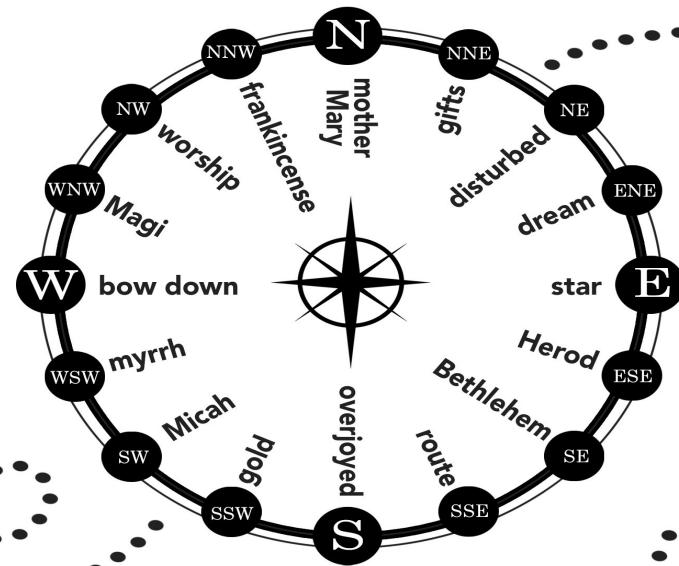


Puzzle!



Use the compass guide (and read Matthew 2) to answer questions about special visitors to young Jesus.

- Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? _____ (ESE)
- Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews? _____ (WNW)
- How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? _____ (NE)
- Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? _____ (SW)
- In what city would Christ be born? _____ (SE)
- King Herod lied to the wise men, telling them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? _____ (NW)
- What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? _____ (E)
- When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? _____ (S)
- Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His _____ (N)
- Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? _____ (W)
- Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus. _____ (SSW) _____ (NNW) _____ (WSW)
- These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as _____ (NNE)
- What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A _____ (ENE)
- The Magi had to return to their country by another _____ (SSE)

Answers: 1. Herod; 2. Magi; 3. disturbed; 4. Micah; 5. Bethlehem; 6. Bethlehem; 7. star; 8. overjoyed; 9. mother Mary; 10. bow down; 11. gold, frankincense, myrrh; 12. gifts; 13. dream; 14. route

@ChurchArt Online

PARISH NEWS & EVENTS



Christmas Mass Information

All Catholics are obligated to attend Mass for the *Fourth Sunday of Advent* during the regular weekend Mass times in addition to **Mass for the Christmas Holyday.**

Christmas Eve Mass
Sunday, December 24 at 7:30 PM
Christmas Day Mass
Monday, December 25 at 9:00 AM

Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
Monday, January 1 @ 10AM



January is *RESPECT LIFE* Month



Good Shepherd is collecting baby items for local crisis pregnancy centers during the month of January.

Accepted Donations include:

- Disposable diapers (newborn to size 4)
- baby wipes
- sleepers/onesies (newborn to 12 mo.)
- No Tears Baby Shampoo
- receiving blankets
- bibs/burp cloths
- baby towels & wash cloths

Due to health concerns all donations must be new items with original packaging/tags. Items can be placed in the bin in the commons area. For questions, contact Mary Ellen Bebermeyer at (757) 897-3219.

Holy Land Emergency Appeal

Bishop Barry C. Knestout has asked all parishes to conduct a special collection to be taken up for the benefit of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) and Pontifical Mission on the weekend of **December 30-31, 2023**. 100% of the funds collected will support high-priority, immediate emergency needs as well as long-term emergency needs to the children and families victimized by terrorism in the Middle East. Please be generous in your support of our brothers and sisters in need.



Food Pantry Needs for the Week of December 24
CEREAL OR OATMEAL

FAITH FORMATION



There are **NO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES** **December 24 & 31, 2023.** Take this time to gather with family and friends to share the true meaning of Christmas. See you in 2024!



Good Grief!!! Support Group Meeting

The next meeting of the *Good Grief!!! Support Group* at Good Shepherd will be on **Monday, January 8, 2024 at 5:00pm.** If you would like more information, please contact Deacon Stan at: DEACONSTAN4@gmail.com

Annual Diocesan Appeal



The dialogue of the Annunciation crackles with questions and shocking answers. "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son." (Luke 1:31) "How can this be?" (Luke 1:34) "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." (Luke 1:35) "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord." (Luke 1:38)

The Annunciation was a kind of verbal dance. It began with Gabriel's lead. It ended with the Son of Man dwelling in Mary. Renaissance paintings of the Annunciation sometimes show Mary in what's called a *contrapposto*: an asymmetrical stance of in which the line of the arms and shoulders balances, the line of the hips and legs. Mary's *contrapposto* posture conveys a sense of movement, reaction, and surprise...peace!

As we near the end of Advent, there is still time to support our Annual Diocesan Appeal. By giving, you can make more room for Christ to enter your life and allow the Holy Spirit to converse with you. Have you heard His voice lately? His voice communicates calm and balance while also asking for a response. We may find ourselves both surprised and strangely at peace when He speaks. Don't be afraid to ask and listen, as Mary did. Please respond generously. As the angel, Gabriel, told Mary, "Do not be afraid...for you have found favor with God." You have found His favor, too. He is coming!

"Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord." (Psalm 89)



The parish office will be CLOSED
December 25-27, 2023
and January 1, 2024
for the holidays.

*There will be weekday mass at Noon Tuesday-Friday next week *



The Roman Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd

300 Smithfield Boulevard, Smithfield, Virginia 23430

Website: www.cgsparish.org E-mail: admin@cgsparish.org

Father Tony's Email: pastor@cgsparish.org

Office: (757) 365-0579 Fax: (757) 365-0994 Rectory: (757) 542-3879

Office Hours: Monday—Friday 10AM-3PM

Mass Times: Saturday—5PM & Sunday—9AM

Weekday Mass Times: Tuesday—Friday at Noon

Adoration is on the 1st & 3rd Friday of each month.

Staff

- Pastor** - Fr. Tony Yllana, pastor@cgsparish.org
Admin Assistant - Vicki Dobbins, admin@cgsparish.org
Religious Education - Lara Detrich, formation@cgsparish.org
Music Director - Katarina Hackney, music@cgsparish.org
Youth Ministry – Scott Watterson, youthministry@cgsparish.org

Ministries

- Ministry to the Sick** - Deacon Stanley Stefanowicz
Pastoral Council - Joe Campo
Finance Council - Dan Falbe
Money Counters - Margaret Hickman
Building - Hart Smith and Tom Quick
Grounds - Tom Quick
Liturgical Ministries Head - Mark Lieberman
Altar Servers - Jerry & Martin Hackney
Children's Liturgy – Kathleen Day
Eucharistic Min (Sat) - Joan Nagy
Eucharistic Min (Sun) - Mark Lieberman
Funeral Mass Coordinator—Joan Nagy
Lectors - Michelle Romanello
Sacristan - Hart Smith
Ushers - Steve Reznick
Knights of Columbus - Shawn Huffaker, gk17335@vakofc.org
Ladies' Guild - Margaret Hickman
Men's Club - Bill Knapp, billknapp1985@yahoo.com
Parish Community Life - Debbi Gatti
Justice & Peace - Mary Ellen Bebermeyer
Haiti Committee & E-Bulletin Board - Dave Maltby
Divine Mercy Cenacle - Dara Murphy
Special Needs Ministry - Sue Ellebracht
Works of Mary - Johanna Arocho

Mission Statement

We, as diverse members of the Body of Christ, come together to serve God, the Catholic Church, and our community. We celebrate God in the Eucharist and the word, as we help each other in the growth of our faith, share our gifts and welcome everyone.

Vision Statement

To know and love God and grow in the Kingdom Of God together.

Inclement Weather - Fr. Tony plans to be at church to celebrate Mass. However, you are not obligated to come if travel is unsafe for you.

Parish Registration and Changes – Registration forms are available on the Church website. You may notify the office if you wish to register with, or be removed from the parish records, or if you have a change of address, telephone number, or email.

Baptisms – A preparation class for parents is required. Contact Lara Detrich at the church office to register.

Funerals – Contact the office if you would like to schedule a Funeral Service. The date and time must be approved by the priest.

Marriage – Registered parishioners must contact the parish at least 6 months prior to the intended date.

Reconciliation – Before Saturday Vigil Mass or by appointment.

Visitation of the Sick – Please call the office to arrange for communion, anointing of the sick, or when someone is ill or hospitalized.

December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 | Rom 16:25-27 | Lk 1:26-38

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” The angel Gabriel announces this in the Gospel today, and it is a phrase with which we are all familiar thanks to our recitation of the Hail Mary prayer. Although some may be comforted by such a message and its angelic messenger, it is troubling to Mary because the angel goes on to tell her she will conceive and bear the Son of God. Thinking practically, Mary is being told the impossible will happen – who wouldn’t be troubled? And yet Mary offers herself: “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Despite her fear and trepidation, Mary went on to answer God’s call and do his will. Our Blessed Mother became a great example of fortitude at that moment, as she exemplified what it means to step outside of our own uncertainty and trust God completely. Although doing God’s will can be difficult at times, St. Paul reminds us in his Letter to the Romans that we can ask God for the strength to say “yes” in spite of our fears.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Up until today, December has probably been a whirlwind. Trees and lights, ornaments, parties and presents – all these things help to kick off “the most wonderful time of year” beginning soon after Thanksgiving. Come Dec. 26, however, for many, the decorations become a nuisance and Christmas trees are out on the curb for pickup. Thank goodness for our Catholic faith because for us, Christmas is just beginning! Mary didn’t say “may it be done to me” only to forget about it the next day. No, in the coming months, the Blessed Mother nurtured the baby Jesus in her womb, anticipating the arrival of her firstborn and the Son of God. And on that blessed Christmas night, her work as the Mother of God was only just beginning. So, as we anticipate the arrival of the Christ Child, we are joyful that *our* Christmas season continues until we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord on January 8. Let us use this time to draw closer to God and make every effort in the new year to do his will.

SING *Angels, announce with shouts of mirth*

*Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*



Gaety Images/Adam Gohhauff

LITURGY AND MINISTRY

Today's Readings:

Today's readings make evident the goodness of the Lord, and that he is the source of all blessings. The Lord promises to build a house for David – one that will last forever. And from the lineage of David comes Jesus, God himself, to dwell among us. He is our shelter, our bodies are his temple, and his kingdom endures forever. We will soon celebrate the feast of his Incarnation and Nativity, while awaiting still, with joyful hope, the time when he will come again.

Gospel Focus:

God is the font of all blessings and salvation.



"Encounter the Joy of the Gospel and Set the World Ablaze"

EVANGELIZED PEOPLE...

Are intentional about developing their relationship with the triune God.

FATHER'S CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Adults: When have you followed the example of Mary and said, "Let it be done to me as you say"?

Children: Is there something hard you need to do this week? What might make it easier?

PRAYER AND VOCATIONS

Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions for the Month of December



Evangelization: For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Pope Tweets:

"Heaven doesn't value what you have, but what you give."

Please Remember in Prayer:

Barbara Bonney, Gene Chappell, Justin Evans, Ellen Gauthier, Leslie Lunger, Christopher Morris, Dara Murphy, Betty Nagy, Mary Pasko, Elizabeth Perry, Alice Reece, Debbie Steiger, Marcella Stratman, Irene White, Thomas Wunder and Brandon Zakaras

Today's Reflection

Choosing that special person



If you were to ask a married couple how they came to fall in love, or asked two good friends how they came to be friends, they may have difficulty answering and might say something like, "It just happened." In one sense that may be true. In another sense it didn't just happen. If two people are in a significant relationship with each other, be it marriage or friendship, it is because they have chosen each other. Why does someone choose one person rather than another as a spouse or friend? Why does someone choose to share his or her life with someone else? This is the mystery of human freedom, human preference. The more significant relationships cannot be forced. Love is freely bestowed by one person on another; the other freely receives what is bestowed and freely reciprocates, and a new relationship is born. There is a depth about all that.

If there is mystery in the relationship of one human being with another, even more so in the relationship between God and us. Why did God choose Mary to be the mother of His Son? Why this particular woman in this small village at this particular time of human history? It was the mysterious freedom and preference of God. Yet, there is a difference between God's choice of Mary and the choice any one of us might make of another. When any one of us chooses another to love or to befriend, there is always, of necessity, an exclusive element to that choice. We choose this person rather than any number of others. Although we choose several people in the course of our lives in each case our choice of one excludes others.

God's choice of Mary was not exclusive in that sense. In choosing Mary, He was choosing all of us. He chose Mary for all our sakes. God chose her to carry God's Son on behalf of us all, because her future child was God's gift to us all. That is why Mary's response to God's choice of her was not just a matter that concerned herself. It concerned us all. We all had a vested interest in how she responded. Her response would also be our response. In a sense we looked to her to make an appropriate response on behalf of us all to God's choice of us.

The good news is that Mary did not let us down. Although initially disturbed and perplexed by the message, she eventually surrendered fully to that mysterious choice of God. Having been graced in this mysterious way, she responded wholeheartedly, "Let it be to me according to your word." God freely chose her, and she in turn chose to place her freedom at God's service. God's choice of Mary, and her choice of God in response had the most wonderful consequences for all of us. She went on to sing, "the Almighty has done great things for me." And because of her response to God's choice, we can all sing, "the Almighty has done great things for us." We have all been graced through Mary's response to God's choice of her.

(associationofcatholicpriests.ie/homily-resource/24-dec-2023-4th-Sunday-of-advent/)

Considering a call to the priesthood

"Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God." Consider following Christ more closely as a priest or in consecrated life. Talk to your priest or reach out to the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, or write: vocations@richmonddiocese.org.



**December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent**



Readings for the Week

Monday, December 25—Christmas Day
Is 52:7-10; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18

Tuesday, December 26—St. Stephen
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22

Wednesday, December 27—St. John
1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a and 2-8

Thursday, December 28—The Holy Innocents
1 Jn 1:5—2:2; Mt 2:13-18

Friday, December 29
1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:22-35

Saturday, December 30
1 Jn 2:12-17; Lk 2:36-40

Sunday, December 31—Feast of the Holy Family
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40

Daily Mass & Intention Schedule

Mon.	December 25	9:00 am	Available
Tues.	December 26	Noon	Available
Wed.	December 27	Noon	+Eleanor Wunder
Thurs.	December 28	Noon	Available
Fri.	December 29	Noon	Available
Sat	December 30	5:00 pm	+Courtney Horvath
Sun.	December 31	9:00 am	Good Shepherd Comm.

Parishioners are invited to remember their loved ones in a special way through prayers. If you would like to have a Mass celebrated in memory of a loved one or a special intention, please contact the parish office. **Stipends may be turned in with the collection or mailed to the office. Checks should be made out to Church of the Good Shepherd. Please write "mass intention" on the memo line of your check. Thank you.**



Church open for personal prayer:

Tuesday—Friday 11AM to 1PM*

*Since there will be weekday masses December 25-29, the church will only be open during the mass times.



Online Giving

We invite you to check out our

On-Line Giving Program.

Visit our parish website: www.cgsparish.org
click on 'Give' then 'On-Line Giving'

If you are new to our parish, you can find the registration form on our website www.cgsparish.org or contact the parish office.



Weekly Offering for:

December 16 & 17, 2023

Regular Offering needed weekly: \$ 6,250.00

(The following totals include E-Giving)

OFFERTORY:

Regular Offertory	\$ 5,823.16
Holy Days	\$ 40.00

ADDITIONAL FUNDS COLLECTED:

Mortgage	\$ 738.00
Haiti	\$ 640.00
Barron Dempsey	\$ 110.00
Catholic Virginian	\$ 304.00
Other	\$ 407.00

Mortgage Balance \$ 18,692.83

MASS ATTENDANCE

Saturday	92
Sunday	217

Thank you for your continued support of the Church of the Good Shepherd!

Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Gifts to Our Church

Upcoming Special Collections

December 25—Christmas

December 25—Catholic Charities

December 31—Holy Land Emergency Appeal

January 7—Mortgage



The AED is located in the Commons by the fire extinguisher outside the office.

