

# Fourth Sunday of Advent!



*Joy*

## Weekend Masses

Saturday 5:00pm  
Sunday 8:00am,  
10:30am, 12:15pm

## Weekday Masses

Monday-Friday 9:00am

## Adoration

Monday-Friday 10am-10pm

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Wednesdays, 6pm-7pm  
Sat. 3:45pm-4:45pm or by appointment



## Parish Office

8110 Jewel Lake Rd  
Anchorage, AK 99502

Phone: (907) 243-2195  
Fax: (907) 243-0088

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday  
10:00am - 5:00pm

Web: [www.stbenedictsak.com](http://www.stbenedictsak.com)

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/stbenedictsak>

Email: [parishsecretary@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:parishsecretary@stbenedictsak.com)



## Lumen Christi Catholic School

Grades 7-12

8110 Jewel Lake Rd Bldg. D  
Anchorage, AK 99502

Phone: (907) 245-9231

Office Hours: Monday-Friday  
7:00am-3:00pm

Web: [www.lumenchristiak.org](http://www.lumenchristiak.org)

## - Our Community at a Glance -

**Prayer Chain:** email Shirley Arnold at [s\\_arnoldak@outlook.com](mailto:s_arnoldak@outlook.com)

**Outreach:** Emergency food for those in need call **907-273-1596**

**Clare House:** 4th Tuesday each month; contact **Beth Waetjen @ 907-242-2384**

**Archangel Attic:** Open Tues.-Thurs. 12pm-3pm, and Fri. 10am-3pm, Sat. 10am-4pm,  
call **907-215-7079**. To volunteer call **Colleen: 354-4372** or **Mary: 868-3453**

**Youth & Young adult Catechesis:** call **Gabe O'Lena 907-215-7058**

**Choir:** See **Steve Ring** after Mass or email [sring1316@outlook.com](mailto:sring1316@outlook.com)

**Samoan Mass:** 12:15 Mass, 1st Sunday of the Month

**Filipino Mass:** 12:15 Mass, 3rd Sunday of the Month

**Hospitality Sundays:** Coffee /donuts, after **8am-10:30am** Masses

**Pancake Breakfast:** Served **8am to 12:15pm** the 2nd Sunday of the month, **Oct - Apr**

**Knights of Columbus:** Meets 1st Wednesday at 7pm

**Legion of Mary:** Meets Mon. at **5:30pm**; call **Ursula @ 907-570-2163**

**December 21,  
2025**

## Mission and Core Values

Saint Benedict Parish  
is a community of  
Catholic, Christian  
stewards,  
working to live and  
preach the Word of  
God in thought,  
word and deed.

As a ministry of Saint  
Benedict Parish,  
Lumen Christi High  
School provides a  
rigorous Catholic  
education in a Christ-like  
environment. We are  
called to proclaim the  
Gospel of Jesus Christ, to  
build community, and to  
serve our brothers  
and sisters.

We are united in our core  
values of living **Faith**,  
Celebrating **Family**  
and Achieving  
**Excellence!**



## THOUGHTS FROM OUR PASTOR



## "Emmanuel - God is with us" - Always!

"Emmanuel" – "*God is with us*". But, if we are honest, most of us have known times when God seems distant, unapproachable, not interested in the events of our lives. Perhaps we have mused, "Where was God when I lost my job, or my home, or my marriage, or my spouse to illness?" St. Joseph also wondered how he could end up marrying a woman, his betrothed, who was with child but not by him. Had God abandoned him? These are legitimate questions, and the standard answer, that God was with us as we suffered, rarely convinces. We need a God not afar off but close at hand. For many, God is not close at hand. During his moment of doubt when he was contemplating divorcing Mary, the Angel visited Joseph and told him, "Do not be afraid! God is with you!" Not just literally but in reality! God is with you in that child. Don't just think of yourself but think of the glory of Israel and the salvation of the world which this child will bring". Likewise, we cannot fear God or think Him unapproachable when we know that in Christ, He has taken human flesh and blood and been born, just as we are, just as dependent as we are. He cannot undo that. He has bound Himself to us forever and is with us to the end of time. Whatever happens, however low we fall, however much distress or failure we experience, we know Him to be true to His name - Emmanuel. He is with us. God is with us. Always! And this week, we will celebrate His birth in time. O Come O Come Emmanuel! – *Fr. Tom*

# Welcome to Saint Benedict Parish

Monday 12/22	Tuesday 12/23	Wednesday 12/24	Thursday 12/25	Friday 12/26	Saturday 12/27	Sunday 12/28
<b>Mass</b> <b>9am: Fr. Steven Moore ROS</b> <u>Parish Office Closed</u> Adoration 10am - 10pm Legion of Mary 6-7pm <b>OCIA 6:30</b>	<b>Mass</b> <b>9am: Bobby McMorro SI</b> <u>Parish Office Closed</u> Adoration 10am-10pm Video Series The Search & Discussion 9:30am	<b>Masses</b> <b>9am:Jim &amp; Jane Branham ROS</b> <b>4pm: Rosemary Chan ROS</b> <b>6:30pm:Danny Bacher ROS</b> <b>9:30pm:Chuck Biernard ROS</b> <u>Parish Office Closed</u> <del>Adoration 10am-10pm</del> Confessions 6pm Samoan Choir 6:30pm High School night 7pm	<b>Masses</b> <b>12am: People of the Parish SI</b> <b>10:30am: Noel Danielson SI</b> <u>Parish Office Closed</u> Adoration 12pm-10pm 10:30 Choir Practice 7pm	<b>Mass</b> <b>9am:Active Military &amp; Vets SI</b> <u>Parish Office Closed</u> Adoration 10am-10pm Frozen Chozen 5:30am Jr. Legion 10am Kid Play 1pm Samoan Choir 6:30pm Youth Intermural Basketball 8pm	<b>Vigil Mass</b> <b>5pm:Tadeusz Rzeszut SI</b> Confessions 3:45-4:45	<b>Masses</b> <b>8:00am:People of the Parish SI</b> <b>10:30am: Edward Diemer ROS</b> <b>12:15pm: Chuck Biernard ROS</b>  <b>NO Super Sunday!</b>  Check out our page at: <a href="https://www.stbenedictsak.com/65">https://www.stbenedictsak.com/65</a> FB: St. Ben's Youth Ministry Insta: @stbensyouthanc

**Mass Intentions:** SI= Special Intentions

RTH= Return to Health

ROS= Repose of Soul

## Saint Benedict Staff

### **Pastor**

Fr. Tom Lilly  
[tlilly@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:tlilly@stbenedictsak.com)  
 907-243-2195

### **Deacon**

Deacon Daniel Winters

### **Pastoral Assistant/ Business Manager**

Marcy Adkins  
[madkins@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:madkins@stbenedictsak.com)  
 907-243-2195

### **Administrative Assistant**

Katherine Mitchell  
[parishsecretary@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:parishsecretary@stbenedictsak.com)  
 907-243-2195

### **Director of Music**

Steve Ring  
[sring@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:sring@stbenedictsak.com)

### **Church Housekeeper**

Elaine Potter

## Evangelization and Catechesis

### **Youth and Young Adult Minister**

Gabe O'Lena  
[golena@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:golena@stbenedictsak.com)  
 907-215-7058

### **Super Sunday Faith Formation**

John and Shelby Burger  
[burger@stbenedictsak.com](mailto:burger@stbenedictsak.com)

## Lumen Christi School

### **Principal**

Brian Ross  
[brross@lumenchristiak.com](mailto:brross@lumenchristiak.com)  
 907-245-9231

### **Director of Advancement**

Anne Gore  
[agore@lumenchristiak.com](mailto:agore@lumenchristiak.com)  
 907-245-9231

### **Administrative Assistant**

Kimberly Guzman  
[khs@lumenchristiak.com](mailto:khs@lumenchristiak.com)  
 907-245-9231

## Sacramental Information

### **Parish Office 243-2195**

- OCIA:** contact Marcy Adkins 273-1554
- Baptism of infants:** celebrated either during Mass, after the 12:15 Mass on Sundays or at any other time approved by the Pastor. Parents are required to attend a baptismal preparation class prior to the baptism of the child.
- Weddings:** scheduled by meeting with the Pastor at least six months prior to the wedding date. Please call the office for more details.
- Funerals:** contact the parish office following a death and we will be pleased to assist you.
- Anointing of the Sick, or Communion to the Homebound:** Please call the parish office to request a visit.

Thank to all those who come and put together meals for **Hope Soup Kitchen!**

Next date is Saturday **January 3rd!**

Call Andy Flores @ 907-887-4917

Thank you to all who provide meals for **Clare House**

Next dinner date is **December 23rd!**

## The Traveling Madonna

The new traveling Mary sign up for January thru December 2024 is now posted.  
 Please say a rosary each day she is in your home.  
 Thank you for welcoming the Lord's mother.  
 Questions call **the office 907-243-2195**

## ⇒ Readings:

### Sunday 12/21

Isaiah 7:10-14  
 Romans 1:1-7  
 Matthew 1:18-24

### Sunday 12/28

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14  
 Colossians 3:12-21  
 Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

## ⇒ Celebrations:

# December Anniversaries

Once Upon  
A Time...

Ian and Judy Fulp	12/20/69
John and Trisha Mitchell	12/16/72
Daniel and Janice Kitzos	12/07/74
Bill and Shirley Arnold	12/30/77
Elmer and Lois Salontai	12/22/79
Bolesio and Elena Perko	12/03/91
Ken and Joy Wynne	12/20/91
Peter and Vaioalii Potasi-Mariota	12/24/99
Carl and Gloria Spencer	12/19/01
Dan and Kate Johnston	12/31/05
Zach and Rachael Stohr	12/21/06
Chuck and Juliet Knecht	12/18/09
Pete and Donna Guerra	12/19/09
Joan and Krissaundra Felise	12/02/18
Brian and Marce Tjaden	12/20/24

*May your marriage always bring glory to God, joy to one another and blessings to your family for many generations to come.*

*May love and laughter fill your hearts and your home for all at the days of your lives.*

*May you face every challenge hand-in-hand and side-by-side*

*knowing that with God's grace, you'll conquer all obstacles together. May the world be forever a better place because the two of you fell in love. In Jesus' name, Amen*

*"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." -Eph. 5:31*

## ⇒ Parish Financial Update:

### ⇒ Stewardship of Treasure:

	Week 23	YTD
Offertory Income	\$ 15,389.85	\$ 290,527.85
Other Income	\$ 416.00	\$ 49,619.56
	\$ 15,805.85	\$ 340,147.41

Expenses: (avg. wk. \$17,162.20)

YTD Expenses: **\$ 354,378.65**

#### Combined Parish and School

**Total Income \$1,131,131.59**

**Total Expense \$1,171,287.38**

**- \$ 40,155.79**

Our new fiscal year began 1 July

#### \*Online Donation Income:

- \* There were 44 gifts made online
- \* There were 0 Families new to online giving
- \* There were 0 Maintenance Fund donations
- \* There were 3 Parish Outreach donations
- \* There were 6 Special Collection donations
- \* There were 0 World Youth Day donations

*Dear Lord,*

*Thank you for teaching me to be generous as you have been generous with me.*

*Thank you for showing me that all I am and have are gifts from you.*

*And that these gifts from you, Lord, are meant to be shared. Show me the joys of generosity.*

*Help me to understand others, perhaps unknown to me, depend on me for help.*

*Remind me that my world, my parish, needs "Good Samaritans" to heal the wounds of our times.*

*Make me a gift to others in your name.*

*Amen.*

#### Please Pray for:

Diane Peterson  
Christina Del Rosario  
Ann Curro  
Bea Freeman  
Waetjen Family  
Alicia Warren  
Fr. Tim Saur  
Rosemary Dunn  
Connie Budahl  
Danny Lee  
Franklin Ellenson

Terry Tutor  
Marty Goblowski  
Jim Seeley  
Sam Waetjen  
Chloe Hernandez  
Damon Carey  
Gerry Rapp  
Alicia Datuin  
Mike & Bettye Smith  
Pat Scott  
Julie Allard  
Bernie & Marian Simon

Kim Randolph  
Lagi Fi-Zwetsch  
Will Davenport  
Nicole Johnson  
Crescencia Molina  
Jessica Randolph  
Geneva Colon  
Michele Waetjen  
Vannessa Mors  
Denise Trefry  
Richard Campbell  
James Mitchell & sons

Fontaine Wilhelm  
Theresa Dolan  
Ofelia Domingo  
Maipelle Burns  
Mike Keenan  
Kevin Pfeiffer  
Steve Taylor  
Lara Krill  
Joseph Mitchell  
Dan Rollins  
John Branham  
Jeff Harris Family

Ted & Agnes Mayac  
Doris Clausen  
Ellison Williamson  
Jackie & Greg Kern  
Paul Larson  
Mary Dubois  
Glen Allen  
Virginia Aberle  
Elizabeth Bastiani  
Solita Balones  
Mark Blumenthal  
Deneen B. Bozeman

Al Honeywell  
Wally Johnston

*(To add or remove please call 243-2195).*





# Lumen Christi School

Living Faith, Celebrating Family, and Achieving Excellence



## ⇒ Principal's Update:

We find ourselves at the end of the fall semester and entering a much needed and anticipated Christmas break! We pray for our high school basketball teams as they compete in this weekend's Lumen Christi Invitational Tournament against 10 girls teams and 7 boys teams from across the State of Alaska. If you are around town, come to our gym to support and cheer on our teams in their first games of the season! We can also use your help for concession sales and manning the admission gate table—check your Remind messages for details! For those traveling during break, our prayers are with you for safe travel and joy.

This next announcement will be popular with some and unpopular with others. **Starting January 5th, energy drinks are banned in our school building 30 minutes before the start of school, during the day, and 30 minutes after the final bell.** Energy drinks come in many forms, but the most popular are Monster, Red Bull, C4, Celsius, Yerba Mate, and Alani Nu. While we know that students often drink these for increased energy, the dangers to adolescents including dehydration, increased heart rate, anxiety, and insomnia are real: ([https://www.cdc.gov/school-nutrition/media/images/2024/09/The\\_Buzz\\_on\\_Energy\\_Drinks\\_infographic.png](https://www.cdc.gov/school-nutrition/media/images/2024/09/The_Buzz_on_Energy_Drinks_infographic.png)) and (<https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/energy-drinks>).

A short survey of our students (96 total responses) revealed that a third of our students consume at least 1-2 energy drinks a day, including weekends, with some consuming 3 or more each day. My own observations greeting students each morning tells me the number of students starting their day with a Red Bull, Monster, or Alani Nu is probably much higher than the survey results reveal. Unfortunately, our teachers often experience the “crash”—sleeping in class, irritability, mood swings, lack of focus, and other misbehaviors—later in the day when the quick energy boost wears off. Excessive caffeine and sugar intake can also disrupt sleep patterns—which can lead to reduced academic performance. Caffeine dependency leads students to feel like they need another energy drink to function and the cycle starts anew. Are you seeing similar results at home?

So yes, we have educated and are educating our students on the dangers of these drinks, but just like cell phones back in 2018, we feel that these drinks are counterproductive to our learning environment. And because they are highly caffeinated and highly sugary, they are ultimately harmful to our young people. Therefore, the staff and I feel that simply removing them from our school environment is the most effective and appropriate approach. The school has two filtered water bottle fill stations to support better choices. Thank you for sharing this information with your son or daughter over break and supporting us starting in January.

On behalf of our school staff, I want to thank you for all of your support and assistance over this fall semester. We wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

*Blessings, Brian*

## Archangel Attic

The holiday season is upon us! Our selection of Christmas décor, lights, candles, and gifts offers something for all your needs. Each week, we are given more holiday items to share with you.

We will be closed Dec. 24th-26th and Jan. 1st. We will be open the rest of the time including Sat. Dec. 27th.

Everything will be 1/2 OFF!!!

Thank you for shopping with us.

## KNIGHTS TABLE

### *Congratulations: November*

Knight of the month

Larry Clement

Family of the Month

Nick and Oriele Kinder



Patriotic Rosary— 12/15 and 01/05 at 6:00 pm

K of C Council meeting - 01/07 at 7:00 pm

4th Degree meeting – 01/05 at 7:00 pm

Officer's meeting - 01/22 6pm

**The Knight of the Month** We chose Larry Clement - Larry has been leading our council's pro-Life efforts. Larry has organized the 40 days for life campaigns for St Benedicts (Tuesday was our day), Also organizing the baby bottle and diaper drives and throughout the year.

**Family of the Month** We chose Nick and Oriele Kinder - Nick and Oriele have been members of the parish for many years. From helping in years past with youth groups and events. Now we would like to help recognize them for their help in many little ways, helping with some parish office duties, assisting with OCIA. They both help model to us many of the aspects of being a good catholic family.

## WHAT IS GOING ON?



## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS THANKSGIVING GLOVE DRIVE

The Knights of Columbus would like to thank all the generous people that made a donation during our 22nd annual Thanksgiving Glove Drive. It was a great drive!!

With your help we were able to collect 61 pair of gloves, 6 scarves, 55 pair of socks, 68 hats and 13 other useful items.

The people that will receive them will be very thankful.

“When I was naked, you clothed Me”

**Thank You.**



## Catholic Daughters of the Americas

Have you been wondering who The Catholic Daughters of the Americas are? Would you like to know more about us?

CDA is one of the largest Catholic women's organizations established in 1903 by the Knights of Columbus. Our local court was chartered in at Holy Family parish in 1961. We are a spiritual, charitable, social and service group. We invite all Catholic women to join us as we plan this year's events. Our next meeting will be on **Saturday, January 10, 2026**, beginning **with Mass at 9:00 am** in the chapel at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mass will be celebrated by our chaplain, Fr. Robert Whitney. It will be a memorial Mass for our deceased members followed by brunch in the Lunney Center. Please join us. For more information contact [cecistanley2013@icloud.com](mailto:cecistanley2013@icloud.com)

## Events across the Archdiocese – December–January, Advent and Christmas

By Levi Livengood

Across the Archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau, Advent and Christmas see a variety of activities, from Simbang Gabi to food drives, and much more.



No matter how many years ago...  
Abortion still hurts. Project Rachel.  
Confidential. Healing.  
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projectrachelalaska@gmail.com

### WOMEN'S RETREAT

**Ladies – YOU are invited!**

Come join us, the Ladies of St. Andrew Parish (in Eagle River) on January 10, from 10 AM to 1 PM.  
We'll gather for a Continental Breakfast, then listen, pray, and share, under the leadership of Elizabeth Loeffler.

**Title:** Voyage to Second Childhood

**Topic:** What we need to change to become a child eager to discover and follow Christ's path for us.

We'd love to have YOU join us! Please call M. Lee at 907-694-4443 or D. Galle at 907-764-7661 for more details & to let us know you're coming!

**Glory Bound 2025** at Saint Therese's Camp grades 6–8, Dec 28–30; grades 9–12, Dec 30–Jan 1.  
young men and young women's retreats.

**Our Lady of the Snows** in Girdwood will serve a hot meal at the Methodist Church on January 4th, where the food bank is, and will continue to collect and donate food.

**St. John the Baptist** will have a giving tree throughout Advent.

**St. Andrew:** St. Nick market Dec 5 5-8, blue Christmas prayer service Dec 19 6:30pm for those who have trouble around Christmas due to loss.

**Holy Cross** will have a youth night on Dec 22 from 6–8pm.

**Our Lady of the Lake** will have a Christmas program and potluck following Sunday Mass on December 21.

**Holy Family** in Anchorage will have:

- An Advent playlist from Fr. James on Spotify (see Letha's email or the website)
- Daily Advent Reflection by Br. Anthony Martin
- Confessions every Sunday Mass and on Tuesday from 7–8pm during adoration
- St. Nick party at 9:30am Dec 6
- Dec 8 Immaculate Conception Holy Day of Obligation
- Dec 10 Dominican forum
- Las Mañanitas 7am dec 12 followed by Mass for OLOG



Through Helping Holidays, you can help ensure those in need have a Christmas gift this year by sponsoring a client family. You can sign up as an individual, family, or group. We suggest a gift of \$50 for an individual, \$150 for a family and \$200 for a family of five or more.

To help us have time to deliver gifts to families, items will need to be dropped off at our office between Monday, Dec. 8 to Thursday, Dec. 11 from 9 am to 5:30 pm.

Note: Many of our refugee families live across the state. To reduce shipping costs for families in the RAIS program, we can only accept gift cards and one small gift per family.

[Helping Holidays link](#)

## In-kind Needs for CSS Programs

### Extra Holiday Gift Drop-off Week at 4600

**Debarr** is Dec. 15-18 from 9 am to 5:30 pm.

If you missed adopting a family and would like to help, we are in need of the following items, wrapped or unwrapped (if wrapped, please label it with what item it is and what size it is, if applicable):

- Ice cleats
- Thermal underclothing
- Warm gloves
- Hats
- Warm socks
- Winter jackets
- Blankets

### Complex Care Holiday Giving

To help spread a little holiday cheer the staff at Complex Care would like to give the opportunity to clients to select items from a wish list that would be delivered on Christmas Day.

Clients would select one item from the following wish list:

- Sweatshirt
- Sweatpants
- Thermal Mug with lid
- Bus Pass (\$26)
- Slippers

Clients may then select 3 of the following items:

- Ice grippers
- Cane Ice gripper
- Gloves
- Hats
- Socks
- Movie ticket gift card
- Nail clippers and Nail file
- Reading glasses
- Nail polish

**Winter Gear Needs** -- All our shelters have an ongoing need for winter gloves, hats, hand and foot warmers, winter jackets, socks, and boots. We can never have too many. They can be dropped off at specific shelters, or at Saint Francis House Food Pantry (at times they reach capacity and cannot accept donations temporarily). SFH drop-offs are from donations can be dropped off at 3710 E. 20 th Ave. 1-4 pm Monday through Thursday and 9-4 Friday.

**Pet Food Drive** Many families rely on the comfort and companionship of their pets, and lately our St. Francis House Food Pantry has had a growing need for dog and cat food. If you feel called to give, we welcome donations of unopened or gently used bags of pet food.

Your generosity helps families keep their beloved pets fed, supported, and close — a small act of compassion that brings great joy. Drop off donations at Saint Francis House Food Pantry at 3710 E. 20 th Ave. 1-4 pm Monday through Thursday and 9-4 Friday.

Many **refugee clients** do not have snowpants and have articulated that they would like some. Seeking snowpants and snow boots drive in time for an event which will be the evening of the 24th.

Drop off 9 am to 3 pm at 4135 San Roberto Ave. at the Welcome Center.

**Donations for the 3rd Avenue Resource & Navigation Center** are accepted Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the 3RNC, 1131 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

When dropping off items, please ask for Brian Andrews to ensure your donation is properly received.

- Hats
- Belts
- Gloves
- Hot Hands
- Reading Glasses





## Bible Study

Meets the **2nd –4th or 5th.**  
**Wednesday's** of each month at 7pm

Our next Bible Study will be on  
Wednesday Dec. 17th.

We meet in the school library at 7 PM.

## Book Club

**January 8th @ 7:00PM**  
in the Rectory.

Our next book will be a novel, "Death Comes for the Archbishop" by Willa Cather, which we will discuss in January.

Contact Lynn Stuhr @ [lstuhr18@gmail.com](mailto:lstuhr18@gmail.com) or 907-830-1627.

## Women's ministry

### Blessed Among Women

Our next gathering will be on Thursday evening  
at 6pm, **January 20th** in the Parish Hall.

**See you then!**



This is a monthly gathering to seek a more profound understanding of what it means to be a woman of God through quarterly presentations by local speakers and spiritual teachings from Pope St John Paul II and female Saints (while sharing food and fellowship with other women).

## Men's Ministry

As we continue to celebrate Blessed Michael J. McGivney's Beatification, please enter the Promo Code **BLESSEDMCGIVNEY** to join online for free. Ask A Knight for more information or follow the QR code to join online - Please Enter St Benedict's Council #12290.



## Parish pilgrimage

**News on the next Parish  
Pilgrimage in the South East USA.**

**Stay tuned.**

**Check the shelf in the back of Church**

## Merry Christmas or Season's Greetings

The decision to celebrate the birth of Jesus on December 5th is not based on careful calculations of the actual day Jesus was born. Its origins were from polytheistic Rome, December 25th was a celebration of the Unconquered Sun, marking the return of longer days. It followed Saturnalia, a festival where people feasted and exchanged gifts.

In today's world, we see the reverse. The celebrations of Christmas are being shorn of all religious symbols and connotations: Santa has replaced the Christ Child; Rocking around the Christmas tree has replaced Come all Ye Faithful and I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas has replaced Silent Night. Merry Christmas has become Season's Greetings.

Fewer people are drawn religiously to the Christmas story, even as they value the Christmas season as a very special time of year. They value the feast for its emphasis on love, gift-giving, color, specialness, and celebration, but prefer the emphasis be precisely on these things without a reference to Christ. Many also think we are a secularized culture, not a Christian culture, and it is unfair to non-Christians to emphasize the religious (Christ) aspect of this feast. It is offensive to Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, agnostics, and non-believers. Given the pluralistic make-up of our society, saying "Merry Christmas" can be imperialistic, narrow, and not fully respectful of others. This carries some legitimacy, though it is also deeply flawed. This criticism doesn't come mainly from Jews, Muslims, and the non-Christians. It arises mostly from some excessive and less-than-fully healthy sensitivities within Christians and ex-Christians. We need to be sensitive to others and realize and accept we cannot impose a Christian celebration on those who don't share our faith. But society must also be fair to us and allow us to celebrate Christ's birthday as a religious feast.

No one should begrudge another for saying Merry Christmas or Season's Greetings. Silent Night can play alongside White Christmas. Jesus, no doubt, is on good terms with Santa. Love, joy, gift-giving, and colorful lights do their own work on the heart and what they do there is contingent upon what is in that heart. To some hearts they will say, Merry Christmas, to other hearts they will say, Season's Greetings, and to some hearts they will say both. We should be good with that. (Adapted from ([info@ronrolheiser.com/december25,2023](mailto:info@ronrolheiser.com/december25,2023)))

### Questions

1. How do you keep Christ in Christmas?
2. How accepting are you of other religions' celebrations?

### Challenge:

Greet everyone you meet with Merry Christmas or Season's Greetings.

### Quote:

"Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ from heaven, go out to meet Him! Christ on earth, be exalted! Sing to the Lord all the whole earth; and that I may join both in one word, let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, for Him who is of heaven and then of earth. Christ in the flesh, rejoice with trembling and with joy; with trembling because of your sins, with joy because of your hope." ~ St. Gregory Nazianzen

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## OCIA

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### Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

What is Catholicism? Are you curious?  
Are you interested in joining the Catholic Church?  
Do you feel you are on the outside looking in?  
Would you like to know more about the Catholic Faith?  
Maybe you were raised Catholic and have strayed?  
Have you ever wondered, 'Why am I even doing this?'  
Do you remember all the reasons of your faith,  
the beauty of our faith?



**We meet, Monday evenings at 6:30pm  
in the parish rectory!**

**We would love to have you join us. Everyone is welcome!**  
**Contact the office at the office 243-2195**

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## Adult Ed

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### TUESDAY MORNINGS

We are watching season 5 of The Chosen.  
Join us for coffee, pastries, an episode,  
and discussion after Mass.

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Ascension Presents has awesome material and  
shorter videos on various Catholic Topics  
through YouTube and Facebook!

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## Evangelization Ministry

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### **Don't miss our next Epic Evangelization event!**

Have ever wanted better formation in how to evangelize in an  
ever-changing world?  
Have you met someone from another Mass time and wondered how  
you did not know them?  
Have you ever found out about an event after it occurred and  
wondered why you did not know about it?  
If you answered yes to any of the above, then I think you will be  
excited to know about our next event.

**All ministry leaders, catechists, staff, and parishioners are  
invited! Please forward to anyone you think might be  
interested. TBA**

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### Men Needed!!

Men wanted for Prison Ministry in Anchorage to visit the im-  
prisoned and bring them the Dismas Ministry Catholic Bible  
Study at the Anchorage Correctional Complex. Wed. eve-  
nings, 7pm, at Cook Inlet Pre Trial, and/or 12pm on Fri. at An-  
chorage Jail. About 1.5 hours per visit on a routine basis. No  
experience needed, just the desire to help these men come to  
Christ. An application and an evening Dept. of Corrections  
Chaplain's Office training would be required. Interested? Con-  
tact Herman Ellemberger at: [hre814@gmail.com](mailto:hre814@gmail.com)

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## Adoration

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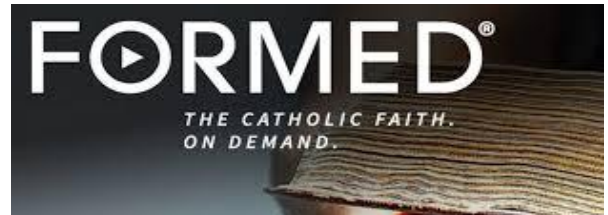
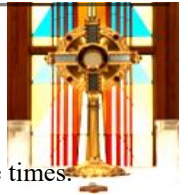
### Eucharistic Adoration

Adoration is offered:  
Monday—Friday 10:00AM-10:00PM

You are welcome to come in to pray during these times.

~ Call the office to get the code to the adoration door.  
Call the office to sign up\*

*"Could you not watch one hour with me?" (Mt. 6:21; 26:40)*



Visit [Formed.org](http://Formed.org) for great material on  
sacraments, Devotions, saint movies and more!

- 1) go to [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org).
- 2) click Sign Up
- 3) click I belong to a parish/organization
- 4) type in St. Benedict and look for our address  
(8110 Jewel Lake Rd. Anchorage, AK) and then  
enter your name and email!



**No Super Sunday,  
Merry Christmas!**

Pre-K thru 8th High  
4:00-1:30 Family time in the gym & lunch!!  
1:30-2:00 Super Sunday presentation for families  
2:00-3:00 Class time for students and adults

**All families who attend the family formation time  
are eligible for great door prizes!!  
New games, new prizes!!!  
Same great family faith formation!!!**

**High School grades 9-11**

**We meet in the room above the  
gym from 4:00-5:45 PM.**



Lower 48

# Pilgrimage

2026

JAN. 30-  
Feb. 6

Join Bob and Fr. Robert Whitney on a pilgrimage through the earliest sites of the Catholic Church in the Americas. And lots more...



## DETAILS...

### Highlights of Itinerary:

Jan. 30- Anchorage to Orlando  
Jan. 31- Tallahassee- Venerable Florida Martyrs and missions  
Feb. 1- Birmingham- Cathedral and EWTN  
Feb. 2- Retreat day at Blessed Sacrament Shrine  
Feb. 3- Atlanta- Shrine and Cistercian monastery  
Feb. 4- Savannah- Cathedral and Flannery O'Connor Museum  
Feb. 5- St Augustine- Oldest Mass, Cathedral, and La Leche Shrine  
Feb. 6- Back to Orlando for flight Home or ???



**Total Cost:**  
**Triple: 1436**  
**Double: 1576**  
**Single: 1996**

Includes:  
Airfare  
Lodging  
Transportation  
2 meals a day

REGISTER BY  
NOV. 15 TO  
LOCK IN PRICE.

Contact Bob McMorrow for more information

907-308-9382  
rmmorrow@stbenedictssak.com





# # Upcoming Events

01/07 High School Night 7pm extended night!  
01/06 Jr. High Night 6pm



**St. Andrew Bobola, S.J.**  
Patron of our E/C Team,  
Pray for us.



# Pray for us!

## #Youth Corner

**1/07 Youth Night**

**7-9pm**

**1/06 Jr. High Night!!**

**We Need Adult Volunteers!! 6-8pm**



Check out our page at:

<https://www.stbenedictsak.com/65>

FB: St. Ben's Youth Ministry

Insta: @stbensyouthanc

