

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

November 27th / November 28th 2021: First Sunday of Advent



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

SACRAMENTS and LITURGY
English Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.
English Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.
Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 7:30 a.m. and 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: See Below

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.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, MASS & DEVOTIONS: We have an additional Sunday Latin Mass at 7:30, which is intended to aid in the social distancing, and will continue on a provisional basis.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, CONFESSIONS: Confessions have returned to the confessional. Confessions will be offered at 3:30-3:55 p.m. on Saturday and on Sunday at 7:00-7:25 a.m., 8:30-8:55 a.m., and 10:15-10:40 a.m.

NOTE ON CONFESSIONS: If there is a significant line for confession, Fr Booth might say part of the formula of absolution while the penitent recites the act of contrition. The full formula of absolution is always said, but the first part might be said softly during the act of contrition. Thus, you might only hear “and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

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 Lois Pruitt, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of her soul from November 28th to December 4th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Lois Pruitt from December 5th until December 11th.

FIRST FRIDAY: We will have our First Friday English Mass on December 3rd at 8:30 a.m. in the Rectory followed with Adoration and Benediction and a Latin Low Mass at 6:30 p.m. in the Church.

FIRST SATURDAY: First Saturday Mass will be offered in Latin at 8:30 a.m. on December 4th. Altar server training, choir practice, and Martha and Mary Altar Sodality will follow Mass.

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

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 wrapped gift items back with the angel tag attached by Sunday, December 19th.

FUNDRAISER FOR OUR FRANCISCANS: All are invited to a fundraising dinner for our Franciscans, the Poor of Jesus Christ, that will be held at the social hall of Our Lady of the Valley. The event will occur on Thursday, December 2nd from 6:15 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. with dinner served at 7:00 p.m. There will be a raffle, including artwork by Sr Clara, \$1,000 cash, and one week at a Lake Martin house that sleeps 20. There is no cost to attend, but an appeal for donations will be made. Banquet registration required by November 24th by calling (205) 913-3776.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Daniel Sessions, Charles Deering, Matthew Gubenski, Patrick DePew, Max Gallegos, John Gardiner, Andrew Vickery, John Paul Stepnowski, Collins Hess, Hunter Limbaugh, Francisco Rodriguez, Adam Sellers, and Dominic Rumore. May more good men to answer God’s call to the priesthood.

FIRST COMMUNION DATE: For 2022, 1st Communion is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 15th.

CONFIRMATION DATE: Our next confirmation is planned for Spring of 2023.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last week was \$4465 and \$300 was donated to the Preservation Fund. Many thanks for your generosity.

2021 HIGH MASS SCHEDULE: The High Mass schedule for the 10:45 a.m. Mass is as follows: Every second, third, and fourth Sunday of the month excluding December 26th with the addition of Immaculate Conception (Weds, December 8th), and Christmas (Sat, December 25th).

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is about a six-month backlog on Mass Intentions. Thus, requested Mass dates cannot always be honored.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (*Masses in the Rectory Chapel)

Sat, Nov 27: 4:00 p.m. † Sheila Garner (by Mary & Betty Mason)
Sun, Nov 28: 7:30 a.m. Special Intention for Susan Muck (by Monica Duvall)
9:00 a.m. Pro Populo
10:45 a.m. Special Intention for Natalie Lawshe (by Cora Duvall)
Mon, Nov 29: *8:30 a.m. † Souls in Purgatory
Tues, Nov 30: *8:30 a.m. Special Intention for Michael Renna (by the Duvall Family)
Wed, Dec 1: *7:00 a.m. † Jose Pilar Carrillo (by the Pinter Family)
*8:30 a.m. Special Intention for Philippa Davis (by the Botta Family)
Thur, Dec 2: *8:30 a.m. Special Intention for Gabriella Trinci (by the Botta Family)
Fri, Dec 3: *8:30 a.m. † Mario Botta (by the Botta Family)
6:30 p.m. Special Intention for Fr Massimo Botta (by the Botta Family)
Sat, Dec 4: 8:30 a.m. † Peter Davis (by the Botta Family)
4:00 p.m. † Sheila Garner (by Mary & Betty Mason)
Sun, Dec 5: 7:30 a.m. Special Intention for Jaycie Donellan (by the Hahn Family)
9:00 a.m. Pro Populo
10:45 a.m. Special Intention for Scott & Lori Donellan (by the Hahns)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially William Hull, Theresa Ragusa, Gloria Archambault, Anthony Morris, James Bonner, Matthew Clune Sr., Ronnie Buchanan, Barbara Williams, Gail McMahon, Gracimo Ribeiro Bento, Sister Miracles, Bob Wiseman, Eve Moore, Aaron Minjares, Bill Dinan, Carol Brandley, Eddie Hunter, Lawrence Brandley, Don Williams, Roseanne Timpa, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Beryl Curtis, Nicole Copeland, Linda Cooper, Lee Dinan, Danny Rohling, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, William Scroggins, Lamar Smith, Paul Herrmann, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Joseph Edwards, George Dunham, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, and Stephanie Perry.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Bar 5:1-9, Phil 1:4-6,8-11, Lk 3:1-6
7:30 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Rom 15:4-13, Mt 11:2-10
9:00 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Bar 5:1-9, Phil 1:4-6,8-11, Lk 3:1-6
10:45 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent	Rom 15:4-13, Mt 11:2-10

Prepare, Celebrate, Repeat

It is that time of year again. Not Black Friday, Cyber Monday, the Iron Bowl aftermath, or anything of the sort. No it is Advent, the beginning of yet another liturgical year. We might have never considered the question, but why do we need a liturgical year, or even Advent itself? We could ask the same thing about Lent, or Ordinary Time, or the Christmas season. Surely, if we were of a minimalistic mindset, we might consider only two annual celebrations, those of course being Christmas and Easter. Some Christians have basically done exactly this sort of thing, limiting annual celebrations to just Christmas and Easter, eliminating every other feast and season. Some, such as the Puritans, took it a big step further. Both in England and New England they banned Christmas and Easter. In fact, Christmas was outlawed in England from 1647 until 1660 and in New England from 1659 to 1681 because of the Puritans.

In Massachusetts, churches were mandated to remain closed on Christmas and businesses were required to be open to thwart any form of celebration. In both England and New England, Christmas became a day of mourning and fasting, a day when the protestant work ethic was to supersede any joy that the birth of Jesus might foster. In England, mince pies were banned at Christmas, along with other seasonal treats that traditionally marked the season. This ban led to the Canterbury ‘Plum Pudding Riots’ in 1658, the response to which was sending the military to Canterbury to enforce the joyless nature of the Puritan Christmas. That the bans on Christmas were short, 13 years in England and 22 years in New England, is telling.

One of the Puritan arguments made against Christmas was that it was unbiblical. Granted, nowhere does the New Testament mandate the celebration of Jesus’ birth, but it can hardly be argued that the Bible prohibits the celebration of God being born into this world as a man. Nor can we say that celebration significant events is banned, outlawed, or discouraged in the Scriptures. It is not like the Law of Moses prohibits the celebration of the Passover every year. No, its celebration was mandated: *“You will keep this practice forever as a statute for yourselves and your descendants. Thus, when you have entered the land which the Lord will give you as he promised, you must observe this rite. When your children ask you, ‘What does this rite of yours mean?’ you will reply, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice for the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt; when he struck down the Egyptians, he delivered our houses”* (Exo 12:24-27). Likewise, *“For seven days you will eat unleavened bread, and the seventh day will also be a festival to the Lord. Unleavened bread may be eaten during the seven days, but nothing leavened and no leaven may be found in your possession in all your territory. And on that day you will explain to your son, ‘This is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ It will be like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the Lord will be on your lips: with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt. You will keep this statute at its appointed time from year to year”* (Exo 13:6-10).

If the Passover is to be celebrated year after year, the perpetual commemoration of the feast marking the liberation of the Israelites from the bondage of slavery, how much more ought we celebrate and commemorate the events that mark mankind’s liberation from slavery to sin and death? If the Passover celebrated the beginnings of the occupation of the Promised Land, how much more does Christmas signify the beginnings of our entry into the eternal Promised Land of heaven?

Notice also that the annual celebration of the Passover was not just a celebration preceded by a penitential period much as Advent precedes Christmas, it also was intended to be catechetical in nature. In other words, annual celebration of the liberation of the Israelites is meant to pass on its significance to succeeding generations. It is a time to anticipate, celebrate, learn, and relearn what God has done. We repeat celebrations for a reason, we celebrate seasons for a reason. Thus St Peter teaches *“Therefore, I will always remind you of these things, even though you already know them and are established in the truth you have”* (1Pet 1:12). The truth bears telling and retelling, living and reliving. - Fr Booth