

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

December 2nd/December 3rd 2017: First Sunday of Advent



**1460 Pearson Avenue SW
Birmingham, Alabama 35211
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Pastor
Rev. Jim W. Booth

Religious Education
Ann Noblitt

SACRAMENTS and LITURGY

English Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.

English Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.

Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 10:45 a.m.

English Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday

Latin Weekday Masses: 7:00 a.m. Wednesday and Friday

First Saturday Latin Mass: 8:30 a.m. with confessions beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Holy Day Mass: As Announced

Confessions: Thirty minutes before Saturday and Sunday Masses and by request

Baptisms: By Appointment

Marriage Arrangements must be made with the Pastor at least 6 months before the date of the wedding. Talk to the Pastor before making any firm wedding plans. No destination weddings.

WELCOME to all of our visitors: We are glad you have attended Mass with us. If you wish to join Blessed Sacrament, please pick up a parish census form at the Religious Goods Counter located in the vestibule of the front entrance.

IN MEMORIAM: In memory of Dominick and Angela Montalbano, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of their souls from December 3rd to December 9th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Webb Dismukes from December 10th until December 16th.

MEMORIAL SANCTUARY LAMP SIGN-UP SHEETS for 2018, 2019, and 2020 are at the religious goods counter in the vestibule at the back of the Church.

FIRST SUNDAY: This Sunday is the first Sunday of the month. There will be coffee and donuts following the 9:00 Mass.

DECEMBER 8th, THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: Friday, December 8th is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and a holy day of obligation. We will have Mass in English at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 7th and on Friday, December 8th at 8:30 a.m. Low Latin Masses will be offered on December 8th at 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

ADVENT ANGEL TREE: We have an Advent Angel Tree this year that will benefit a number of truly needy families in our local communality. Please bring the gift items back with the angel tag attached by Sunday, December 17th.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Deacon Jonathan Howell, Connor Chandler, Chris Green, Justin Ward, Daniel Sessions, Charles Deering, Doug Hess, Juan Perez, and Luis Reyes. We need to fervently pray for those who are discerning a call to the priesthood. We will need 12-15 men to enter seminary by 2020 or we face the closing or consolidation of parishes.

2017 HIGH MASS DATES: December 17th (Gaudete Sunday); Sunday, December 24th (Christmas Eve, 8:00 p.m.)

2018 TENTATIVE HIGH MASS DATES: Sunday, February 4th (Sexagesima Sunday), Sunday, March 11th (Laetare Sunday), Thursday, March 29th (Holy Thursday), Sunday, April 1st (Easter Sunday), Sunday, April 15th (First Communion, Second Sunday After Easter), Thursday, May 31st (Corpus Christi, Thursday 6:00 p.m.), Sunday, July 1st (Precious Blood), Wednesday, August 15th (Assumption, Wednesday 6:00 p.m.), Sunday, September 2nd (Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost), Sunday, October 28th (Christ the King), Sunday, December 16th (Gaudete Sunday), Monday, December 24th (Christmas Eve, 8:00 p.m.).

A NOTE ABOUT CHRISTMAS: The year, Christmas lands on a Monday, which means that our Christmas Eve Masses will be on Sunday. Since every Sunday and Christmas are holy days of obligation, everyone must attend a Mass that counts for Sunday and one that counts for Christmas. This can be done by attending the vigil Mass on Saturday and any of the Masses for Christmas, a Mass on Sunday morning and any of the Christmas Masses, or by attending a Christmas Eve Mass (since it occurs on Sunday) and a Christmas Day Mass. One cannot merely attend a Christmas Eve Mass and have it count for both Sunday and Christmas, however.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection for last weekend was \$3184 and the Preservation Fund contributions totaled \$5190. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Sun, Dec 24: 3:30 p.m. Carols
4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass in English
7:30 p.m. Carols
8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve High Mass in Latin
Mon, Dec 25: 9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Mass in English
10:45 a.m. Christmas Day Low Mass in Latin

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (*Mass in Rectory Chapel)

Mon, Dec 4: *8:30 a.m. Special Intention for Luke Kelly (by the Rumore Family)
Tues, Dec 5: *8:30 a.m. † Mother Mary Gabriel Long, SsEW (by the Sister Servants of the Eternal Word)
Wed, Dec 6: *7:00 a.m. † Tom & Rita Flemming (by Charles Anthony Rumore, Jr.)
*8:30 a.m. † Mother Mary Gabriel Long, SsEW (by the Sister Servants of the Eternal Word)
Thur, Dec 7: *8:30 a.m. † Rebecca Morris (by Ann Noblitt and Ginny Daniel)
6:00 p.m. † Rebecca Morris (by St Bernadette's Band)
Fri, Dec 8: 7:00 a.m. † Thomas Flemming (by Dominic Rumore)
8:30 a.m. Pro Populo
6:00 p.m. Special Intention for Allison Rumore (by the Runge Family)
Sat, Dec 9: 4:00 p.m. † Rebecca Morris (by the Bryant Family)
Sun, Dec 10: 9:00 a.m. *Pro Populo*
10:45 a.m. † Sr Joseph Mary Powell, OP (by Lena Donellan)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially William Scroggins, Laura Minjares, John Minjares, Sr., Lamar Smith, Fr Kevin McGrath, OSB, Johnny Young, Sharon Collier, Richard Collier, Paul Pac, Jacob Baker, Paul Herrmann, Debbie Zeller, Peter Ransom, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Darleen Schultz, Joseph Edwards, Fr Joseph Underwood, George Dunham, Rebecca Rice, Mike Hale, Kay Junk, Liz Pate, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Mary Thornton, Liz Bailey, Thatcher Kerzie, Simmes Beville, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Anna Marie Madison, Kathleen Strawmeyer, Cindy Little, Stan Trawick, David Henning, Bill Bankson, Bill Mara, Loretta Mara, Don Broseman, Lillie Rumore, Jennie Sciro, Stephanie Perry, Marcus Perry, Cynthia Daniel, and Jackie Modica.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Isa 40:1-5, 9-11, 2Pet 3:8-14, Mk 1:1-8
9:00 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Isa 40:1-5, 9-11, 2Pet 3:8-14, Mk 1:1-8
10:45 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Rom 15:4-13, Mt 11:2-10

The Sacraments: Matrimony

The Catechism notes that ‘Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter - appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility. In a word it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values’ (CCC 1643).

One of the terms in this statement on marriage does not often get the contemplation that it deserves. That word is conjugal. We tend to see this word as pertaining to marriage in a general sense, which in its common usage certainly applies. But the root of this word gives us more insight into what marriage is at a natural level (i.e., between a man and a woman where one or both is not baptized) and at a sacramental level (i.e., where both man and wife are baptized). It is easy to see in the compound nature of the word conjugal that the ‘con-’ signifies ‘with’ or ‘together.’ With or together in what manner? The ‘-jugal’ part of the word comes from the Latin word *jugam*, which means yoke. This would be a yoke like that used to harness two oxen together. Of course, this type of yoke joins the oxen at the neck, and it should therefore be no surprise that the jugular vein gets its name from the same root.

Thus, conjugal means joined or yoked together at the neck, which is hardly an image that most people today would find attractive or edifying. From a modern American cultural perspective we would tend to understand marriage as being joined together at the heart or the mind. In a few months we will celebrate the expression of emotional love in the secular holiday of Valentine’s Day where hearts will be the most common image of this celebration. But how many Hallmark cards are we likely to find expressing a union of husband and wife yoked together at the neck? If one such Valentine’s Day card could be found, no doubt it would have to be put in quite humorous terms lest the very image of the yoke be deemed insulting or demeaning. As for being joined at the mind, this is what many people assume it means to be so-called soul mates. Being joined at the mind would be one way of saying that husband and wife have so much in common: common politics, common life aspirations, common financial perspectives, common hobbies, common temperaments, common football allegiances, etc. Being of the same mind on all or many things certainly makes for less strife in a marriage, but it is not the very essence of marriage.

In other words, romance and being like-minded are not what makes a marriage, they are not the bond between man and wife. What happens when the romance fades? What happens when husband and wife no longer share the same intellectual perspectives? Would the marriage cease to be when one or both of these things happen? Sadly, the answer today is all too often ‘yes.’

But if we see marriage as being joined at the neck, we begin to understand marriage as husband and wife working together, not just sharing emotions and ideas. We begin to see the need for moving forward and progressing together. We begin to see that both husband and wife are to have a common destination. We begin to see the very important truth that ‘us’ supplants ‘me’ in marriage. In the proper understanding of natural marriage, there is common earthly totality of husband and wife together seeking the good things in this life. In the supernatural or sacramental understanding, this totality is extended to spiritual realities and the supernaturally good things in this life and most importantly in the life to come. Thus, with the conjugal understanding of marriage, us comes before me, the common good comes before personal satisfaction, and a common destination comes before personal aspirations. When the sacramental dimension is added, the sanctification of the spouses and the children becomes the utmost concern so much so that the very limitations and faults of husband, wife, and children begin to become a means of spiritual growth, growth that ultimately challenges us to love as God loves.

- Fr Booth