

St. Gertrude Chicago

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Combined Bulletin for
**Fourth Sunday of Advent/
Christmas/The Holy Family of
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**
*Sunday, December 24 and
Sunday, December 31, 2023*

From Fr. Mike

As we approach quickly the great feast of Christ's birth, our hearts are filled with gratitude and anticipation for the joyous occasion of Christmas. This season is not just about the exchange of gifts and festive decorations but a profound reflection on the ultimate gift—the birth of Jesus Christ our Savior.

In a world that often feels divided, Christmas serves as a reminder of the unifying power of hope and love. The nativity story, with its humble beginnings in a manger, speaks to the simplicity and purity of the message of our salvation.

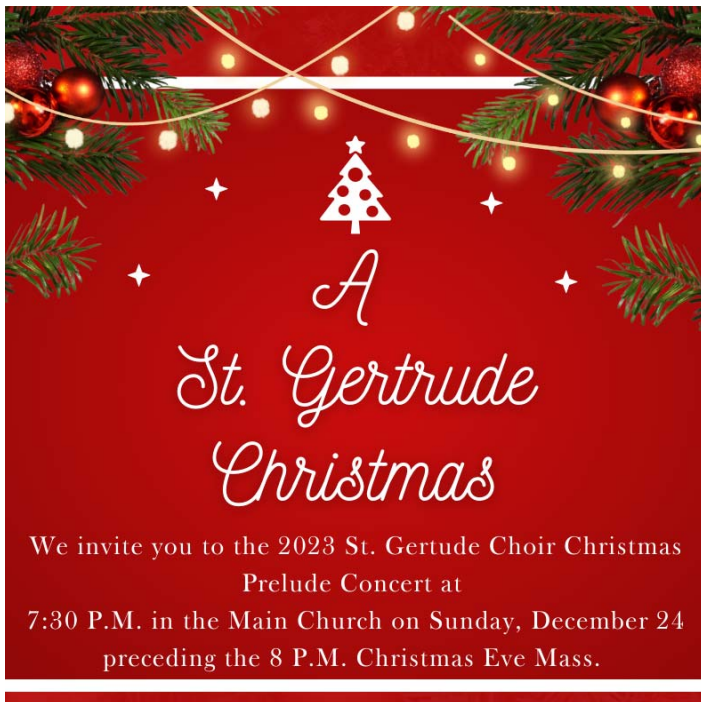
As we come together as a community of believers here at St. Gertrude's, we welcome to the table of the Savior all who gather. No matter what you bring to the table, no matter what circumstances or situation you find yourself in, we embrace you with a spirit of unity and peace. For this is the very reason our Savior Jesus was born into the world.

This past year has been filled with ups and downs, highs and lows, from the war in Ukraine, Palestine, and Israel, violence on our city streets, to sickness, pain, and suffering. Yet through all of it, the Christmas story teaches us resilience and the transformative power of faith. Let the light of the Bethlehem star guide us through any moments of darkness, reassuring us that hope prevails even in the most challenging of times.

During this holy season of giving, I am reminded how generous this parish community has been and continues to be. Your outreach to the hungry and poor through Care for Real, our Refugee Ministry's welcome to the family from Venezuela, and your ongoing support of our Religious Education, NCA, youth group, and Heart to Heart are all signs of your embrace of the Gospel of Jesus.

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior and move into the year 2024, I trust this we will continue to be a beacon of light, spreading warmth and acceptance of all people, no matter what creed, color, orientation, or way of life.

I am so very grateful to be a part of this family of faith! I wish you a blessed and joy filled Christmas and a New Year filled with peace and good health.



Christmas and New Year's Schedule

We'll have our usual 8:00 am and 10:30 am Mass times on Sunday, December 24 and Sunday, December 31; however, there are no Gym Masses.

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24

- 5:00 pm Family Mass (live-streamed) - Music by the Dunne family & Jennifer Dunne students
- 7:30 -8:00 pm Choral music (live-streamed)
- 8:00 pm Vigil Mass (live-streamed) - St. Gertrude Choir (Matt Heimer, Cantor), Jim Szmurlo, Trumpet & Violin, JT O'Toole, Double Bass

Christmas Day

Monday, December 25

- 8:00 am - Kathryn Flynn, Cantor, Mary Horan, Piano, John Horan, Guitar, Jo Sisson, Violin
- 10:30 am (live-streamed) - Kristina Vragovic, Cantor, Kathryn Flynn, Piano, JT O'Toole, Double Bass, Jo Sison, Violin, Augustine Melecio, Trumpet
- Rectory office closed

Tuesday, December 26

- Rectory office closed
- 7:30 am - Mass

New Year's Eve

Sunday, December 31

- 5:00 pm - Mass

New Year's Day - Mary, Mother of God

Monday, January 1

- Rectory office closed
- 8:00 am - Mass
- 10:30 am - Mass (live-streamed)

How to Watch our Live-Streamed Masses

Look to view our live-streamed Masses and the Christmas Eve prelude? Watch them on our parish's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/stgertrudechicago/live/>!



Growing in Faith: *Christmas Reflection*

You've heard it, probably as often as I have: Christmas is for

kids. The idea is that Christmas is a time when the eyes of children grow large with wonder and delight, that youngsters are fascinated with all the tinsel and all the colorful wrapping and the story of a baby named Jesus.

That's certainly true. What's also true — and I'm especially aware of it this year — is that Christmas is a time for adults to watch kids being kids. To tap into the wild joy that is frequently on display in this season, and to recognize the agony of a meltdown because, after all, it's hard being a kid.

For me, this is a time of watching my four-year-old granddaughter Emma, and her one-year-old brother Noah, and their 18-month-old cousin Ulysses as they are growing into themselves. (Of course, every day of the year is for that.)

And it's kind of poignant because this is the time of year when I'm most aware that Jesus once was a toddler, and once was an 18-month-old, and once was a four-year-old. Like these three kids — like children in your own family or those you see at Walmart — Jesus was overjoyed at times and overwhelmed at others and whiny and giggly and lost in his thoughts.

Jesus was once an innocent little kid, and so was I, and so were you. So were all those people we meet in the course of our day, even those who may disagree with us. Each one of us was loveable. And we still are.

~ Patrick T. Reardon



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from Staff/Christmas Blessing

Thank you for choosing to be a part of St. Gertrude parish and helping to making 2023 such a wonderful year!

Great churches don't just happen; they are created and nurtured by active, generous parishioners. We are so grateful for each and every person in our community of faith. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your loved ones and may 2024 be filled with blessings and joy!

~ Father Mike, Fr. Paul, and the staff of St. Gertrude parish

A Christmas Blessing by Wilda English

God grant you the light of Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ.

A Message from Heart to Heart

The Heart to Heart and Lending Closet offices will be closed for Christmas on Tuesday, December 26 and Thursday, December 28.

Laurie and Sr. Susan are so grateful for the volunteers, donors, and all the friends and members of our community. You have shown us what Incarnation -- Jesus being born among us -- is all about. We wish everyone much joy during this season of Light and Love.



No Gym Mass Until January 2024

There is no Gym Mass on Sunday, December 24, Christmas Day, or Sunday, December 31.

Please join us in church for the 10:30 am Mass.

Women's Friendship Club Luncheon

The Women's Friendship Club will be lunching at the Greenhouse Inn Restaurant at Misericordia on Thursday, January 11 at 11:30 am.

The restaurant is located at 6300 N. Ridge Avenue.



JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF LOVE, REFLECTION,
AND FUN AS YOU CELEBRATE, RENEW, AND
STRENGTHEN YOUR SACRED COMMITMENT TO YOUR
LIFE PARTNER.

A Night of Romance

Saturday, February 10

ST. GERTRUDE CHURCH & SOCIAL HALL

5:00 PM: MASS AND RENEWAL
OF COMMITMENT
6:00 PM: COCKTAILS AND
APPETIZERS
7:15 PM: DINNER

8:15 PM: SHORT PRESENTATION,
DANCING, SOCIALIZING
8:30 PM -10 PM: DANCING AND
SOCIALIZING

You're Invited to An Evening of Romance

Save the date! St. Gertrude's Marriage Ministry is planning a special evening for couples on Saturday, February 10. The night will celebrate, renew, and strengthen your sacred commitment to your life partner.

All couples are welcome, but space is limited!

The night will start off with Mass, followed by cocktails, appetizers, dinner, and dancing. Dim lighting, romantic decorations and great food will set the mood for an evening for you and your partner to reconnect and socialize with other couples in the Social Hall.

The cost is \$125 per couple and includes dinner, beer, and wine. Tickets will be sold beginning December 18th at the rectory. Gift certificates are available - this would be a great Christmas present!

For more information, contact Fr. Mike at mgabriel@stgertrudechicago.org or Sherl Patterson at spatterson@stgertrudechicago.org.

Sign Up for Emails from St. Gertrude Parish!

If you would like to receive emails from our parish or your email address has changed, please let us know! Send an email to news@stgertrudechicago.org and specify if you would prefer just the weekly bulletin, distributed on Thursday afternoons, or our daily prayer/reflection with notices about upcoming parish events.

Thank You to our Singers and Musicians

Dear St. Gertrude Family,

I wanted to take a moment to express my thanks and gratitude to all of you (both parishioners and visitors) who took time out of your busy schedules to contribute your musical gifts and talents to the multitude of Christmas Masses this year.

This being my first year as Director of Music here at St. Gertrude parish, I have been swarmed in support and enthusiasm from all sides - from numerous volunteer musicians, to those I am fortunate enough to be able to hire on a professional spectrum. I love being able to build something musical, worship-worthy, and collaborate with some of Chicago's finest, all in the tight-knit community of Edgewater.

Thank you all for making my transition more personal and memorable (I won't say easy!) during this busy time of year.

Planning has already started for Holy Week, 2024 - until then, I'll see you from behind the Bechstein!

For those of you who weren't able to join us this season or who are considering contributing some of your musical gifts and talents to the St. Gertrude parish community, never hesitate to reach out or email me! New choir members, cantors, and instrumentalists are always welcome, and always needed.

I look forward to meeting many more of you in 2024.

~ Kathryn Flynn



Year-End Giving

As you consider your year-end charitable donations, please think about making an additional contribution to St. Gertrude. Your generosity has helped support us during these past trying years.

We hope that you will continue to support us now and into the coming year as we carry out our service and our ministries to our parish and our community.

Information about making a donation can be found at <https://stgertrudechicago.org/donate-to-st-gertrude>.

Thank you so much for all you have done and are doing!



Christmas 2023 Letter From Cardinal Cupich

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also celebrate the birth of our hope. When he came among us as one like us in all things but sin, he lifted us up to new and transformed life. In fact, he opened for us the way to share in the very life of God. One of the prayers of the Mass gives us these words: "...may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who

humbled himself to share in our humanity."

The struggles that we face in our personal lives and in our wounded world do not have the last word. We are meant for more. We are meant for full and eternal life. I pray that our celebration of the Lord's birth will remind us of the glory that will carry us beyond the challenges, sometimes truly significant challenges that mark our lives and our world.

We must also remember that the Lord did not just come among us once and long ago. He continues to walk with us as we walk with each other. Our celebrations of the Eucharist remind of that. And he will never abandon his people. He is now and always Emmanuel, our God with us. Our journey is his journey. And this year, having celebrated the first of two synods of the Church, we are especially aware that he accompanies us as we accompany one another.

In this holy season, I invite you to pray. Take time, create a quiet space, look on the creche, read the gospels, and allow yourself to know that he is near and that he walks with you. If you do so, I can assure you that you will know his peace. Then, take what you learn from him to your family, to your workplace, to your community, and to entire world. The gift of Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, is not something we can hold for ourselves. We are called and destined to share it with others.

As I celebrate the Eucharist, I will remember you and pray that you will have a living sense of the Lord among us, the one who walks with us and draws us forward into the fullness of his life.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Blase J. Cupich*

Cardinal Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago



Thank You for Supporting our Greenery Sale!

Thank you to those who bought trees, wreaths and garland from our annual greenery sale! All proceeds went to St. Gertrude's ministries.

Special thanks to Robert Clarke who generously volunteered as our delivery driver. We appreciate his hard work!

~ Eduardo Soto, Business Manager



Thank You for Donating to our Giving Tree Program

Thank you for donating to our Giving Trees program! All cards have been earmarked for Care for Real and the St. Gertrude Refugee and Immigrant Ministry so those in need could have a happy and blessed Christmas.

We appreciate your generosity!

Special thanks to the Giving Tree Program coordinator Joe McMahon!

Financial Report from Dec. 16-17

Sunday Collection Envelopes: \$2,287.00

Loose Checks: \$670.00

Loose Cash/Coins: \$427.00

Online Donations: \$5,495.91

Total Collected: \$8,879.91

Budgeted: \$10,000.00

Difference: -\$1,120.09

Year-to-date Collected FY 2024: \$265,143.32

Year-to-date Budgeted FY 2024: \$386,400.00

Difference: -\$121,256.68





Growing in Faith: Feast of the Holy Family Reflection

In the December 31 gospel, Mary gets a deeply unsettling prophecy from Simeon who tells her that her heart will be not just broken - but pierced with a sword! Simeon tells Mary that Jesus will have a controversial, physically dangerous and very public ministry - and that she will have a mission, too: she will be deeply connected to Jesus. She will suffer when he suffers. And in her suffering, Mary will be connected to the rest of humanity as a Mother.

“And you yourself a sword will pierce, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

It is a terrible mystery why suffering can draw people together in true intimacy, to be revealed. Suffering starkly illuminates what is meaningful in life in a way that ease and happiness do not. I have seen that those who can bear to stand in the reality of grief and loss, can have the most authentic relationships. They are prepared to listen to any story of suffering with their whole selves, and their presence is very healing.

And so it is with Mary: She understands our human feelings. She is always honest and fully present. And she is our MOM, she already knows our weaknesses and errors and sins, and she loves us anyway. She wants good things for us. She is very approachable. Through the intimacy and the vulnerability of relationship, we become fully known, down to the secret thoughts of our hearts!

Through her pierced heart, Mary is a consolation in our suffering, as she was to Jesus in his. Thank you, Blessed Mother.

~ Ruth Ott



Thank You to the Heavenly Horns Performers!

We appreciate the members of the Heavenly Horns, who played after Mass last weekend.

Their performance was lovely and put everyone in a holiday frame of mind!

Parish Information

New Parishioners

- Sam Russo & Elizabeth Duff-Russo

Please Pray for our Parishioners and Friends

- Carlos Barragan
- Zara Bradley
- Lilly Buie
- Hallie Burhoe
- Maggie Calloway
- Aida Calvopina
- Claire Conley
- Denise DeBelle
- David Denegas
- Ann Collins Dole
- Mr. and Mrs. Emin Euman
- Luke Fitzgerald
- Gina Heidkamp
- Rochelle Hernandez
- Maria Hertl
- Erica Maria Kast
- Marilyn Klein
- Ignacio Lopez
- Matilde Manzardo
- Janet McCulley
- Jack McDermott
- Nancy Michael
- Andy Mueller
- Karey Myers
- Donald Nyderek
- Denise Plunkett
- Claude Poulsen
- Charley Scantlebury
- Richard Seitz
- Willy Spalla
- Elinora E. Tolentino
- Manuel & Norma Viray
- Leon Ward
- Ron Whitfield
- Yyes Yoza
- Joel Pozzi Zio

Contact the Rectory office at 773.764.3621 or email stgertrude1420@stgertrudechicago.org if you would like to add a name to the prayer list.

Parish Staff and Contact Info

Rev. Michael Gabriel, Pastor—mgabriel@stgertrudechicago.org

Fr. Paul Àdajà, Associate Pastor—padaja@archchicago.org

Eloy Escamilla, Pastoral Associate—eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org

Kathryn Flynn, Minister of Music—kflynn@stgertrudechicago.org

Sherl Patterson, Office Manager—spatterson@stgertrudechicago.org

Laurie Hasbrook, Heart to Heart Lending Closet Manager—lhasbrook@stgertrudechicago.org

Andy Mueller, Parish Buildings Engineer—stgertrude1420@stgertrudechicago.org

Sr. Susan Quaintance, OSB, Heart to Heart Director—squaintance@stgertrudechicago.org

Tracy Shields, Communications Director—stgerbulletin@yahoo.com

Eduardo Soto, Director of Parish Management—esoto@stgertrudechicago.org

Heart to Heart Contact Info

To reach our Heart to Heart director, Sr. Susan Quaintance, OSB, call her at 872.296.2537 or email her at squaintance@stgertrudechicago.org. To reach Laurie Hasbrook, our Lending Closet manager, please call 773.973.5464 or email her at lhasbrook@stgertrudechicago.org.

Cantors, Musicians, Ministers of the Word, & Eucharistic Ministers, for This Week and Next Week

Ministers of the Word

- Saturday, December 23 at 5:00 pm - Kathleen Dawson, Patrick Reardon
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 am - Millie Slane, Marty McDermott
- Sunday, December 24 at 10:30 am - Bob Backis, Rafael Melendez
- Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 pm - Jennifer Kiedaisch
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 pm - Rose Karasti, Patrick Robinson
- Monday, December 25 at 8:00 am - Hallie Burhoe, Art Lyons
- Monday, December 25 at 10:30 am - Bob Backis, Tim Love
- Saturday, December 30 at 5:00 pm - Joseph McMahon, Kathleen Dawson
- Sunday, December 31 at 8:00 am - Hallie Burhoe, Millie Slane
- Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 am - Rose Karasti, Anthony Myers
- Sunday, December 31 at 5:00 pm - Joseph McMahon
- Monday, January 1 at 8:00 am - Millie Slane
- Monday, January 1 at 10:30 am - Bob Backis

Eucharistic Ministers

- Saturday, December 23 at 5:00 pm - Kathy Wall
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 am - Hallie Burhoe
- Sunday, December 24 at 10:30 am - Steven Monti, Maria Ugarte, Carlos Barragan
- Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 pm - Tim Harrington
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 pm - Michael Kowalsky, Roman Reyes
- Monday, December 25 at 8:00 am - Barb Daly
- Monday, December 25 at 10:30 am - Millie Slane, Kathy Wall, Maria Ugarte
- Saturday, December 30 at 5:00 pm - Tim Harrington
- Sunday, December 31 at 8:00 am - Kathryn Stimac
- Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 am - Stephen Modde, Michelle Kuehlhorn, Rafael Melendez
- Sunday, December 31 at 5:00 pm - Steven Monti
- Monday, January 1 at 8:00 am - Hallie Burhoe
- Monday, January 1 at 10:30 am - Kathleen Dawson

Cantors and Musicians

- Saturday, December 23 at 5:00 pm - Jim Manzardo
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 am - TBA
- Sunday, December 24 at 10:30 am - TBA
- Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 pm - Music by the Dunne family & Jennifer Dunne students
- Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 pm - St. Gertrude Choir (Matt Heimer, Cantor), Jim Szmurlo, Trumpet & Violin, JT O'Toole, Bass
- Monday, December 25 at 8:00 am - Kathryn Flynn, Cantor, Mary Horan, Piano, John Horan, Guitar, Jo Sison, Violin
- Monday, December 25 at 10:30 am - Kristina Vragovic, Cantor, Kathryn Flynn, Piano, JT O'Toole, Bass, Jo Sison, Violin, Augustine Melecio, Trumpet
- Saturday, December 30 at 5:00 pm - Bernie O'Connor
- Sunday, December 31 at 8:00 am - Denise Goodman
- Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 am - Kathryn Flynn

Altar Servers for This Week and Next Week

- **Sunday, December 24 at 10:30 am** - Cross bearer - Munachimso Okoye, Acolytes - Chimamanda Okoye, Chukwnonso Okoye
- **Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 pm** - Cross bearer - Henry Villareal, Acolytes - Carter Cartwright, Xavier Lassus
- **Sunday, December 24 at 8:00 pm** - Cross bearer - Carter Dant, Acolytes - Wyatt Dant, Mathious Paulus
- **Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 am** - Cross bearer - Xavier Lassus, Acolytes - Carter Cartwright, Mathious Paulus

Mass Intentions

- **Sunday, December 24:** 8:00 am - Edith Ellero; 10:30 am in church - Joseph and Isabelle Laczkowski +; 5:00 pm - Parishioners of St. Gertrude; 8:00 pm - Parishioners of St. Gertrude
- **Monday, December 25:** 8:00 am - Parishioners of St. Gertrude, 10:30 am - Parishioners of St. Gertrude
- **Tuesday, December 26:** 7:30 am - Living and deceased parents of St. Gertrude parishioners
- **Wednesday, December 27:** 7:30 am - Glenn and Mary Jo Martin+
- **Thursday, December 28:** 7:30 am - Communion Service
- **Friday, December 29:** 7:30 am - Mary McGuinness+
- **Saturday, December 30:** 7:30 am - Jenny & Austin Wyman; 5:00 pm - Grace V. Cabrera+
- **Sunday, December 31:** 8:00 am - Parishioners of St. Gertrude; 10:30 am in church - Living members of the Gusmanos family; 5:00 pm - People of God
- **Monday, January 1:** 8:00 am - People of God; 10:30 am in church - People of God
- **Tuesday, January 2:** 7:30 am - Joe McMahon, Fabian Onyibor
- **Wednesday, January 3:** 7:30 am - Apolonia Sia
- **Thursday, January 4:** 7:30 am - Communion Service
- **Friday, January 5:** 7:30 am - Kathleen Marsh
- **Saturday, January 6:** 7:30 am - Living and deceased parents of St. Gertrude parishioners; 5:00 pm - Harry Glotkowski + Asta Reitneris+

Donate to our Parish

- Text the word *Donate* to 1.773.741.9505.
 - PayPal link - visit our parish website at www.stgertrudechicago.org
- GiveCentral: www.givecentral.org/location/8/allevnts

Mass Times/Reconciliation/Rector Office Hours

- Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:30 am in Church, 10:30 am Gym Mass; Monday-Friday: 7:30 am (Thursday is a Communion Service.); Saturday: 7:30 am & 5:00 pm; **See our Christmas Mass schedule on page 2.**
- Reconciliation is offered on Saturday from 4:15-4:45 pm in Church or by appointment by calling the Rectory at 773.764.3621.
- The Rectory office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-4:30 pm and Saturday from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm. **See page 2 for upcoming office closures.**
- For the most up-to-date information, visit stgertrudechicago.org.