

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

December 9th/December 10th 2023: Second 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, Wednesday, and Friday

Latin Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 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: Saturday 3:30-3:55 p.m., Sunday 7:00-7:25, 8:30-8:55, and 10:15-10:40 a.m.

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 a.m., to aid in social distancing, and continues on a provisional basis.

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: For Edward Von Hagel, Jr., the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from December 10th to December 16th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Mary & Bill Dinan from December 17th until December 23rd.

RORATE MASS: In lieu of usual Morning with Mary events, there will be a Rorate Mass, a Latin Mass in honor of Our Lady, on Saturday December 16th at 6:30 a.m.

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

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

BLANKET DRIVE: We will be collecting new blankets and comforters for the Catholic Center of Concern all through Advent until Epiphany.

MEMORIAL SANCTUARY LAMP SIGN-UP SHEETS for 2024, 2025, and 2026 are at the religious goods counter in the vestibule at the back of the Church.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES: We continue with the Bishop’s Annual Appeal for Catholic Charities 2024 campaign. You also can enter your annual pledge or recurring gift any time at catholiccharitiesbhm.org. Our pledge goal for this year is \$20,000.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Patrick DePew, Max Gallegos, John Gardiner, Collins Hess, John Paul Stepnowski, Andrew Vickery, Hunter Limbaugh, Adam Sellers, Francisco Rodriguez, Justin Brouillette, Cameron Huhlein, Patrick Letterle, Wilson Moin, Joshua Callahan, Michael Masny, Ross Gilliland, Franz Mercado, Thomas Rogers, Nick Smith, and Dominic Rumore. May more good men to answer God’s call to the priesthood.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last week was \$11,635 and \$230 was given for the Preservation Fund. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is about a 7-month backlog on Mass Intentions. Thus, requested Mass dates cannot always be honored.

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

Sat, Dec 9:	4:00 p.m.	† Bob Bryant (by the Bryant Family)
Sun, Dec 10:	7:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Jeff Brown (by the Donellan Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for Linda Cooper (by the Donellan Family)
Mon, Dec 11:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Grace Kirby (by the Hall Family)
Tues, Dec 12:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Blaise Beaumont (by the Hall Family)
Wed, Dec 13:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Michael Renna (by Doug & Monica Duvall)
Thur, Dec 14:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Maddie Duvall (by the Duvall Family)
Fri, Dec 15:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Mary Shields (by Monica Duvall)
Sat, Dec 16:	6:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Paris Duvall (by the Duvall Family)
	4:00 p.m.	† Julia V. Bryant (by the Bryant Family)
Sun, Dec 17:	7:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Joseph Ducote (by the Duvall Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for John Luke Bruegan (by the Duvall Family)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Laura Minjares, Pedro Antonio Triana, John Davis, Alexandra Taylor, Chorbishop Richard Saad, Mary Jerabek, Sr Maria Lucis, Debbie Booth, Deacon Walter Henderson, Paul Trussel, Paul Caruso, Jeff Brown, Mary Simmons, Linda Henry, ShaKendria Hooks, Lisa DeKam Nicholls, Don Williams, Ronnie Buchanan, Barbara Williams, Gail McMahon, Gracimo Ribeiro Bento, Bob Wiseman, Eve Moore, Bill Dinan, Carol Brandley, Eddie Hunter, Lawrence Brandley, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Beryl Curtis, Linda Cooper, Danny Rohling, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, Beverly Scroggins, William Scroggins, Lamar Smith, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Joseph Edwards, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, and Stephanie Perry.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Isa 61:1-2,10-11, 1Thes 5:16-24, Jn 1:6-8,19-28
7:30 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Phil 4:4-7, Jn 1:19-28
9:00 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Isa 61:1-2,10-11, 1Thes 5:16-24, Jn 1:6-8,19-28
10:45 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent	Phil 4:4-7, Jn 1:19-28

Fourth Precept of the Church

The fourth precept of the Church is to abstain from eating meat and to observe the days of fasting established by the Church. There is a common misconception among Christians, protestant and Catholic alike, that fasting no longer applies. Some believe that Jesus abolished fasting. When challenged by the disciples of John the Baptist as to why His disciples did not fast like they did and like the Pharisees did, Jesus replies “*Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?*” (Mt 9:15). Aha, a smoking gun! Jesus is with us and therefore we not longer have to fast. Not so fast! Jesus goes on to say “*The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast*” (Mt 9:15). His disciples will indeed fast. But we have Jesus, some might object. Yes, we have Him spiritually and sacramentally, but we do not yet possess the Bridegroom in His fullness. The Apostles could see Him with their eyes, shake His hand, hear His voice with their ears, but we can’t say these things of Jesus’ presence among us today. While He has not abandoned us here on earth we will not be with our Bridegroom until we enter the Wedding Feast of Heaven.

Some are likely to point to what Jesus says immediately following the above verse, namely “*No one patches an old cloak with a piece of unshrunk cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved*” (Mt 9:16-17). This is not a repudiation of fasting but a warning to not mix the old Law of Moses with the new law of Christianity. The two are related, old cloth and new cloth as well as old wine and new wine, but not the same. For example, the Law of Moses only prescribes fasting on the Yom Kippur and Jewish tradition adds another four days of obligatory fasting, all of which are mourning various disasters in Jewish history, such as the destruction of Solomon’s Temple. If we were to observe the Jewish calendar with Yom Kippur, Purim, Hanukkah, and so forth, we would be mixing new and old wine, and we could say the same if we fasted on their schedule as well.

Jesus also tells us in the Sermon on the Mount that His disciples will fast. When talking about how to properly fast – for the sake of God and not human respect – Jesus teaches “*When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to others to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you*” (Mt 6:16-18). Jesus says when you fast, not if you fast. So He does expect us to fast. Likewise, would Jesus bother to tell His disciples how to fast and not expect us to fast? A few verses earlier in this chapter Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray by introducing the Our Father. Would He tell men 2000 years ago how to pray but not also expect us to pray?

So, what does the Church say about fasting? First of all, we are free to fast if we so choose whenever we want. Sundays are generally excluded out of reverence for the Resurrection, but as Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount as cited above, fasting is meant as a devotion and not a punishment. Likewise, the sabbath is for us and not us for the sabbath (Mk 2:27). Nevertheless, there are two days of obligatory fasting for those age 18 to 59: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting is also encouraged on Holy Saturday as well, but it is not obligatory. In addition to fasting, the Church also requires abstinence from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and the other Fridays of the year (unless a solemnity, like the Immaculate Conception, happens to land on a Friday). In 1966, however, the Vatican permitted local churches (i.e., France, United States, etc.) to allow meat on the Fridays outside of Lent so long as another penance replaces abstinence from meat. In true American form, a great many have tossed out the idea of abstaining from anything – not dessert, not coffee, not snacks, not anything – on Fridays outside of Lent. In any case, all Catholics age 14 and up are called to abstain on all Fridays of the year as well as Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

- Fr Booth