ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC CHURCH

(ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON)

Staffed by the Josephites since 1952

FOURTHNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 22, 2024



4600 REED ROAD, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77051-2857

Parish Office: 713.738.2311 Fax: 713.738.3337

Emergency Contact: 409.963.5633 CCE: **713.731.2775** Parish Hall: 713.731.2725 SVdP Food Pantry: 713.731.2716

WEB Address: http://www.sfxhouston.com E-MAIL: stfrancishou@sfxhouston.com

Parish Office Hours: Tues-Wed 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Fri 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Closed on Mon & Thur

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/StFrancisXavierCatholicChurchHouston YouTube: St. Francis Xavier Houston

PASTOR:

Vy. Rev. Michael Thompson, SSJ

DEACONS:

Michael V. Jenkins Darryl K. Drenon

Frank J. Laugermann (Retired)

PARISH SECRETARY

Shirley M. Foreman....x113

DIR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Unella Baber.....x103

ADULT FORMATION (OCIA)

Deacon Michael V. Jenkins

SVdP FOOD PANTRY

Mandy Wheatfall 713.731.2716

CONTRIBUTIONS/MEMBERSHIP

Agnes Thompson

HALL MANAGER

Hilton S. Williams 713.542.0120

PLANT MANAGER/MAINTENANCE

Curtis Jones

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

Sat: Vigil 5:00 p.m.

Sun: 7:30 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Weekday (Tue - Fri): 7:00 a.m. First Friday: 7:00 a.m.

Holy Days: 7:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

CONFESSIONS

One (1) hour before Weekend Masses or by appointment

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED **SACRAMENT:**

First Friday: 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

CHOIR REHEARSALS:

Adult Choirs

Wednesdays: 6:30p.m. Thursdays: 7:00p.m.

Youth Choir

4th Saturdays: 12:00 Noon

CHOIR DIRECTORS:

Jerry Givens 281.772.9276 Daniel Guerrero 281.723.9948 Mikayla Peugh

BIBLE STUDY/ADULT CATHECHISM: SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER

NOTICE

MISSION STATEMENT

We, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as expressed in the beliefs and traditions of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Through a passion for righteousness and consciousness of duty to God, we uphold the faithful worship of God in our mission to our church family and the Sunnyside Community.

> **VISITATION OF THE SICK Communion** for the sick and shut-in is available. Please call the parish office to make arrangements.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please call the parish office for information. Preparation classes are required for parents and godparents. Classes are held on the 1st and 2nd Thursdays of the month from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Call the Parish Office to register for the class.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Please contact a priest a minimum of six months prior to your proposed wedding date.

WELCOME VISITORS/NEWCOMERS

To register, call or come by the parish office or visit our website at:www.sfxhouston.com



MASS INTENTIONS

SAT. 12/21/2024 5:00PM

James Lacy, Jr. (D)

Florence & Wanda

SUN. 12/22/2024 7:30AM

Ezzard Sam (D) – Lydia & Roger Sam SUN. 12/22/2024 10:00AM Devin Taylor (D) – Tywanna Navy

Devin Taylor (D) – Tywanna Navy **MON.** 12/23/2024

(Pastor's Private Mass)

Thelma Archer (D)

Herbert "Red" & Dolores "Dee" Archer TUE. 12/24/2024 5:00PM

Christmas Vigil Mass

People of the Parish

WED. 12/25/2024 10:00AM *Christmas Day Mass*

People of the Parish

THUR 12/26/2024 7:00AM Cornelia Denise Pickney (D)-M. Chaney

FRI 12/27/2024

Zyra Clark Thomas (D)-Patricia Session SAT 12/28/2024 5:00PM

People of the Parish



Jo Ann Edwards passed away on December 17, 2024 at the age of 86 yrs. Mrs. Edwards is the Mother of Michael Rochon. A Funeral Mass is scheduled for Saturday, December 28, 2024 at 10:00am. Eternal rest grant unto her soul.

Gwendolyn Myers passed away on December 14, 2024. Eternal rest grant unto her soul.

Victor Charles passed away on December 18, 2024 at the age of 85 yrs. Funeral arrangements are pending. Eternal rest grant unto his soul.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS



DECEMBER 21-DECEMBER 22

5:00pm.....John & Mary Richard
7:30am....Herbert "Red" &
Delores "Dee" Archer

10:00am...... David & Valencia Wiltz



Donald Abraham, Mary Jane Albert, Clara Barras, Mike & Beverly Bedford, Hazel S. Brown, Tommy Burton, Amber

Byas, Julius Cadoree, Nancy Calvin, Nathaniel Campbell, Sterling Certenberg, James Chambers, Dalton Cooper Jr, Frank Davis Sr, Rev. Henry Davis SSJ, Marlene Davis, Dalton Dean Jr, Julia Dean, Lois Epps, Edward & Lillie Etienne, James Forbes, Lawrence Frank, Latoya Gallow, Anthony Gobert, Betty Goodwin, Beulah Hadrick, Mason Harrison, Alvin J. Hebert, Clyde Henderson, Donald Henderson, Diane Houston, Tommy Guillory, Jr., Dcn Irvin Johnson, Brooke Joseph, Shirley Ann Joseph, JoAnn LaSane, Freda Lawdins, Shirley Lawdins, Roy Lee, Hilary Ledet, Hazel Lewis, Laurenzia Lewis, Eugene Mallery, Charles Martin, Shannon Martin, Florence McChristian, Diane Miles, Dorothy Milstead, Cookie Mooring, Vy. Rev. William L. Norvel SSJ, Carolyn Ollison, Cynethia Pichon, Percy Pichon Sr, Robin Pichon-Mosley, Catherine Pierre, Michael Pierre, Mildred Pierre, Marcelle Prevost, Melody Ratcliff, Effie Rems, Mary Richard, Elise Richmond, Christine Roberts, Wilson Robertson, Louis Robinson, Oliver Rose, Brian Russell, Grace Russell, Vv. Rev. Michael K. Saah-Buckman SSJ, Kerry Samuels, Joyce Smith, Joyce Stagg, James Stelly, Jeffery Steptoe, Mackenzie Swanks, Kennedi Swanks, Erma Taylor, Melvin Thomas, Gemma Walcott, Agnes Williams, Patricia Williams, Eddie Jean Wilson, Janice Woods, and all the sick and shut-in in our parish family.

Let us Know: Call the Parish Office when you and/or a family member are ill, in the hospital, or having surgery. After 30 days call the Parish Office to remain on the Sick List.

Lord, we pray for all our current military service members who put their own lives on the line every day to protect our families and our country.

Army: Barbara Baber, Sade Beck, Wadie Troy Butler, Patrick Clay Jr, Kalah A. Guidry, Angel Guillory, Geraldine Guillory, Kerry Hubbard, Kory Hubbard, LaTroy King, Gary Christian Robertson, Anthony Lamar Smith II, Jordan T. McCorkle. Essence L. Casteel

Navy: Alvin Balthazar, Debreanna Brown, Jermaine Ceaser, Kevin Crockett, Alexander Guillory Jr, Courtney Harris, Nia D. Hawkins-Camp, Xavier Henry, Randolph J. Navy III, Anthony N. Russell

Air Force: Samuel Houston, Roderick Jones, Joshua Creeks, Joffre Lander

Marines: Reginald Ward

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Drawing closer to Christmas, we sing, "Lord, make us turn to you; let us

see your face and we shall be saved." Micah turned to Bethlehem and saw the face of the Messiah. Elizabeth saw and heard her pregnant cousin and recognized the face of the Lord. Even John the Baptist in his mother's womb turned to Mary's voice and leaped for joy. May we see the face of God in God's word, in the spirit of the season, and in the people we know and love.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday − **December 22**

4th Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:1-4
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

■Monday – December 23

Saint John of Kanty, Priest Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 Psalm 25:4-5, 8-10, 14 Luke 1:57-66

■ Tuesday – December 24

Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29
Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
Matthew 1:1-25 or 1:18-25

☐ Wednesday – December 25

Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 98:1-6 Hebrews 1:1-6

John 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

■ Thursday – December 26

Saint Stephen, The First Martyr Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 Psalm 31:3-4, 6, 8, 16-17 Matthew 10:17-22

☐ Friday December 27

Saint John, Apostle, Evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:1,2-8

Saturday December 28

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
1 John 1:5—2:2
Psalm 124:2-5, 7-8
Matthew 2:13-18



December 23 thru December 30

NO CCE CLASSES

January 6......9:30am

PreK – 5th CCE Classes Resume January 11......6:00pm

6th – 10th CCE Classes Resume

Discussing Sexuality with Your Children

Parents, you're invited to a special two-day event to help you confidently and lovingly guide your children through conversations about human sexuality. Rooted in St. John Paul II's inspiring Theology of the Body, this program will explore the beauty of human dignity as children of God and provide practical parenting tools to approach this important topic. Together, we'll engage in thoughtful presentations, supportive small groups discussions, and open Q&A sessions designed to empower you with faith-filled guidance. January 17-18, 2025 from 8:30am 4:00pm

St. Jerome Catholic Church, 8825 Kempwood Drive, Houston, TX. Registration \$150 per couple or \$100 per individual. For details



and registration, scan the QR code or contact us at 281-741-8710.

Email familylifehouston@archgh.org, or visit www.arch.org/familylife.

Christus Vivit: Young Adult Leader Training

Christus Vivit is a training program offered by the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry for those serving as leaders in parish-based young adult ministry. Young Adults who complete this course will gain an understanding of the basic principles of young adult ministry, practical skills needed to serve on a leadership team, and helpful tools needed to create a successful young adult ministry at his/her parish. This will be a 5 week course held on Wednesdays starting on January 29, 2025 at St. Dominic Chancery (2403 Holcombe Houston) from 7:00-8:30p.m. Registration deadline is January 27, 2025. Cost to attend is \$25. For more information and to register, contact the Office of Young Adult & Campus Ministry yacm@archgh.org, Call 713-741-8778, or online at www.archgh.org/vaworkshops.



Dates to Remember

December 22, 2024 4th Sunday of Advent **Parish Christmas Party**

December 24, 2024 - Christmas Eve No Morning Mass Christmas Vigil Mass – 5:00pm

December 25, 2024-Christmas Day Christmas Day Mass - 10:00am

We are the Lord's



2024 The **DSF** Campaign ends on December 31st. As of December 10, 2024, we

are now 56% paid toward our goal of \$69,500.00. This represents 132 donors out of 869 households. Thank you to the first-time donors! To Pledge/Pay Online visit: www.archgh.org/dsf



As we approach the end of the year, let's take time to reflect on the Blessings we have received. You

are invited to commit to giving back in the new year by completing a Call to Stewardship Intention Card. These cards were mailed in your January Envelope packet. If you do not receive envelopes in the mail, we have yellow intention cards in the vestibule of the church and the Parish Office. These cards will be collected on the weekend of January 4th & 5th.

Annual Giving

If you need a copy of your 2024 contribution Statements statement for tax

purposes, please call the Parish Office at (713) 738-2311 after December 31st. Statements will be sent only upon request.

Please note: Contributions received after December 31st will not be reflected on statements for 2024.

In-person Mass attendance on Saturday, December 14th and Sunday, December 15th was 429 and the 7:30am Sunday Mass Please join us via YouTube Livestream, or bring a friend to come worship with us in the church.

Did you know that Catholics can make an Act of Spiritual Communion?

When unable to receive Holy Communion, pray the prayer below:

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, Come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from Amen

Stewardship Reflection

That we take time to properly prepare ourselves to celebrate Mass each Sunday. "For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." (Luke 1:44) When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading at Mass, do you "leap for joy?" If not, don't blame the lecturer or priest, rather look inside yourself. What are you doing to grow in friendship with Jesus? How do you prepare for Mass each week? Do you just show up and expect to be entertained? As the Body of Christ, we are called to be active participants, not just passive observers.



Incarnate Word Academy Inspire Day Girls STEM Day at IWA

Sat. Jan. 25th | 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Middle School Girls Grades 6 - 8 Cost: \$15 (includes a STEM Day t-shirt, RSVP lunch, activity fees) www.bit.ly/iwastem No Later Than January 1, 2025.





FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (c)

December 22, 2024

God Can Work in Unexpected Ways

Happy Sunday!

Today, we celebrate the last Sunday of Advent, a time of anticipation and reflection before Christmas. The Gospel introduces us to Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visiting her cousin Elizabeth, who is also expecting a miraculous child. This encounter reveals how God works in unexpected ways and invites us to say "yes" to His call, no matter how unprepared we might feel.

The first reading from Micah foretells Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah. This small and seemingly insignificant town was chosen for a monumental purpose. Similarly, God chose King David, the youngest and least likely of Jesse's sons, to be Israel's greatest king. Both examples remind us that God doesn't see as humans do; He looks into the heart and calls the least likely to do His greatest work.

This theme carries into the Gospel, where God uses Mary, a young virgin, and Elizabeth, an older woman thought to be barren, to bring forth Jesus and John the Baptist. Despite their circumstances, both women embraced God's call with faith, allowing His plan to unfold through them.

What About Us?

God still calls us today. His call might be to serve as a Lector, sing in the choir, or care for someone in need. Often, we hesitate because we feel unqualified, fear others' opinions, or think we're too busy. Yet, as Mary and David show us, God doesn't call the perfect; He perfects the call.

When Mary said "yes," she opened the door for the

Savior of the world. Her willingness to trust God despite her fears changed history. What if she had said no? God's plan invites each of us to participate, and our "yes" can have a profound impact we may never fully realize.

This Advent, consider how God might be calling you. Maybe He's asking for something small but meaningful, or perhaps something that feels overwhelming. Trust that, like Mary and Elizabeth, God will work through you if you are willing.

A Prayerful Reflection

As we prepare for Christmas, let us remember that God calls us not because of our status, skills, or achievements, but because of our hearts. He works through us in unexpected ways, often when we feel least prepared.

When God reveals Himself and calls us, may we, like Mary, respond with a resounding "yes." May this Christmas season inspire us to trust in His plan and embrace the unexpected ways He works in our lives.

May God bless you and your loved ones as we journey together toward the joy of Christmas.

Yours in Christ,

Deacon Darryl

Vatican Says No 'Yahweh' In Songs, Prayers at Catholic Masses

The Vatican has reiterated a directive that the name of God revealed in the tetragrammaton YHWH is not to be pronounced in Catholic liturgy or in music. Catholics at worship should neither sing nor pronounce the name of God as "Yahweh," the Vatican has said, citing the authority of Jewish and Christian traditions.

The instruction came in a June 29 letter to Catholic Bishops conferences around the world from the Vatican's top liturgical body, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, by an explicit "directive" of Pope Benedict XVI. "In recent years, the practice has crept in of pronouncing the God of Israel's proper name," the letter noted, referring to the four-consonant Hebrew Tetragrammaton, YHWH.

That name is commonly pronounced as "Yahweh," though other versions include "Jaweh" and "Yehovah."

But such pronunciation violates long-standing Jewish tradition, the Vatican reminded bishops.

"As an expression of the infinite greatness and majesty of God, (the name) was held to be unpronounceable and hence was replaced during the reading of sacred Scripture by means of the use of an alternate name: 'Adonai,' which means 'Lord,'" the Congregation said.

That practice continued with Christianity, the letter explained, recalling the "church's tradition, from the beginning, that the sacred Tetragrammaton was never pronounced in the Christian context nor translated into any of the languages into which the Bible was translated."

Invoking the Vatican document from 2001, the Congregation reminded bishops that the name "Yahweh" in Catholic worship should be replaced by the Latin "Dominus" (Lord) or a word "equivalent in meaning" in the local language.

The Vatican's move will require changes in a number of hymns and prayers currently used in American churches, but not in the Mass itself, said the U.S. bishops' top liturgical official

The Catholic Church does not use the name "Yahweh" or "Jehovah" in Catholic liturgy for a number of reasons, including:

• Jewish tradition

The name was considered unpronounceable in Jewish tradition as a way to express God's majesty and greatness.

Preserving holiness

The Catholic Church has traditionally used "the Lord" or equivalent to preserve God's holiness.

• Early Christian practice

Early Christians addressed God as "Lord" because the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures replaced YHWH with the Greek word kyrios, which means "Lord".

• Jesus's practice

Jesus, a pious Jewish man, would not have addressed God as Yahweh in public. Instead, he used the term "Abba", which is a familiar form of "Father".

• Avoiding the tetragrammaton YHWH

The Catholic Church does not use the tetragrammaton YHWH in liturgical celebrations, songs, or prayers. This is due to Jewish tradition, which holds that the name was unpronounceable to express God's majesty and greatness. The name was replaced with "Adonai," which means "Lord".

• Using "Jehovah". Not transliterating the divine name

The Catholic Church does not transliterate the divine name in liturgical texts and translations. Instead, it uses "the Lord" or an equivalent to preserve the holiness of God.

By Catholic Music Network.com Catholic Online (https://www.catholic.org) 8/26/2008 Published



2024 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DONATIONS



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Alexis Alfred M/M R. L. Henderson

Clara Ames

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M/M Charles Lewis & Family Tanya Melissa Lewis and Ruby Gardner

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Tiffnie & Kaden M/M Hilton & Virginia Williams

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Susie Wiltz Anthony Johnny Wiltz, Sr. / Wiltz Family

Adeline & Ronald Young Malveaux & Young Family



THANK YOU for joining us!

Because of your SUPPORT, the Unit 138

FOOD DRIVE mission was a SUCCESS!!!

632

Non-Perishable Food items were donated to **St. Francis Xavier Food Pantry**

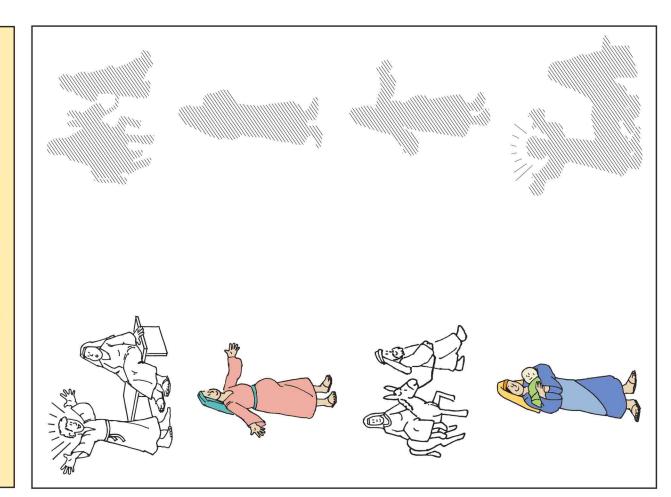






Mary was blessed.

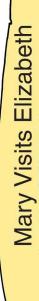
Match the shadows.



Children's Worship Bulletin

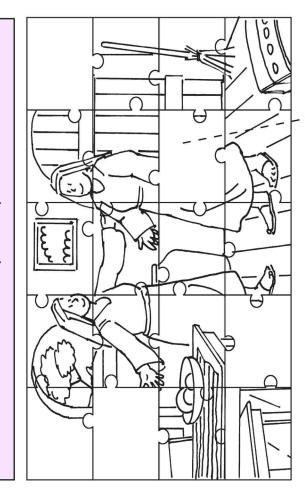
Ages 3+

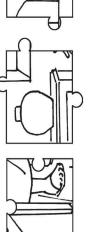
December 22, 2024 • Luke 1:39-45

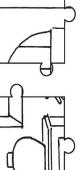


Mary went to visit Elizabeth.

Match the puzzle pieces.



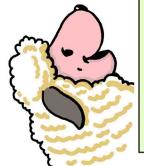






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Elizabeth declare to Mary? What else did

and column to find the letters to fill in the blanks. Add the numbers from the intersecting row

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Children's Worship **Bulletin**

Ages 7+

December 22, 2024 • Luke 1:39-45

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Mary went to visit Elizabeth. What happened when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting?

Solve the puzzle below to fill in the blanks.









αi

က

4.

games.childrensbulletins.com

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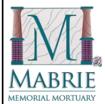


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