



ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH

201 West Springfield Avenue - Sullivan, MO 63080 • (573)468-6101

December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday In Advent

MERRY CHRISTMAS



During this, the final week of Advent, and on the Great Solemnity of the Birth of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I wish to impart to all of you my priestly blessing for these intentions for the new year:

For good health, for protection from all harm, for the resolutions of conflicts and contentions among your families, for an increased awareness of the presence of God, and as the world seems to grow ever colder with apathy and disunity, for the experience of the warmth and goodness of the God's Love for you.

*Sincerely,
in Our Lord Jesus Christ*

WELCOME

A warm welcome to all of you who have come to worship with us. If you are visiting, we are honored by your presence. If you are interested in becoming a member, please call the rectory at 573-468-6101.

Parish Website: www.stanthonyssullivan.com



Pastor's Pen



How often have you heard that Jesus was most certainly *not* born on December 25? The reasoning goes that the Catholic Church, already "infected by paganism" (so critics assert), could better corral and control the once-pagan population of the Roman Empire by "baptizing" the Pagan Roman holiday of *The Birth of the Unconquered Sun* on December 25, the date on which the Romans commemorated the winter solstice, and turning it into a Catholic holiday.

While no one can "prove" that Jesus was really born on December 25, one can at least set forth some considerations. When Luke writes, "In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a Virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The Virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, You who art full of grace! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:26-28).

Which sixth month is being referred to? It does not say "in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy," but "in the sixth month." With John the Baptist conceived six months prior, that would take us to the month of *Tishri*, which at the time of Jesus's birth was universally taken to be the first month of the Jewish Year.

Let us recall how Zachariah was ministering in the Temple at this time. No matter which week he was assigned, he would have been quite busy. *Tishri* is a fitting month because of its eschatological suite of festivals. *Tishri* begins with *Yom Hateruah*, the "Feast of Trumpets," which is also called *Rosh Hashanah* – literally "the Head of the Year" – because this day which foretells the *Coming of the Lord* is fittingly also the start of the Jewish Year, which foretells the future inauguration of a New Age. Next, on *10 Tishri* there is *Yom Kippur*, the "Day of Atonement," which is a day in which Jews ask for Forgiveness of Sin. This holiday foretells the *Day of the Final Judgement*. Then on *15 Tishri* is celebrated the great Pilgrimage feast of *Sukot*, "Tabernacles," or "Harvest," foreshadowing the final ingathering of the redeemed as God's "harvest" taken to dwell with God in his "tabernacle" for eternity. Hence one-half a cycle of the moon is occupied with Feasts that proclaim the End Times. depending upon how the Hebrew Calendar was structured that year. *

You will notice that this argument cannot pinpoint the exact date of Jesus' birth. It would be disingenuous to make such an argument, though we can entertain certain possibilities. For instance, if we take the most common year attributed to Jesus birth, which is 5 B.C. (or 3757 according to the Hebrew numbering allegedly from the Creation of the World) we discover that on that year the Hebrew month of *Kislev* happens to align with the Roman month of December, so that *Kislev 1* was December 1. So apparently the Hebrew holidays were "late" in the year 3757.

There is only one Jewish holiday in *Kislev* that Jews celebrate universally, which is the festival of *Hanukkah*. Though a very late feast celebrating the Rededication of the Temple after the victory of the Maccabees over the Hellenists, it happens to fall every year on *Kislev 25*. It is, shall we say, intriguing that that a Jewish Feast to celebrate the Rededication of Temple, just happened to fall on *December 25* in the same year

in which Jesus was most likely born. It makes typological sense of course that Jesus, the light of the world, the one who would rededicate the Temple by his life, would arrive on the holiday which celebrates rededication and renewal.

There are other candidates for the "real" birthday of Jesus: March 21 has been a favorite for many, since this is the first day of Spring. Others, thinking that Jesus' would be conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary on the Spring Equinox instead place Jesus' birth in late September – locating a *1 Tishri* "Rosh Hashanah" for his birth. I have even come across one (rather specious) argument for "September 11" as Our Lord's true day of birth. But what you think about this. Do you think my above argument has merit? Let me know, I would be delighted to hear your ideas.

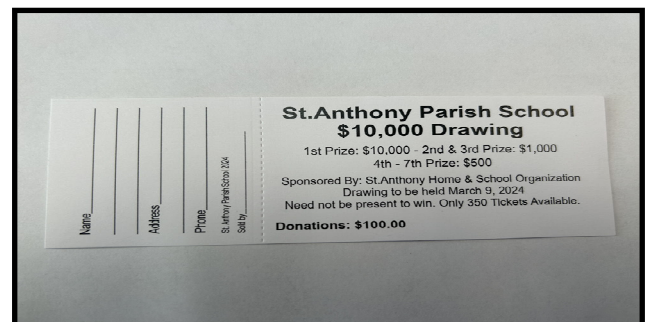


SCHOOL NEWS

Who doesn't need \$10,000?

This is the Home & School's biggest fund raiser of the year.

Tickets are \$100.00 each and only 350 tickets are sold.



You can purchase a ticket by yourself or go in with family or friends. Tickets may be purchased through any school family, at the school office or at the rectory. This is a perfect Christmas gift for the person who has everything!

We appreciate your support and look forward to the New Year!

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 25
11:00 a.m. Linda Licher

Tuesday, December 26
Communion Service
Perpetual Help Devotions

Wednesday, December 27
8:00 a. m. **NO MASS**

Thursday, December 28
8:00 a.m. Bob Klinger

Friday, December 29
8:00 a.m. Marv Prater

Saturday, December 30
4:00 p.m. Jerome & Dorothy gauzy

Sunday, December 31
11:00 a. m. Jack Lyons

Lector and Minister Schedule

Saturday, December 30
4:00 p.m. C Hercules
Ministers R Abel, M Berry

Sunday, December 31
11:00 a. m. Marty de la Torre
Ministers G Koebbe, J Lock

Servers

Saturday, December 30
4:00 p. m. Andy Prater

Sunday, December 31
11:00 a. m. Reed Newbanks & Volunteer

Gift Bearers

Saturday, December 30
4:00 p.m. R & A Abel

Sunday, December 31
11:00 a. m. Ushers

There will NOT be Mass on Monday, January 1, 2024.
Since it falls on a Monday, it is not a Holy Day of Obligation.

Rectory Office Closed

The rectory office will be closed through January 1st. We will be back in the office on Tuesday, January 2nd.

You are more than welcome to leave a message for us on the answering machine by calling 573-468-6101.

If you have an emergency you may contact us during that time. We do ask that you respect our time off with our families and call the rectory and leave a message.

Merry Christmas! Peace be with you and your family!

SICK LIST *May God grant them healing of soul and body*
If you have someone that you would like to add, please call the rectory. If they are well, please let us know.

Patrick Blankenship	Christina Lambing	Angie Biehl
Cindy Dill Fox	Mike Fone	Carolyn Land
Charlene Woodcock	Patti Day	Christina Lambing
Wanda Baxter	Patrick Blankenship	Tricia Harris
Carl Brendel	Scott Staufenbiel	David Jost
Dorothy Efink	Kayden & Jayden Eftink	
Bella Matchell		

If someone has recovered or passed away, please call and let us know.

The bulletin for the weekend goes in for publication on Monday morning.

Pray for our Service Personnel

If you wish to add someone to the list please call the rectory.

Alec McCormick/Air Force	Chris Carter/Air Force
Jonathan Cox/Amy Reserves	Cooper Sellars/Marines
Jacob Cargill/Air Force	Cory Garrus/Marines
Mark Johnson/Marines	Bradley Rigdon/ Marines
Ray Schoonveld/Marines	Wyatt Seaton/Marines
Mary Kate Wetzel/Marine	Kim Hurt/Air Force Reserves
Nathan Stark/Amy/National Guard	Jaison Ronsick/National Guard
Jordan Bodi, Army	Trisha
Bohn/ Marines	Ethan Kackley/Marines
Luke D. Ryan/Marines	Timmy Kloos/Air Force
Oliva Price/Navy	

If someone is no longer in the Military, please let us know. If you would like to add someone to list please call the rectory office. Thank you.

Our Thanks Offering

The Offertory for Dec 9th & 10th, 2023

(this is the 9th & 10th offertory due to the early submission)

Adult Envelopes.....	\$ 7,185.00
Envelopes: (112)	
Electronic.....	\$ 1,340.00
Loose.....	\$ 319.00
Total General Fund Offertory	8,844.00
St. Vincent de Paul.....	\$ 960.00
Solemnity.....	\$ 40.00
Immaculate Conception.....	\$ 60.00
Candles.....	\$ 22.00
Assessment.....	\$ 30.00
Electronic Special Collections.....	\$ 180.00
	1,292.00