

December 15, 2013 • Third Sunday of Advent

With almost childlike eagerness today's scriptures proclaim: "Here is your God . . . he comes to save you" (Isaiah 35:4); "the coming of the Lord is at hand" (James 5:8); "Are you the one who is to come?" (Matthew 11:3). Jesus' description of his ministry assures us that the Messiah has already come into the world to save humankind. And, after all, this is the reason we celebrate Christmas and "rejoice with joyful song" (Isaiah 35:2).

Yet we know that Isaiah's prophecy and Jesus' ministry of healing are not complete. Disease, poverty, sadness, and death are still rampant in our world, and much suffering is of human making. "The least" are not treated with the dignity that Jesus envisioned for them "in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 11:11). The ministry described in these scriptures is still needed in the world today.

COME WISDOM, HOLY WORD OF GOD

One of the O Antiphons calls on Wisdom, the holy Word of God, to guide and show us the way to continue Jesus' healing, saving ministry. Today's scriptures provide a wealth of wisdom and a clear path for us to follow. God's wisdom is shown in Jesus, who has come into our midst to rescue the least ones and lift them out of their suffering. We have only to ask Jesus to heal our suffering and need, and show us the way to extend his salvation to others.

As you make your final preparations for Christmas, how will the wisdom of these scriptures affect your use of time and money? Will you purchase gifts for people who can't give back? Might you buy from an organization that supports people with disabilities? Will you write a letter to heal an old wound or rift? Where and with whom will you spend your time?

Let us pray: Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong but tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation (Evening Prayer, December 17).

Today's Readings: Is 35:1-6a, 10; Ps 146:6-10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

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St. Alphonsus Parish

St. Mary's Assumption Church
National Shrine of Blessed Francis Seelos
2030 Constance Street † New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 522-6748 † Fax: (504) 523-3734

Sunday Masses

Vigil: 4:00 PM (Church)

Sunday: 9:00 AM (Chapel): 10:30 AM (Church)

Weekday Masses

Monday—Friday: 7:00 AM (Chapel)

Monday—Saturday: 8:00 AM (Rectory)

St. Mary's Chapel/1516 Jackson Avenue

Our Faith Community welcomes all members and visitors alike

St. Alphonsus Parish Mission Statement

In the tradition of our immigrant founders, St. Alphonsus Parish continues to be a welcoming and caring Roman Catholic community of faith. We are inspired by the Holy Spirit, formed by the Gospel under the mantle of Mary, Our Mother of Perpetual Help, and since 1843 served by the Redemptorists, men of faith such as Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos. We are committed to carry forward a living history that shapes us into a Eucharistic community which strives for a more just society through service to each other and to the community.

Parish Office Hours

Monday—Friday: 8:30 AM—2:30 PM
 Email: stalphonsusoffice@parishmail.com
 Website: www.stalphonsusneworleans.com

Pastoral Staff

Under the pastoral care of the Redemptorists since 1843

Father Richard Thibodeau, C.Ss.R.

rthibs@aol.com
 Pastor

Father Eugene Harrison, C.Ss.R.

eugeneharrison@msn.com
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 Music Director

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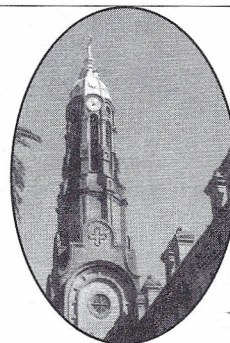
smcder@dcc.edu
 Vocalist

IN RESIDENCE

Father Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.

Director, Blessed Seelos Welcome Center

Father Gerard LaPorte, C.Ss.R.



Confessions

Saturday: 3:30—3:55 PM (Church)
 or by arrangement

Baptisms

Call the parish office by the 25th of the month to make appointment for class. Class is the 1st Saturday of the month at 10:00AM.

Marriages

Please make arrangements at least six months in advance.

Home Visits

Please call the parish office when someone is ill and would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick or receive Holy Communion.

Eucharistic Adoration

The 1st Friday of each month at 5:00 P.M. in the rectory chapel.

Rosary

The Rosary is prayed every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Seelos Shrine.

Phone Numbers

Daily Spiritual Message	586-1803
Friends of St. Alphonsus	524-8116
Hope House	525-2561
Mercy Endeavors	568-0607
St. Alphonsus School	523-6594
Seelos Welcome Center	525-2495

If you would like to become a parish member of St. Alphonsus please call the parish office.

Pastor's Corner

Dear Parish Family,

In the midst of your Christmas shopping I thought I would share with you a few updates.

We recently sent a letter to each **registered parish member** which lists our schedule for Christmas and New Year's. If you haven't received this mailing, please check with our parish office. It is possible that you are not considered a registered member! Even though you might come to St. Mary's each week unless you have filled out the parish registration form you are not an "official" member.

The **Christmas gifts for the students** attending our St. Alphonsus School are due back today. We want to make sure that each receives a gift before school lets out for Christmas. If you still have a tag or a gift at home, please return it today so we can account for all the gifts that we have or may still need to get. Thanks to all who participated in this effort.

We have not scheduled a particular time during Advent for the **Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession)** beyond our regular scheduled times on Saturday afternoon (3:20 to 4:00 p.m.). Please keep in mind, though, that you are always welcome to stop at the parish office or make an appointment with one of the priests if you wish to celebrate the Sacrament.

The week of March 23, 2014, we will have a group of 10-15 **young adults (ages 18 and older) from our sister Redemptorist parish in Grand Rapids, MI** (also named St. Alphonsus) come to our parish for a mission trip. During the five days they are with us they will assist in the various ministries on our parish campus as well as learn something about New Orleans. If you have any ideas on how to make their time here more enriching please let me know. This is a great opportunity to meet others also under the Redemptorist banner.

We are hoping to have our **new parish website** in operation in the weeks ahead. Besides having a new look we are hoping that it contains features that you will find to be very helpful in planning.

You are encouraged to consider **electronic giving** in 2014. For more information on how to easily begin this please call Brother Tom Wright at 504-256-6114 or at twrightcssr@gmail.com

I would be remiss if I did not give an update on our **Bell Tower Restoration**. We continue to make strides towards our ultimate goal. In early January the Finance Committee will look at the funds on hand and what is still needed to complete the project and determine how to make up the shortfall...if one exists. Your help at Christmas will make that conversation less painful! So please remember your parish in your Christmas giving...both the tower project and/or the general operating needs of our parish. Remember, we depend on you, our members, to keep us going strong!

Thought for the week: "Santa may be watching but the police have radar!"

Have a great week ahead...and good luck finding those Christmas bargains!

Fr. Richard

REST IN PEACE

Our prayers and heartfelt sympathy go out to....

Darlene Gaiennie and her family on the death of their father Henry F. Soroe, Jr.,

Heidi Brown and her family on the death of their father Charles Schmidt,

Majorie Deano and her family on the death of their beloved husband Lloyd Deano.

May they all rest in peace!

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

**December 24th Christmas Eve Family Mass
4:00 P.M. St. Mary's Assumption Church**

**December 25th Christmas Day
10:30 A.M. St. Mary's Assumption Church**

**Please invite your family, friends, and neighbors
To join us!**

**POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS
FOR DECEMBER**

Pope Francis' general prayer intention for December is **Victimized Children**: "That children who are victims of abandonment or violence may find the love and protection they need."

His mission intention is **Prepare the Savior's Coming**: "That Christians, enlightened by the Word incarnate, may prepare humanity for the Savior's coming."

The New Orleans Opera's Metropelican production of
"HANSEL AND GRETEL"
For children of all ages
Sunday, December 22, 2013
At 2:30 P.M.
**St. John the Baptist Church
1139 Oretha C. Haley Blvd.**

This delightful 45 minute version of the classic favorite introduces children to opera and continues to enchant new audiences. The fully staged and costumed reenactment of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale is perfect for the holidays!

Sponsored by: St. Alphonsus Parish, Trinity Episcopal Church, Felicity Redevelopment, Inc. & Mount Zion Baptist Church.

OUR BELL TOWER RESTORATION

**Have you responded to our campaign
to restore St. Mary's Bell Tower?**

Please do so today!

We all need your help to "finish the job!"

Loving God, we remember the following:

Robert Beyer, Jr. & Sr.

Dennis Cross

William & Thelma Crotty & Family

Walter Palmer Diaz, M. D.

Elsie Dufresne Duffel & V. L. Duffel

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Preston

Irene Gelderman

Nancy Stafford Hartson

Katherine Walet Hartson

Deacon Maurice John Hartson, III

Gerard D. Krummel

Margaret Simmons McBride

William. G. Russell & Sam Moran Families

Mr. Joe Pastora

Mr. Kenny Pratt

Mr. & Mrs. Felix Rousset, Jr., Sr. & Rosemary

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Schafer

Wandah "Cookie" Scheuermann

Mr. Travis Taegue

Mr. Ken Teague

Lucille Bayer Vella

Mercedes & Pete Waldron



CHRISTMAS GIFT TREE FOR THE CHILDREN of ST. ALPHONSUS SCHOOL



All gifts must be returned by this Sunday Dec. 15.

The gifts can be returned to the church or to the parish office.

Please return the gifts wrapped and with the name tag (ornament) attached.

We would like for each child attending St. Alphonsus School to receive one gift.

Electronic Giving



One new way of donating money to St. Alphonsus is electronically. This saves you having to worry about bringing money with you to church and assures that your contribution is made whether you are here on Sunday or not.

For more details please call Brother Tom Wright at 504-256-6114 or email: twrightcssr@gmail.com.

Have you included St. Alphonsus Parish and/or the Redemptorists in your will?

2014 Weekly Offering Envelopes

If you're thinking of becoming a registered parishioner of St. Alphonsus Parish now would be a good time to sign-up either by coming to the office, emailing or calling the office with your information. The parish office number is 504-522-6748.

It's very important that our information about you is correct so that your end-of year contribution letter will go to the right address.

Touro Hospital Needs Volunteers...

for the surgery waiting room desk, book rack for patients, assist administrative staff, gift shop, escort patients to their rooms after they have gone for tests.

For more information please email Denise Chetta at denise.chetta@touro.com or call **504-897-8107**.

Sunday Collection

Year to Date:	(11/1/13 -11/30/13)
November, 2013:	\$18,876.70
Actual Year to Date:	\$101,580.03
Budget:	\$102,083.38
Amount below Budget:	-\$503.35
Actual YTD Prior Year:	\$95,389.50

Deep gratitude to all!

Please Pray for...

Lydia R. Steele, Larry Konikoff, Jr., Paul & Claude Dupuis, Donald Henry, Meagan Sauviac, Betty Rome, Imelda Ward, Terry Baker, Terence Ibert, Jr., Emma Romsy, John W. Parham, Helen Lee Adams, Lisa Tracey, Norman Mopsik, Nick Baroni, Eric Dusang, Seth & Ian Hubbard, Brandon Isbell, Cynthia Bergeron, Barbara Bossier, Elizabeth Doell, Janice Douglas, Beth Bertucci, Ted Sternberg, Toni Tanner, Yen Nguyen, Victoria Dominique, Lisa Huber, Michael Schafer, Luke Spottswood, Adele Faucheux, Linda Faucheux, Byron Montz, Joyce Bourgeois, Margaret Dyer, Barrie Byrnes, Jack Russo, Miller Family, Lois Beyer, Francis O'Rourke, plus all sick and infirmed.

To place or keep a name on our sick list, please call the rectory every 3 weeks to let us know that you, a loved one or friend are still in need of prayers.

Monday - December 16

7:00 am Our Bell Tower Donors
8:00 am Cecil J. Murphy, Jr. +

Tuesday - December 17

7:00 am Nicholas Pastor +
8:00 am Joseph L. DeFelice +

Wednesday - December 18

7:00 am Rosalie Rogers +
8:00 am Brian Bensen & Family

Thursday - December 19

7:00 am Redemptorists
8:00 am Marian Elizabeth Bolton. +

Friday - December 20

7:00 am St. Thomas Clinic
8:00 am Frank Chapman +

Saturday - December 21

8:00 am James Wagner +
4:00 pm Bella Petit DeFelice +

Sunday - December 22

9:00 am Walter Metzinger, Jr. +
10:30 am All St. Alphonsus Parishioners
Brian Bensen & Family

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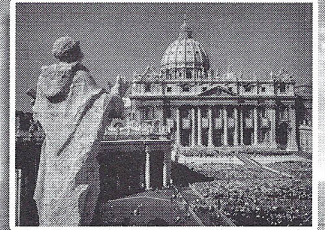
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