too, must respond to this annunciation with humble obedience—that His will be done, that our lives be lived according to His word.

- Dr. Scott Hahn



The parish staff knows of the following who are ill, in retired living accommodations, etc. **If you are aware of others, please let Father or the parish office know:** Carl Burrell, Bella Mally, Jane Soars, Eleanor Finley, Susan Fisher, Gerri Allen, Kathy McCarthy, Ken Keyes,, Mildred Crawford, and the residents of Franklin Hills Care Center and Cherrywood Place.

Prayers for the infirm and homebound are a work of mercy.

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Saturday

3pm – Confessions (St. Francis Xavier)

4pm – Vigil Mass (St. Francis Xavier)

Sunday

7:30am – Holy Mass,
(St. Francis Xavier)

9:00am – Holy Mass (St. Patrick)

11:00am – Holy Mass,
(St. Francis Xavier)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Daily Mass is celebrated in the Convent at St. Patrick's, Monday through Friday at 7:00 a.m.

School Mass at St. Patrick's is celebrated at noon Monday through Friday.

Please contact the parish office by email to arrange a baptism, marriage, or funeral, or to request a certificate.

To request the offering of the Holy Mass for your intention, please email the office or leave your intention in the Sunday collection basket.

St. Francis Xavier can be found online at sfxspokane.org or at [facebook.com/sfxspokane](https://www.facebook.com/sfxspokane)

Our Mailing Address is:

P.O. Box 7179, Spokane, WA, 99207

SFX DIRECTORY

Office Telephone: (509) 487-6363

Sacramental Emergencies: (509) 866-6098

Father Semple: pastor@sfxspokane.org

Office Email: office@sfxspokane.org

Office Hours. Tuesday, Thursday 9am-12pm.

Wednesday 9am-11am

THIS WEEK AT ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

THERE ARE NO DAILY MASSES THIS WEEK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30TH

3:00pm, Confessions

4:00pm, Mass *Karl Schmid*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

7:30 am, Mass *Greg & Alicia Hayward*

11:00 am, Mass *Pro Populo*

4:00pm Vigil Mass Mary Mother Of God

(Saint Patricks)

MONDAY, JANUARY 1ST

8:00 am, Mass for the Octave of the Nativity

10:00am Mass Mary Mother of God

(Saint Patricks)



PAX

The Husband of Mary

There is nothing unreal about the marriage of Mary and Joseph. Never, in fact, had earth seen a more perfect union, a love so deep, so glorious. For they loved each other in God.

The Holy Spirit hovered over their loving union, drawing them ever closer into the tender embrace of the Thrice Holy God. He was the foundation of their being. In adoring Him, their souls were joined. He was the seal of their oneness. It was this that made the strength and beauty of their marriage. In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul writes: “For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” That was the secret time-beat which every instant throbbed in the hearts of Mary and Joseph. As divine love is incorruptible, so their love springing from it was invincible, and indeed, far from distracting them from God, it helped to unite them closer to Him. It was so from the time of their first vows. Joseph then thought he could never love Mary more than at that moment, but after the angel’s revelation she became dearer still. The strength of his attachment made him a new man. The Infant-God that she carried increased his reverence, since he looked upon her as a new Ark of the Covenant and a Tabernacle of the Holy of Holies.

As for Mary, she saw in Joseph the representative of Divine Authority, the one chosen to be God’s coadjutor in the mystery of the Incarnation, and always she showed him deference, submission and tender affection. Their vows of virginity served but to unite them more closely. It was because their love had in it no fleshly desires that it was untroubled by anxiety, doubt, bitterness or disappointment. Virginal love is without spot or wrinkle. They knew nothing of what St. Paul calls “the tribulation of the flesh” (I Cor. 7:28). Holy in mind and body, their affection for each other was capable of constant enrichment and increase: “O holy virginity,” cried Bossuet, “your fires are stronger because they are free; the flames that burn in us can never equal the ardor of the chaste embrace of souls whom love of purity binds together.”

It would be a great mistake, however, to imagine that their spiritual attachment had in it nothing of the senses. There is no reason to think that they were deprived of that tender natural attraction deep in the heart of those who love. Joseph had perhaps the presentiment that Mary, because of her mission, would one day be named by the whole world “cause of our joy.” In any case, now living with him in his home, where until death they would be together, she was and could be the constant cause of his joy.

And Mary? She treasured in her heart all Joseph’s words and acts of delicate thoughtfulness, and she gave him in return the joyous and devoted service of a loyal wife, foreseeing each desire, granting every wish. Their great delight was to see how best each could please the other. “I am a little servant,” said Mary. “No, God Himself appointed me to serve you.” And so it went. And now while Mary spun and hemmed swaddling clothes, Joseph fashioned the cradle wherein very soon the Son of the Most High, the King of Creation, the Savior of the world would lay His infant head.

PARISH EVENTS & NOTIFICATIONS

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED

The parish is in need of young men willing to train as acolytes. Some Latin comprehension, moral discipline, and a well kept appearance are required. Please email the office.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

NFP uses the physical signs placed by God within each woman's body to identify when pregnancy can occur. Monthly classes for three months. Tuition \$95.00 for the series. Classes are currently conducted virtually. Contact the Women's Health Center: 509-474-2400

SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE

The parish is looking for volunteers who would be interested in participating in the "Seven Sisters Apostolate." This Apostolate seeks to strengthen the Church by ensuring that a Holy Hour is prayed every day for the intention of the parish priest.

The Apostolate is for women, and involves a commitment of praying in the church one day a week. If you are interested, please contact Patty Parra at (509)993-2864.

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY

If you desire consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, please contact the sisters at 487-3963.

Every Friday evening at St. Patrick's from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., the sisters pray for our families and friends who are not in full communion with the Catholic church and no longer practicing their Catholic faith. Please join us.



NCYM YOUTH GROUP

Middle School, Tuesdays

6-8pm

High School, Wednesdays

6-8pm

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THE WORLD IS POISONED BY ERRONEOUS THEORIES, AND NEEDS TO BE TAUGHT SANE DOCTRINES, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO STRAIGHTEN WHAT IS CROOKED.

SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER CABRINI

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- G.K. Chesterton -



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