

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

December 8th/December 9th 2018: Second Sunday of Advent



**1460 Pearson Avenue SW
Birmingham, Alabama 35211
Phone: (205) 785-9840**

**E-mail: church@myblessedsacrament.org
Website: www.myblessedsacrament.org**

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, 6:30 p.m. on First 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 Angela and Dominick Montalbano, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of their souls from December 9th to December 15th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Eugene Mason from December 16th until December 22nd.

MORNING WITH MARY: All ladies are invited to a morning of devotion next Saturday, December 15th. Adoration will begin at 8:30 a.m., there will be confession during adoration, followed by benediction at about 9:10 a.m., and concluding with a Latin Mass at about 9:15 a.m.

THIRD SUNDAY: Next Sunday is the Third Sunday of the month. We will have vocations prayers and a reception for the confirmandi following the 10:45 a.m. Mass.

MASS & MARCH FOR LIFE: Bishop Baker will celebrate a Mass for Life at the Cathedral of St Paul on Saturday, January 12th at 9:00 a.m. Following the Mass, there will be a peaceful and prayerful rally and march at Brother Bryan Park at 10:45 a.m. Please come and speak out on behalf of innocent babies and others who can't speak for themselves against the culture of death.

POTLUCK DINNER DANCE: We will have a covered dish dinner dance in the Parish Hall this Saturday, March 2nd following the 4:00 p.m. Mass. All are invited to dine and dance.

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 16th.

ADVENT OUTREACH TO THE CATHOLIC CENTER OF CONCERN: All through the season of Advent we will collect non-perishable food items as well as other basic necessities such as toiletries, diapers, paper goods, and the like for the Catholic Center for Concern. Please help those in need have a better Christmas by meeting their most basic needs.

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.

CONTACTING THE FRANCISCANS: the Franciscans of the Fraternity Poor of Jesus Christ, Friar Gabriel, Friar Rafael, and Friar Leticio, can be contacted at (205) 578-2988, on facepage @poorofjesuschristalabama, and via e-mail at franciscanspjcalabama@gmail.com

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection for last weekend was \$3005 and \$465 were collected for the Preservation Fund. Many thanks for your generosity.

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

Sat, Dec 8:	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for Charlie Rumore (by Scott Donellan)
	4:00 p.m.	† Sylvester Theriot (by Bill & Marian Dinan)
Sun, Dec 9:	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for Therese, Damian, & James Labauve (by Richard & Barbara Juneau)
Mon, Dec 10	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Dr. Lydia & Dr. Thomas Beaumont (by the Hahn Family)
Tues, Dec 11:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Mary Jo Fernandes (by the Hahn Family)
Wed, Dec 12:	*7:00 a.m.	Special Intention for Mary Margaret Rumore (by Mary Claire Matthews)
	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Rosemarie Laque (by the Hahn Family)
Thur, Dec 13:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Michael Rumore (by the Hahn Family)
Fri, Dec 14:	*7:00 a.m.	Special Intention for Mike Donellan (by Mary Donellan)
	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Deacon Terry & Rita Rumore (by the Hahn Family)
Sat, Dec 15:	9:15 a.m.	Special Intention for Aric Pohorelsky (by the Hahn Family)
	4:00 p.m.	† Sylvester Theriot (by the Bryant Family)
Sun, Dec 16:	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for Mary Claire Matthews (by Richard & Barbara Juneau)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Christopher Chism, Anthony Timpa, Jacob Baker, Virginia Files, Danny Rohling, Vinita Kelly, Penny Vaughn, Patricia Durward, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, Sylvia McCarrick, William Scroggins, Lamar Smith, Fr Kevin McGrath, OSB, Johnny Young, Paul Herrmann, Debbie Zeller, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Joseph Edwards, George Dunham, Rebecca Rice, Kay Junk, Liz Pate, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Liz Bailey, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Anna Marie Madison, Kathleen Strawmeyer, Cindy Little, Stan Trawick, David Henning, Bill Bankson, 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. Third Sunday of Advent	Zep 3:14-18, Phil 4:4-7, Lk 3:10-18
9:00 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Zep 3:14-18, Phil 4:4-7, Lk 3:10-18
10:45 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Phil 4:4-7, Jn 1:19-28

Four Important Things (Continued)

Death, judgment, heaven, and hell are often called the four last things. They are not called the four last things because they are the last or least likely things we reflect upon in life. They are called the four last things because they represent the final things that happen to us in this life: we all die, we are all judged by God, and as a result some are judged worthy of heaven while some are judged worthy of hell.

Although they do not get their name for this reason, it is almost a certainty that death, judgment, heaven, and hell are truly the last things many of us want to think about. ‘Last’ in this sense means that we would rather think about almost any other topic than these. We would rather think of doing the laundry, changing the oil, visiting the dentist, cleaning the gutters, having a colonoscopy, doing the taxes, cleaning the oven, and so forth than to ponder these subjects. For some people, ‘last’ will mean that their deaths will force the issue, that death will bring about the unavoidable truths of these realities whether they like it or not.

Since we don’t understand eternity – timelessness as opposed to the passage of a very long period of time – heaven and hell do not occupy much of our thoughts. Being optimists, or being presumptuous, we kinda think vaguely of going to heaven, but these thoughts typically come about when someone we know dies. Of the four last things it is death that more than likely disturbs us most, not only because it is much more tangible than the other three last things, but also because we have a greater natural fear of death than just about anything else except for perhaps suffering, especially protracted suffering. We might also deeply dread the prospects of dying in a certain way, such as dying by drowning, dying by fire, dying in our sleep, dying suddenly, dying after having lost the use of our minds, dying after having lost the use of our bodies, dying alone, etc.

As Christians, however, we really should not fear death as much as we do. Jesus conquered death, robbing it completely of its power. Indeed, thanks to Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection we should be able to say along with St Paul “*O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?*” (1Cor 15:55). Death no longer means an end but now represents a beginning. Understanding through faith that death leads to the possibility of everlasting life in heaven should tame our natural fear of death, knowing that death brings us into the presence of Jesus should make death far more palatable that it typically is for most people.

In any case, what exactly is death? Medical science would say that death occurs when the signs of life cease. Cessation of breathing was once considered the measure of death. Later, the absence of a heartbeat was evidence of death. Since both breathing and the heart can stop for a period of time without the certainty of death, brain activity is the most recent means of determining whether or not death has occurred. Spiritually speaking, however, death occurs when the immortal soul leaves the mortal body, when the body is no longer animated by the soul. This cannot be measured directly, but breathing, the heartbeat, and brain activity are all measures of life and their absence is therefore a measure that death has occurred.

But if we understand that death is the separation of the soul from the body, if we understand that we are not merely our bodies but that our bodies are merely part of us, if we understand that our bodies are mortal but our souls are immortal, if we understand that our bodies can be destroyed but our souls are indestructible, and if we understand that it is not our bodies but our souls that carry our personhood and our identities, then dying united with Christ should not be a source of dread and foreboding. We naturally fear death because it seems like the end, it seems utterly permanent, but it is the permanent end only to our earthly bodies but not to us as persons or us as individuals.

As Christians, it is key to understand these realities and to recognize that our knowledge and our faith must overcome our natural fear of death. It is also essential to understand death in a proper spiritual way because we will struggle to understand life and the meaning of life unless we understand death itself. Knowing that death is the end of our earthly lives but not the end of us individual persons and knowing that the judgment of our lives immediately follows death should lead us an understanding of how we ought to live in this life.