

4th *Sunday* OF ADVENT



December 24, 2023

TWO HOLY MARTYRS PARISH

ST. SYMPHOROSA + ST. RENE GOUPEL



WELCOME TO TWO HOLY MARTYRS PARISH CHURCH SCHEDULES

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Robert Regan
PASTOR

Rev. Kevin Gregus
ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Norman Trela
RETIRED PRIEST IN RESIDENCE

PASTORS EMERITUS

Rev. Ted Bojczuk
PASTOR EMERITUS

Rev. Peter Paurazas
PASTOR EMERITUS

Rev. Idzi Stacherczak
PASTOR EMERITUS

PARISH STAFF

Ken Hilliard
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
EXT. 222

Magdalan Koziar
OFFICE & TUITION COORDINATOR
EXT. 248

Irene Perconti
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT EXT. 241

Peg Siebenaler
FAITH FORMATION
COORDINATOR EXT. 226

David Boyle
MUSIC DIRECTOR EXT. 225

Dcn. Raul Duque
PARISH ORGANIST

Mark Schusteric
MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR

Jacqueline Guerrero
BULLETIN & GENERAL
OFFICE ADMIN EXT. 221

SCHOOL STAFF

Kathy Berry
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Chris Garza
ASSISTANT SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Contact the Two Holy Martyrs
St. Vincent de Paul at (312) 316.3725

ST. SYMPHOROSA

6135 S. Austin Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638

SUNDAY MASS

9 AM | 12 PM

MONDAY — SATURDAY MASS

8 AM mass is held during:

February | April | June
August | October | December

SATURDAY VIGIL

5:30 PM

RECONCILIATION


TUESDAY | 6 PM—7 PM


All are welcome to join in praying the Rosary after 8 AM mass Monday through Saturday! Come meditate on Christ with us!

PARISH OFFICE

6135 S. Austin Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638

*Located on Austin between
the school and church buildings*

 773.767.1523

 www.twoholymartyrs.org

 info@twoholymartyrs.org

MONDAY—FRIDAY

9 AM—4 PM

SATURDAY

9 AM — 12 PM

PARKING AND SAFETY REMINDER

The safety of our parish community is important and must be taken into consideration at each gathering. Should serious medical or facility issues arise unexpectedly we must be prepared. We ask that you observe parking regulations on both campus locations, churches, loading zones, etc.

PLEASE REFRAIN FROM PARKING IN THE FIRE LANES

ST. RENE GOUPIL

6949 W. 63rd Place
Chicago, IL 60638

SUNDAY MASS

7:30 AM | 10:30 AM

MONDAY — SATURDAY MASS

8 AM mass is held during:

January | March | May
July | September | November

SATURDAY VIGIL


4 PM

RECONCILIATION

SATURDAYS | 3 PM—3:45 PM

SCHOOL OFFICE

6125 S. Austin Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638

 773.585.6888

 www.stsymsschool.org

 office@stsymphorosaschool.org

MONDAY—FRIDAY

9 AM—3 PM

FR. BOB'S WEEKLY BLOG



This year is one in which the Fourth Sunday of Advent immediately moves into our celebration of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas). So, yes, if Advent seems like it flew by, you'd be correct.

Our patient waiting culminates in our remembrance of the Incarnation of God just hours after lighting the fourth candle of the Advent wreath. Our hearts are joyful because we know we are not alone. God is with us. That is what the name Emmanuele means (God with us). Divinity has taken to itself human flesh. God arrives on earth in a very visible, personal way as a vulnerable baby in a manger, a place where animals ate their food.

This is all part of the greatest story ever told. It's the story of the long-awaited Messiah emerging from within the people of Israel as Savior of the world. We as human beings were not going to be able to "fix" the problem of sin, evil and death on our own. God, however, could do something, and God has done something; something mysterious, something miraculous, something supernatural.

And to this we say, "Amen!"

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him

might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16).

We might have a difficult time wrapping our human minds around the story of salvation. How? Why? These are legitimate questions, but the answer is simple. The Answer is Love.

When we truly begin to see the story of salvation as a love story, it changes things. Faith becomes our response to the God who first loved us. How are you responding to God's love? What does it look like in your everyday life?

One way in which we respond to God's love is by regularly thanking God for the gift of salvation; the gift of God the Son. We do this in a special way when we gather weekly to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We celebrate the Eucharist. We recall that the word Eucharist means "thanksgiving."

At Holy Mass, we literally receive the Body and Blood of Jesus the Christ in Holy Communion. We do not consume bread and wine. We reverently consume the same Jesus who once lay helpless in a manger. He is now supernatural food for us; the Bread of Life.

My dear friends, as the secular culture continues to edit Christ out of Christmas, may we each lean in more and more and commit to our faith. What do we believe to be true? What do you believe to be true?

Here is our simple but mysteriously deep answer. Allow me to paraphrase the words of St. Irenaeus, who wrote, "He (Christ) became what we are (human) so that we might become what He is."

That statement should make each one of us say "Wow!"

It might be tough for us to hear, but we (human beings) are not going to be able to "fix" things on our own. Only human pride and arrogance believes we can suddenly "fix the world." God the Father, however, sent us what we need. Is Jesus, however, what we want?

The Paschal Mystery of Christ (suffering, death, resurrection and ascension) opens for us the way to eternal life. In the Person of Jesus, heaven has touched earth. Sin, evil and death have been eternally conquered. We needed outside help, and God sent the help we need.

For this reason, we can sing joy to the world, the Lord is come, let Earth receive her king. Let every heart prepare Him room. And heaven and nature sing. And heaven and nature sing.

Merry Christmas, my dear friends. May the good Lord bless you and your loved ones.

Quote -- "Christmas is God lighting a candle; and you don't light a candle in a room that's already full of sunlight. You light a candle in a room that's so murky that the candle, when lit, reveals just how bad things really are." -- N.T. Wright





FR. KEVIN'S GREGORIAN RANTS

Every believer has the opportunity at Mass to listen to the Word of God being proclaimed and let it settle into their heart. There are many ways to interpret the texts and see how they speak to our current cultural context and our individual lives. The same Scripture passages can hit us in different ways at various times in our lives. We are human – we change, grow, mature, and advance in both physical and spiritual age.

In her wisdom, the Church provides a space during the Mass in which someone who is trained can help to explain the readings we hear as they are applied to our daily lived experiences. This has been the case since the very earliest days of the Church. Peter and the apostles give a number of “sermons” in the Acts of the Apostles that present scripture that is known to the listener but applies it to the life of Jesus Christ. Check out this description of the Mass from the year 170 AD as written by St. Justin Martyr:

“And on that day which is called after the sun, all who are in the towns and in the country gather together for a communal celebration. And then the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of

the Prophets are read. After the reader has finished his task, the one presiding gives an address, urgently admonishing his hearers to practice these beautiful teachings in their lives.”

He goes on to describe how petitions are said, gifts of bread and wine are offered and consecrated, and then how the people receive the bread that has become the Eucharist. The presider addressing the people is an essential aspect to the liturgy and to the Christian life. The Roman Missal (the book the priest uses during Mass) states it like this:

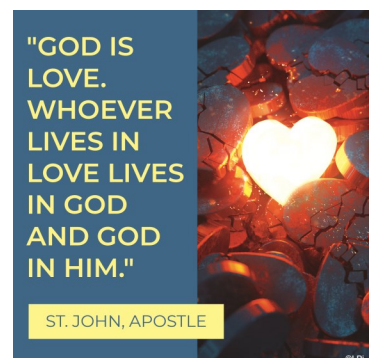
“The Homily is part of the Liturgy ... and is necessary for the nurturing of the Christian life. It should be an explanation of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or the Proper of the Mass of the day and should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners.”

When Fr. Bob and I (or any visiting priest) prepare to give the homily, we start with the texts themselves. Each Mass has its own particular set of readings. We don't start with stories or teachings and then apply them to the readings of the day. Rather, we sit in prayer and allow the Word of God to speak to us. Often, particular phrases or themes pop out as the Holy Spirit directs our hearts. Then, the Spirit reminds us of some aspect of Church doctrine or history, as well as the things that we know you as the parishioners of Two Holy Martyrs are experiencing.

Each priest spends time in seminary and the early years of being a priest to develop a style. Sometimes, certain styles resonate more with us than others, but every priest has something valuable to say if he is truly allowing the Holy Spirit to guide his preparation and delivery.

Fr. Bob and I strive to read and continue forming our minds in the life of the Church and her teachings. Leaving seminary should not be the end of growing our life of prayer and maturing intellectually through reading books and listening to audio about the Christian life.

As the people of God, you deserve to have priests who spend time in prayer preparing to break open the Word of God for and with you during the Mass. Hold us to this! If it every seems like we aren't giving our whole selves in preaching the homily or that we are becoming stale in our content, tell us. The homily is a time to understand more deeply God's will and plan for us and how to encounter him in our daily lives. Woe to the priest who does not take this responsibility seriously!



PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also celebrate the birth of our hope. When he came among us as one like us in all things but sin, he lifted us up to new and transformed life. In fact, he opened for us the way to share in the very life of God. One of the prayers of the Mass gives us these words: "...may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity."

The struggles that we face in our personal lives and in our wounded world do not have the last word. We are meant for more. We are meant for full and eternal life. I pray that our celebration of the Lord's birth will remind us of the glory that will carry us beyond the challenges, sometimes truly significant challenges that mark our lives and our world.

We must also remember that the Lord did not just come among us once and long ago. He continues to walk with us as we walk with each other. Our celebrations of the Eucharist remind of that. And he will never abandon his people. He is now and always Emmanuel, our God with us. Our journey is his journey. And this year, having celebrated the first of two synods of the Church, we are especially aware that he accompanies us as we accompany one another.

In this holy season, I invite you to pray. Take time, create a quiet space, look on the creche, read the gospels, and allow yourself to know that he is near and that he walks with you. If you do so, I can assure you that you will know his peace. Then, take what you learn from him to your family, to your workplace, to your community, and to entire world. The gift of Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, is not something we can hold for ourselves. We are called and destined to share it with others.

As I celebrate the Eucharist, I will remember you and pray that you will have a living sense of the Lord among us, the one who walks with us and draws us forward into the fullness of his life.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Blase Cardinal Cupic

Archbishop of Chicago

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS



From the entire Two Holy Martyrs Parish Staff,
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

We would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas with Hope, Peace, and Love in this Christmas season and throughout the New Year. Wishing a season of blessings for every person within our parish and community. May the Lord continue to strengthen our faith and increase our compassion.



Two Holy Martyrs Parish
St. Symphorosa † St. René Goupil



Fourth Sunday of Advent

(Please note limited Masses)

December 23, 2023

4 PM at St. Rene Church

December 24, 2023

7:30 AM at St. Rene Church

9 AM at St. Symphorosa Church

10:30 AM at St. Rene Church

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023

4 PM at St. Symphorosa Church

6 PM at St. Rene Church

9:30 PM Choir Concert at St. Symphorosa Church

10 PM at St. Symphorosa Church - Choir Mass

Midnight at St. Rene Church

Christmas Day

7:30 AM at St. Rene Church

9 AM at St. Symphorosa Church

10:30 AM at St. Rene Church - Choir Mass

Noon at St. Symphorosa Church

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

January 1, 2024

9 AM Mass at St Rene Church

(Not a Holy Day of Obligation this year)



For the week of:

DECEMBER 23rd - DECEMBER 31st

Saturday December 23rd

04:00 PM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob

- ✠Vince Porcelli (wife Judy)
- ✠Edward Cieslewski (Family)
- ✠Joseph Kasper (Dina Gnat)
- ✠Ed Cieslewski (Toni Ptak)
- ✠Frances Szumowski (Wes & Debbie Szumowski)
- ✠Tony Iuliano (Family)
- ✠Rosa Cicchino (mother)
- ✠Alicia Gaffney (mother)

Sunday December 24th

07:30 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob
09:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin
10:30 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob
04:00 PM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
06:00 PM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Kevin
10:00 PM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin
10:30 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob

Monday December 25th

07:30 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin
09:00 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob
10:30 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin
12PM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob

Tuesday December 26th

08:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Helena Lance (Nancy Loduca)
✠Phil Scaletta (wife Arlene)
✠Margaret Mary Luzzi (Tony & Debbie Luzzi)

Wednesday December 27th

08:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Vince Porcelli (wife Judy)
✠Tomassini Family (Eugene Tomassini)
✠Phillip O'Brien (O'Brien-Kenney Family)

Thursday December 28th

08:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Gloria Zelenka (Friend)
✠Rev. Monsignor Thomas Earner (Earner Family)
✠Geraldine Zwolinski (Barbara Rendak)

Friday December 29th

08:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Roy Moscato (Kathy Alcagno)
✠Victor & Zeneida Narea (Vincent Narea)
✠Lauren Vitrano (Mom & Amanda Vitrano)
✠George Nowak (Wes & Debbie Szumowski)
✠George Simon - Anniversary of death (wife Ruth)

Saturday December 30th

08:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Kathy Arvetis (husband)
✠Kathleen Begney (Tom Begney)
04:00 PM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Kevin
✠Vince Porcelli (wife Judy)
✠Philomena Cozzi (Friend)
✠Joann Watts (Friend)
✠Joe Kasper (Toni P)
05:30PM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Bob
✠Gerald Sears (Gregory Jackson & Family)
✠Philomena Cozzi (Friend)
✠Joann Watts (Friend)
✠Sharon Dykema (Nancy Markham)

Sunday December 31st

7:30 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob
9:00 AM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin
10:30 AM | St. Rene Goupil | Presider: Fr. Bob
12PM | St. Symphorosa | Presider: Fr. Kevin

Presiders are subject to change without notice.



If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. - Romans 14:8

Eternal Rest

Sharon Dykema
Diana Marleau
Joan Vanderplow



OUR SANCTUARY CANDLES

BURNING BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, ARE OFFERED FOR THE FOLLOWING INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF

DECEMBER

VINCE PORCELLI & MARIA PORCELLI

For the repose of their souls, given by Family.

MICHAEL NOWAKOWSKI

For the repose of his soul, given by Joe & Josie Pulido.

PHIL SCALETTA

For the repose of his soul, given by wife Arlene Scaletta.

THANKSGIVING FOR BATTUNG FAMILY

given by Rosario Battung.

In the lighting of candles, we remember and truly live the words of Our Lord: "I am the Light of the World." In the lighting of the sanctuary candles we honor a loved one, living or deceased.

Please Join Us in Praying for the Sick

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Arnold Adaska | Debbie Lipien | Beverly Zummerling |
| Guadalupe Almendarez | Cathy Mazeika | |
| Maxine Carey | Clarence Oleszkiewicz | |
| Margaret Dalton | Rose Paczek | |
| Joanne Gallas | Ramon Perez | |
| Mitch Gallas | Ann Robertson | |
| Ron Kelly | Fr. John Rudnik | |
| Sharon Labiak | Jack Ruggiero | |
| Maryann Larson | Shirley Tloczek | |
| Natalie Lecompte | Fr. Norm Trela | |



Due to privacy laws, names may only be added by immediate family members. Please call the parish office to add or remove a name.



Parish office will be closed on Saturday December 23rd, Monday December 25th and Tuesday December 26th. We will resume back for regular hours on Wednesday December 27th at 9am-4pm

Happy Holidays!



Thank you for your generosity!

PARISH OFFERTORY 12/17: \$8,912.48

Split the Pot Winning Envelope # 63747 \$395.00

To our registered parishioners, please remember a minimum of \$5 is required to participate.




ONLINE/ELECTRONIC DONATIONS

\$15,889.00

October 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023

Total number of transactions:
517



Com Ed has confirmed that there will be a planned **Power Outage on Wed. December 27, 2023** beginning around 8am and lasting up to 8 hours. This outage will impact the **St. Rene Campus**.

An Exelon Company



THANK YOU TO ALL THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE BASKET RAFFLE, WE MADE APPROXIMATELY \$4,030.00

CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE WINNERS OF THE HOLIDAY BASKETS RAFFLE,

1. Cheryl M.
2. Barbara S.
3. Sullivan Family
4. Sally E.
5. Mark K.
6. Lorel B.
7. Ellen S.
8. Sally E.
9. Patrice L.
10. Brian M.
11. Jorge R.



FAITH FORMATION



Important!

Upcoming Events:

12/24: Christmas Pageants.

12/25: MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

1/1/24: HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

Classes Resume:

**1/13: Faith Formation Classes
Saturday, St. Sym's Campus.
9am - 10:30am.**

**1/16: Faith Formation Classes
Tuesday, St. Sym's Campus.
6pm - 7:30pm.**



Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means " God is with us." - Matthew 1:23

May each day of your Christmastime be filled with peace,
and may God's love light your way through the New Year!

Christmas Blessings from the Faith Formation Team

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

On Christmas Eve at the 4:00pm Mass at St. Symphorosa and at the 6:00pm Mass at St. Rene we will present a Christmas Pageant for our community here at Two Holy Martyrs Parish. This performance gives our children the opportunity to celebrate Jesus' birthday. As part of the celebration, we have the students re-enact the Christmas Story..... (in a simple way) Allowing them to experience firsthand the true meaning of Christmas. Please email Miss Peg if you would like to participate. Thank You!

msiebenaler@archchicago.org



Faith Formation Program Emergency Closing Information

In the event of a heavy snowfall, or inclement weather, you can access Emergency Closing Information for our program by going to our website:
Twoholymartyrs.org

In the event of an emergency closing, the announcement of the emergency closing will be the first message displayed on the website homepage.



Thank you to all who attended and helped make Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass a success. A very special thank you to the Corona Family who also participate and dressed up as Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

PARISH SCHOOL NEWS

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



URGENT SCHOLARSHIP HELP NEEDED for Catholic Schools

**Please make a gift to safeguard the
future of Catholic education.**



With the sunset of the Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship program, thousands of Catholic school families cannot keep their children in school.

Thankfully, supporting scholarships has never been easier. Please visit archchicago.org/scholarships to make an online gift to any school in the Archdiocese of Chicago.



Given the sunset of the Tax Credit Scholarship December 31st, we are in great need of funds to support our school children who desire to remain at St. Symphorosa School. We currently have 44 students who are receiving a Tax Credit Scholarship for this school year based on their families' financial need. We believe all things are possible with God and I am hopeful with the support of our school and parish community, these children will be able to continue their education at our parish school, St. Symphorosa next year and beyond. I hope that you will consider making a donation specifically directed to St. Symphorosa School to support our students.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and generosity.

With Gratitude,

Dr. Kathy Berry-Principal



Proudly Presents...

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK OPEN HOUSE

We are "Setting the Stage for Success" at St. Symphorosa School!

Here we:

- Know and love our students
- Put faith first
- Believe all things are possible with God
- Offer a rigorous curriculum, including our STEM Studio
- Work with families to make the investment affordable
- Provide supportive before and after school care



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2024
10:30AM-1:30PM**

**6125 S. AUSTIN AVE CHICAGO, IL 60638
773.585.6888 WWW.STSYMSSCHOOL.ORG**