



St. John Baptiste de LaSalle Catholic Church

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St. Stephen Catholic Church

101 Hawthorne Road
Elkin NC 28621-3016
336-835-3007
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Website: www.ststephennc.org

Fr. John D. Hanic 704-763-2475
Rev. Mr. Harold Markle 336-466-4173
Sister Janis McQuade, S.S.J. 336-835-4542
Fr. Jose Rebaque 203-954-7134
Mr. Cuauhdemoc (Temoc) Herrejon 828-773-2353

St. John

Mary Buran, Karen Huffman Music Ministry
Sabrina Caudill Parish Accountant
336-957-1295
Laura Yanes Bookkeeper, Census
Ann Stone RCIA

St. Stephen

Theresa Martin Music Ministry
Natalie Lopez Youth Faith Formation
Peggy Reikowsky Youth Faith Formation
Phillip Parriah RCIA

Worship Times

Saturday Vigil Mass, 4:00p
Sunday Mass 11:15a; En español, 1:00p
Daily Mass, Holy Days Consult bulletin
Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturdays, 3:00-4:00p

Sunday Mass 9:00a
Communion Service Tuesdays, 12:15p
Holy Days 7:00p
Sacrament of Reconciliation
By appointment

Welcome, New Parishioners

We are a Stewardship Community, sharing our time, talent, and treasure, in the most life-giving ways possible. Parishioners are expected to participate in weekly worship, in our community life, and in our service among our dear neighbors.

Sacramental Life ~ Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Matrimony

For Sacrament preparation, you must be a registered, active member and attend preparation sessions.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

For those who desire to explore the Catholic Faith, spirituality, customs, and practices.

Anointing of the Sick

For those with chronic illness or who are pre-surgery, contact Father John or Sister Janis

Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023



Morning Church!

It's Guadete Sunday or Rose Sunday, the halftime of Advent. We've almost arrived at the great Feast of Christmas. Sometimes these are arduous, energy-draining days directing all our energy in a kinetic busyness so we can accomplish the seasonal "to-dos" and others' expectations.

Did you know mountain climbers often quit *just before* reaching the summit? They fail to complete their quest defeated by the duration of the climb, the piercing cold and debilitating exhaustion. They are so close to their goal, yet, they quit because their journey has worn them down and they can't seem to muster the necessary perseverance to continue. The higher they go, the thinner the air becomes. Eventually, their body aches having to gasp for every bit of oxygen their lungs can hold becomes too discouraging and they just stop trying.

The same can be said for any of us at this juncture of the Advent season. It's so easy for us to lose heart in the blinding blizzard of busyness and extreme demands of these days.

These days can ramp us up on seasonal steroids of wanting the newer, bigger, or better of things. There are parties to plan or attend, gifts to buy, and cards to send. Ironically, there is more to do and less and less time to do it. Our frenetic pace puts most of our attention and time on the "outer space", the struggle with the mountain of "to-dos" before Christmas. Our "inner space" craves spiritual oxygen. We can't breathe in the life we're truly meant to live. The oxygen of our prayer and reflective quiet is ditched just short of Christmas. We can still reach these spiritual goals! Today's third rose candle gives us this hope. It says, "rejoice", regroup, refocus, and recommit to our faithjourney now.

The Voice that once cried out in the wilderness continues crying out to us today, inviting us to testify to The Light who is The Christ: Beginning right now, we can pray for the grace to make straight all the crooked pathways of our life. Rejoice! Emmanuel is here to companion us as we continue this climb in faith and generous service.

*Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances, give thanks...
the One who calls you is faithful and will accomplish this in you.*

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

spanis

 **HEARTwork**

~ Reflecting and Acting on The Word ~

"Rejoice always." What are your sources of joy and gratitude?

Readings <https://bible.usccb.org/>

D E C E M B E R	
17	3rd Sun Advent
19	Communion Service, 12:15p
20	RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p
24	4th Sun Advent ~ Mass, 9a
24	Christmas Eve ~ Mass, 4p
25	Christmas Day ~ Mass, 9a
26	Feast of St. Stephen , our parish patron
31	Feast of the Holy Family ~ Mass, 9a
J A N U A R Y	
06	PARISH Epiphany Pot Luck, 5p BRING SIDES for Chicken & a dessert to share
07	Feast of the Epiphany ~ Mass, 9a

Being Catholic 101: Advent & Christmas Traditions

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Quite unusually for a Christmas carol still commonly performed, there are all sorts of its arcane words and expressions. This is because of the strong roots of the Latin text. ‘O Antiphons’ (so-called because each one begins with an ‘O’), traditionally used during the last seven days of Advent at the Catholic Vespers service.

The distinctly biblical feel of the lyrics differ from the more overtly celebratory tone of most carols (there’s no herald angels harking nor flocks being watched by night, for example), and the actual nativity narrative doesn’t feature in any meaningful way.

The Emmanuel of the title refers to the Hebrew ‘Immanuel’ which appears in the Book of Isaiah in the Old Testament more as a sign of God’s protection than an actual person, whereas in the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament the name Emmanuel refers specifically to Jesus Christ.

☪ Mass Intentions	
17	+Tessie Horneck; John L. & Johnathan Hanic
9a 24	+Susan Martin r/b Jason McClamrock
24-25	Mass for St. Stephen parishioners’ intentions
31	Michelle Garwood (Birthday)
07	Familias de Cortez y Parral

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 17 Juan Rodriguez | 26 Judy Simon |
| 18 Gracie Spicer | 27 Joan Boehm |
| 20 Tom Cirone | Becky Dursee |
| 21 Sixto DeJesus | Gabriel Loyola |
| 21 Hanh Nguyen | Diana Rodriguez |
| Andy Trinidad | 28 Bob DeJohn |
| | 29 Lukas McClamrock |
| | 18 Jackie & Bryan Wagoner |
| | 22 Hilda & Joel Lopez |
| | 23 Elia & Luis Martinez |
| | 31 Crystal & Francisco Fuentes |



Christmas Flowers



Here is your opportunity to remember or honor a loved one or friend for the Christmas Season.

An envelope for your Christmas Flowers are located in the pew pockets PRINT your info on the envelope’s cover, and enclose your monetary gift.

Print the names of those you wish remember/honor on the back. Place the envelope in the collection.



Advent is a time in which, preparing the Nativity display for the Infant Jesus, we learn again who our Lord is, who he is; it is a time to leave behind certain mindsets and prejudices about God and our brothers and sisters; a time in which, instead of thinking about gifts for ourselves, we can give words and gestures of consolation to those who are wounded, as Jesus did with the blind, the deaf, and the lame.



Fr. Joe Mulligan
7009 Cinnamon Circle
Mint Hill NC 28227-4377

Who Will Lead You to God?



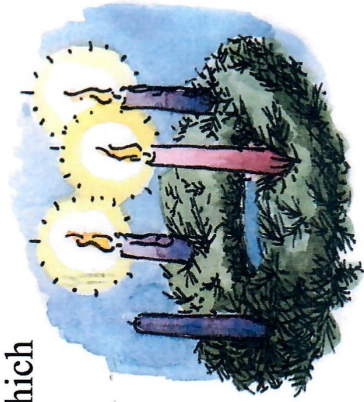
Today's Gospel reading tells us about Saint John the Baptist, who prepared the people for the coming of Jesus. At first people thought that he might be the saviour they were all waiting for, but he was very clear when he told them that he wasn't- there was one coming after him Who would be the truly great One.

Sometimes we hear about great or important people. We know about movie stars and singers and government leaders. Who are some important people you know of?

Do those people that you've thought about help to bring you closer to God? Do they teach you well and give good example? Or do they lead people away from God by doing wrong things or making fun of God's truth?



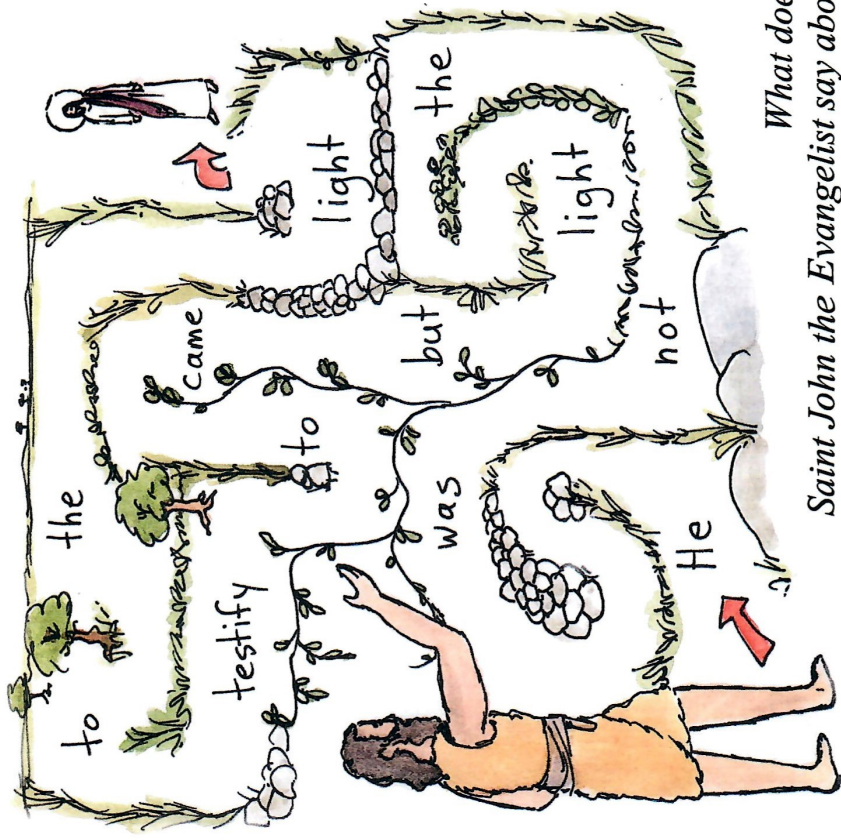
We can know which people are really great by thinking about whether they lead us closer to God, like Saint John the Baptist did.



Answer to Word-find: brokenhearted.

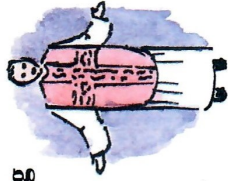
The Kids' Bulletin

Third Sunday of Advent
December 17th, 2023



What does Saint John the Baptist say about the beginning of the Gospel? Read the words you pass as you go through the maze

Was the priest who offered Mass today wearing pink vestments? The colour pink, or rose, is a sign of joy. We use it for the third Sunday of Advent because we are happy that we're half-way to Christmas! If you have an Advent wreath, it's time to light the pink candle!



Saint Hildegard of Bingen

December 17

ST. HILDEGARD OF BINGEN WAS BORN IN THE LATE 1000'S TO A WEALTHY FAMILY. AS A CHILD SHE WAS SICKLY BUT SHE WAS TAUGHT TO READ THE PSALMS IN LATIN.



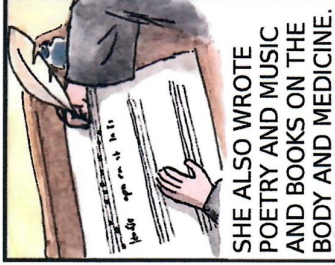
AT THE AGE OF 18 HILDEGARD ENTERED A BENEDICTINE CONVENT, AND SOON BECAME SUPERIOR.



HER CONFESSOR TOLD HER TO WRITE DOWN THE VISIONS SHE HAD SEEN.



SHE ALSO WROTE POETRY AND MUSIC AND BOOKS ON THE BODY AND MEDICINE.



WHEN THE EMPEROR WAS SUPPORTING MEN WHO WERE NOT THE REAL POPE HILDEGARD CORRECTED HIM.



PEOPLE NEARBY AND FROM OTHER COUNTRIES SOUGHT HER ADVICE.



HILDEGARD DEFENDED THE BURIAL IN THE CHURCH CEMETERY OF A MAN WHO HAD EARLIER BEEN EXCOMMUNICATED BUT REPENTED BEFORE HIS DEATH.



SAINT HILDEGARD KNEW A LOT ABOUT GOD FROM HER VISIONS BUT SHE WASN'T PROUD. INSTEAD SHE USED HER KNOWLEDGE AND GIFTS TO BRING PEOPLE CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH MUSIC AND SCIENCE. DID YOU KNOW THAT LEARNING ABOUT GOD'S CREATION CAN HELP YOU TO KNOW HIM BETTER TOO?

The Messenger of Peace

Word-find

V Y E A R P O O R B
I C S P I R I T R O
N A P K O U S L E
D I T G O A L E H E N T I
C I L D V A N T E B I
A V E L A N O I N T E R I
T E S L O R E D T N
O R P R I S O N E R S

See if you can find the words in CAPITALS from today's first reading in the puzzle. Use the left-over letters to fill in the blanks in the reading.

The SPIRIT of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has ANOINTED me; he has SENT me to bring GLAD TIDINGS to the POOR, to heal

the PROCLAIM LIBERTY to CAPTIVES,

and RELEASE to the

PRISONERS,

to ANNOUNCE a YEAR

of FAVOUR from the Lord

and a day of

VINDICATION

by our GOD.



We pray
for our sisters and brothers
in Maui, Morocco,
Middle East, (Oct. 7, 2023)
and Libya... and the 32 places
where war is being raged now.



Our Lady of Protection
Ukrainian Madonna

FEBRUARY 24, 2022
22 months

Ukrainian Catholics dedicate their country
to *Our Lady of Protection*,
interceding to Mary to wrap their country
with her mantle of loving protection.

With the fast pace of communications these days, it's easy to become
overwhelmed and wearied by the barrage of news.
As Catholic Christians, you realized you are intimately tethered
to every Dear Neighbor locally and globally.
When you're feeling overwhelmed and weary, think of and pray for your
Ukrainian sisters and brothers who are overwhelmed and wearied by the barrage
~ not of news ~
but by daily bombings, death, family separation, and the other forms
of collateral damage of war since February 24, 2022.

Our Lady of Protection, pray for us!

Do you know the number
of U.S. Mass
shootings and
gun-related deaths
so far in 2023?



**WHEN IS
ENOUGH,
ENOUGH?**



Tri-C Almsgiving

Thank you so much !!

DEC

Dry beans

CARE for CREATION
RECYCLE INK CARTRIDGES
LOBBY CONTAINERS

Thank you!

