



ST. MARK UNIVERSITY PARISH

The Catholic Community of University of Alaska Fairbanks

1316 Peger Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99709-5168

Email: stmark@cbna.org Webpage: <https://stmarksuaf.org>

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mark's University Parish provides a *welcoming faith community* for students, families, and individuals that share a geographic, intellectual, or historic connection to the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). We exist to *encourage, inform, and support the faith journey of all who have come to UAF* with a background in the Catholic tradition. St. Mark also provides reliable information for non-Catholics inquiring about our faith and contributes to inter-faith discussion and ecumenical action

PASTOR

Fr. Ross Tozzi: rtozzi@cbna.org Ph: 907-347-3005

DEACON

Rev. Mr. Warren Lucero

PARISH OFFICE: ph: 907-374-9544

Office Hours: 10:00 AM– 12noon

Parish Admin: Mary Pat Boger – stmark@cbna.org

Bookkeeping: Marilis Bennett - Ph. 907-590-9291

Music Director: George Stefan - Ph. 907-687-0077

CSA Advisor: Devan Larson: UAF-catholic-Club@alaska.edu

Finance Council: Marilis Bennett, Jen Tucker, & Fr. Ross Tozzi

GAUDETE SUNDAY

3rd Sunday of Advent, Cycle A

December 14, 2025



First Reading: *Isaiah 35:1-6,10*

In the day of the Lord, all sorrow and mourning will cease.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 146:6-7,8-9,9-10*

The Lord will save his people.

Second Reading: *James 5:7-10*

Be patient, and be ready; the coming of the Lord is near.

Gospel Reading: *Matthew 11:2-11*

Jesus tells John the Baptist of the signs of the kingdom that are being worked through him and praises John as more than a prophet..

St. Mark Sunday Mass Schedule

Sunday Mass: 5:30 PM at Sacred Heart Cathedral

Holiday Masses are celebrated with Sacred Heart Cathedral – please check their schedules at sacredheartak.org.

CSA Weekday Mass: Resumes week of January 13th.

Low Gluten Host – If you need a low-gluten host, please contact the priest before mass.

Reconciliation: Saturday at 3pm at SHC or contact priest before 5:30pm Mass

CALENDAR of EVENTS

12/14: 3rd Sunday of Advent

12/16: Christmas Decorating at SHC 3:30-5:30 PM.

12/18: St. Raphael Advent Penance Service 6:30 PM

12/19: St. Nicholas Church Penance Service 6-8 PM

12/23: Simbang Gabi Mass at SHC – 6PM

12/24 & 25: Christmas Eve & Day Masses

12/24-1/2: The Chancery will be closed in observance of Christmas and the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Catholic Definition: GAUDETE SUNDAY

Third Sunday of Advent, so named from the opening antiphon of the Introit Gaudete in Domino semper (Rejoice in the Lord always). On this Sunday rose vestments are permitted in the Eucharistic liturgy. (Etm. Latin gaudete, rejoice.) pronounced “gow-day-tay”. <https://www.catholicculture.org/>

Music of the Mass – December 14

43 People Look East!

67 Creator of the Stars of Night

63 Ready the Way

65 Litany for Advent

54 Savior of the Nations, Come

**Mass of Creation #867-871*



ADVENT

Poinsettias for Christmas: If you'd like to help decorate the altar at SHC at Christmas by donating to help pay for a poinsettia, you'll find envelopes on the credenza between the two offices at SHC. When filling out the envelope, don't forget to put the loved one's name on it. (The standard donation is

\$20 per name, but any amount is appreciated). Deadline for envelopes is **December 15th**. Help brighten the church for Christmas! Thank you for your help and Merry Christmas!



SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL

HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULES

Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM, 7:00 PM

Midnight Mass: 12:00 AM

Christmas Day: 11:00 AM & 1:00 PM Spanish

Mary, Mother of God

December 31: 6:00 PM

January 1: 11:00 AM



*** There will be NO 5:30 PM Christmas Day St. Mark Mass*

We encourage St. Mark parishioners to join Sacred Heart or one of our neighboring parishes for these Holiday Masses.



SUNDAY

Religious Education (SHC): 9:30-10:30am downstairs in the classrooms. *Families of St. Mark are encouraged to attend SHC or ICC religious instruction.* servidoras@cbna.org

Young Adult Game Night (at SHC): December 14th @ 6:30pm.

MONDAY

SHC Book Club: 1st Monday of the month. January book *He Leadeth Me: An Extraordinary Testament of Faith* by Fr. Walter Ciszek, S.J. c.1973. Contact Jan Fortune for info at: 43janettf@gmail.com

Diocesan Bible Study: Will be meeting twice the week of Dec. 15th & 18th. Study Matthew at 6:30 pm in the Mary Chapel of SHC

TUESDAY

Voices of Hope Prayer Group: Every Tuesday from 6 – 8:30pm in the Community Room at SHC.

OCIA Classes: Every Tuesday at 7:00pm at SHC. pbang@cbna.org

Young Adult Feast and Faith: Meets 3rd Tuesday of the month. Tuesday – December 16th @ 5:30pm. Meet at Miguel's Authentic Mexican Cuisine.

WEDNESDAY

Mother's Group: 10AM-Noon. Held at St. Nicholas Parish Great Room in North Pole. Child Care provided. Call or Text April at 907-347-1357.

THURSDAY

Adoration: 8 AM – 12 Noon at Sacred Heart Cathedral; First Thursday of the month 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM.

Voces Verbi Teens: 6-7:30pm (ages 13-17). servidoras@cbna.org

SHC Holy Hour: 7 PM on 1st Thursday every month.

FRIDAY

Voces Verbi: 6:00-8:00pm Friday at Immaculate Conception Church. (Young Adults ages 18-35).

To request Food Boxes - people may call in orders at (907) 374-0572 from 10:00 –11:30am and pick up their food boxes from 12:15 – 1:00pm.

SATURDAY

Oratory & Third Order – Held at SHC from 10am-12noon.

SHC Confessions & Adorations of the Blessed Sacrament 3-4pm

Diocesan Movie Night – Next month's movie date & title TBA.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Catholic Engaged Encounter Retreat –Feb 6-8, 2026, at St. Nicholas Catholic Church. For more info and to register online, visit <https://fairbanks.engagedencounter.com/>

SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

New policies for sacramental preparation in our diocese can be found at: <https://dioceseoffairbanks.org/sacramental-preparation-guidelines>. Contact St. Mark office if you are interested in sacramental training.

First Communion & Confirmation: SHC classes are offered during the school year. For more info contact servidoras@cbna.org. *Please let Fr. Ross or the St. Mark Office know if your child is preparing for these sacraments.*

Baptism – Contact Fr. Ross at rtozzi@cbna.org

Marriage Preparations – Contact Fr. Ross at rtozzi@cbna.org or call (907) 347-3005 *six (6) months prior to wedding date or call the parish office at 907-374-9544*



Justice Challenge: Sunday's Gospel has Jesus answering the question of who he is by stating: "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind recover their sight, cripples walk, lepers are cured, the deaf hear, dead men are raised to life, and the poor have the good news preached to them" (Mt. 11:2-11). Jesus equates his very identity with care for the poor and marginalized. Your challenge this week is to identify the blind, the lepers, and the poor in your life. Discuss one particular person in need whom God is calling you and your family to serve. Select an action you can do for this person, just as Jesus did. And remember that Pope Francis said that having a friend who is poor is a pathway to heaven. So... just do it! <https://pastoral.center>

Focusing the Gospel

Key words and phrases: the works of the Christ, Are you the one who is to come, what you ... see

To the point: The Gospel begins with John questioning who Jesus is and concludes with Jesus extolling who John is. What makes John great is that he recognizes in "the works of the Christ" the person and presence of the Messiah— "the one who is to come." This is exactly our Advent challenge: to see in the goodness around us the works of Jesus and the presence of "the Christ." Advent calls us to look deeper and then to trust what we see. Whom we discover depends upon what we see. www.liturgy.slu.edu



Putting On The Light of Christ

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matthew 11:11)

Adult Question: How do you prepare yourself to meet Christ in those around you?

Child Question: What good thing have you done so far during Advent to be like Jesus? <https://pastoral.center>

CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: What is a tradition that the Pope does on Gaudete Sunday?
(Answer on last page.)

THE THIRD CANDLE IS PINK & IS THE
"Candle of Joy."
IT RECALLS THE JOY WE HAVE IN
KNOWING, LOVING, AND FOLLOWING
CHRIST – NO MATERIAL POSSESSION OR
GIFT CAN TAKE THE PLACE OF THE JOY
WE HAVE IN FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS.

JOY IS LOOKING FORWARD TO CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS.

JOY IS RECALLING THE BIRTH OF JESUS ON THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

JOY BECAUSE HE WAS BORN TO SAVE US FROM SINS.

JOY IS THE ANTICIPATION OF THE SECOND COMING.

Traditionally, an Advent wreath candle symbolizes a thousand years of waiting for Jesus' birth. They represent 4,000 years that humanity waited for the world's Light of our Savior, from Adam and Eve to Jesus. www.catholiccompany.com

Catholic Answers

Question:

Why is rose used during Advent in the Advent wreath and vestments?

Answer:

Advent is a time of penance, and so the ordinary liturgical color for Advent is violet. On the third Sunday of Advent, which is also called *Gaudete* (Latin: “Rejoice”) Sunday, we recognize the joyful anticipation of the season that will culminate in the birth of Christ on Christmas by changing the liturgical color to rose. Rose is a “brightening” of the ordinary violet and thus symbolizes joy.



Question:

Which rosary mysteries are to be prayed on Sundays in Advent?

Answer:

There is no formal Church decree on this matter, although, because Sunday is always the Lord’s Day, the Glorious Mysteries are arguably the most appropriate.

Similarly, one can argue that, apart from Sundays, the joyful Mysteries are most fitting during the Christmas Octave, the Sorrowful Mystery during Holy Week (*except for the Luminous Mysteries on Holy Thursday, given the institution of the Eucharist that day*), and the Glorious Mysteries during the Easter Octave, including Easter Friday, since it too is a solemnity. www.Catholic.com



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULES for Immaculate Conception, St. Raphael, and St. Nicholas Church in North Pole.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM

Midnight Mass: 12:00 AM

Christmas Day: 9:30 AM & 12:00 PM

ST. RAPHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM 9:00 PM

Christmas Day: 10:00 AM

Mary, Mother of God

December 31: 5:30 PM

January 1: 10:00 AM

ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Christmas Eve: 5:00 PM

Christmas Day: 12:00 AM 10:30 AM

Mary, Mother of God

January 1: 9:00 AM 7:00 PM

Things to bring with you to Catholic Mass:

5. Your list of petitions for others and for yourself.

(Practicing) Catholic – Recognize God in your Ordinary Moment
WHAT WE SEE IN THE DESERT



Reflection for December 14, 2025 — The Third Sunday of Advent
In this Sunday’s Gospel reading, John the Baptist seems uncertain about who Jesus is. Yet Jesus affirms his mission through miraculous works, and praises John while revealing the Kingdom’s greatness. [Find the daily reading here.](#)

I’ve always wanted to see a real desert.

I know all about frigid, snowy winters and warm, wet summers. I grew up on rich soil that yields lush vegetation and bountiful harvests. But I’ve never experienced a desert, not in my own country or abroad, and I’m curious.

I know there must be something magical about the desert for it to feature so heavily in Scripture, for it to provide a backdrop to so many crucial moments of salvation history. The Israelites following the cloud, the temptation of Christ, the voice crying out: “Prepare the way for the Lord.”

Why do these moments have to happen in a desert? Why do they make so much less sense in a tropical rainforest or a verdant forest?

I think it’s because the desert doesn’t have anything to offer us, at first glance. No one longs for the physical sensation of a dry heat and a beating sun. But the vast emptiness and the almost mystical harshness — even if we don’t desire and delight in it, this is a setting that we understand, somehow, intrinsically. We know it deep within our soul. God is there.

We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert.

Why? What are we expecting to see?

If we expect to be entertained, we will be disappointed. If we expect reassurance, we will be disappointed. If we expect to feel pleasant and safe and sheltered, we will be disappointed.

The desert is there to challenge us. The desert is there to show us who we are, and who we can be.

So, go.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman – December 11, 2025©Lpi.



December 7: \$ 1,048.00

Parishioner Count: 109

Thank you for your prayers and generous contributions!

Parish SOFT Giving is the new WeShare, a safe, and convenient way to support our parish through one-time or recurring donations using your computer, tablet, or mobile device.

Key Benefits: User-friendly and accessible, set up recurring or one-time gifts, secure, encrypted transactions. Track your giving history at any time. You will find the link at: <http://www.stmarksuaf.org/donations/>

2025 Donations – The accounting system in the Parish Office will not allow us to post donations received after December 31, 2025, to your 2025 contributions. If you would like your contributions to be credited to 2025, they MUST be received by December 31, 2025. **2025 Tax Statements** will be available before the end of January. Please make sure your address is up to date with the Parish Office.

Patience Stewardship

“You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

JAMES 5:8

Patience is another one of those things many of us struggle with. We want things to go according to our plan and our schedule; we like things to be convenient. Any change brings anxiety and fear. Through daily prayer God reveals to us what He wants us to do with the gifts He has given us. Stewards are able to better align ourselves with God’s will and His plan, which is far better than anything we can come up with on our own. www.camdendiocese.org

DECEMBER 2025 PRAYER INTENTION



For Christians in areas of conflict.

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

Remember in your prayers those *who have fallen away from their faith that they may find their way back.*

Pray that we may slow down and listen to God’s voice as during our journey through Advent. Remember those who are elderly, hospitalized, in nursing home facilities, sick, lonely, or incarcerated – may they find some comfort through our prayers. Remember those who have died and gone before us.

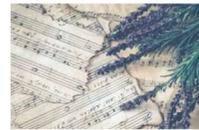
SAFE ENVIRONMENT: Our diocese is committed to creating a safe environment for everyone. If you are aware of abuse, you are encouraged to report the abuse to local law enforcement agencies and to contact our Victim Assistance emailing vac@cbna.org. For more information, access the Diocese Safe Environment site at <https://dioceseoffairbanks.org/report-abu>

Third Sunday of Advent – December 14

“Behold, you will conceive and bear a son...”

(Luke 1:31)

Mary’s openness to God’s plan shows how saying ‘Yes’ can change the world. All vocations, priesthood, consecrated life, or sacramental marriage, begin with a generous response to God’s call. Pray for guidance and courage to follow where He leads. For guidance go to the Diocese of Fairbanks Vocation Office: vocations@cbna.org



CALLING ALL MUSICIANS

George Stefan will be leading the 7 PM Christmas Eve Mass. Thérèse & Edward Yew will be leading the Midnight Mass. Share your gifts at Christmas time and in the mass you will be attending! Contact St. Mark’s Office at stmark@cbna.org with your name and contact information and we will keep you up to date on planning and practices. Midnite Mass practice will be held on Dec. 16 & 18 (Tue/Thu) at 7 PM in SHC Church.

THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT: DEC. 14th

Candle Name: The Shepherd’s Candle

The Third Week of Advent Represents: JOY

Candle Color: Pink

The third candle of Advent symbolizes Joy. As we continue to approach Christmas Day, our joy grows more and more. The third candle takes us back to the joyful anticipation of the shepherds who journeyed to see Jesus in Bethlehem, even before the wise men. On this third Sunday of Advent, which the Church calls “Gaudete Sunday,” meaning rejoice or praise, we light the third candle and rejoice like the shepherds. For this reason, the third candle of Advent is called the “Shepherd’s Candle,” and its color is pink, the liturgical color for joy.



<https://hallow.com/advent/>



In 1934, a young 7-year-old Joseph Ratzinger penned a letter to Jesus requesting three gifts for Christmas. “Dear Baby Jesus, you will soon descend to earth,” the words written in German read. “You want to bring joy to children. You will also bring joy to me.”

The young Ratzinger, who would one day be pope, concluded: “I would like a Volks-Schott, a green chasuble, and a Heart of Jesus. I always want to be good. Greetings from Joseph Ratzinger.”

www.ncregister.com

CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Answer: It is a tradition for the Pope to bless the baby Jesus figures that children bring from their nativity symbolizing joy and anticipation for the Christmas celebration. www.wayground.com