

## 4th Sunday of Advent (Cycle A)



Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18). The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus,

tracing his lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke). We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes. The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and his role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "Yahweh saves." He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: "... The virgin shall be with child ... and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]."

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

### Family Connection

Joseph and Mary are our models for family life and for service of God. Even when the circumstances seemed unclear, Joseph trusted God. Healthy family life is built upon trust, trust in God and trust of one another. Spend some time talking as a family about the importance of trust in your family life, including the ways in which the children trust the adults in the family as well as the ways in which the adults trust the children. Then read today's Gospel. Talk about Joseph's trust of God and reflect together on how your family trusts in God. Pray together that your family life will be built on trust, as was the family life of Joseph and Mary. Pray and sing together an Advent song, such as "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

### ELDER DINNER

A big heartfelt thanks to all who participated in making last Sunday's Elder Dinner possible! Next year we'll try to do more outreach to get as many elders as possible to attend.

### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

If you've served as a Eucharistic Minister before the pandemic or you would like to become one, please see Fr. Mike or contact us at 406.620.7500 or stdenniscrowagency@gmail.com. We'll be arranging a training session for sometime in January for those interested in this ministry.

### CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS & DECORATION TIMES

If you'd like to donate to help decorate our church sites, please see one of the priests. Additionally, if you'd like to help with decorating the churches, here are the following dates/times: Our Lady of Loretto on Sunday, 12/18 after Mass; St. Dennis at 3pm on Tuesday, 12/20; St. Xavier at 10am on Wednesday, 12/21.

### CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE – 12/24 & 25

**Christmas Eve (12/24):** St. Francis Xavier, 5pm  
St. Charles, 7pm  
St. Dennis, 8pm  
Our Lady of Loretto, 11pm

**Christmas Day: (12/25):** St Dennis, 10am



### SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION CLASSES

Classes will resume in January on Wednesdays from 5:00-5:45pm at St. Dennis for the Sacraments of Initiation (First Reconciliation, Confirmation, & First Eucharist) and will run through the first week of April. If you'd like to register your child, please talk with one of the priests or with Brother Jerry.

### INFANT BAPTISMS – FIRST SAT/SUN EACH MONTH

The new regular schedule of Infant Baptisms (children under age 7) is the first Saturday or Sunday of every month at each of our locations. Additionally, there's a mandatory class for parents and godparents on the first Saturday at 10:30 AM at Saint Dennis Parish Hall. **The next class is Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The baptism itself will be scheduled based upon priest availability and your requested church location.** Please contact any of the priests to register before the class. More info at [crowcatholicparishes.com](http://crowcatholicparishes.com)

## **CROW CATHOLIC PARISHES TO RECEIVE A NEWLY ASSIGNED PRIEST IN JANUARY**

As many of you know, it's been several months without a second full-time priest to serve the parishes, but starting the week of January 8<sup>th</sup>, Fr. Thomas Skowron, OFM Cap., will be arriving here on the Crow Reservation to begin his new long-term assignment. We are very grateful that our brother chose to return to Montana after recently serving a year at St. Labre while he was still in ministerial formation. He is very excited to begin his next chapter in Montana living and serving with everyone here in Crow Country!

## **EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL – 2023 (SAVE THE DATE)**

“Cultivating Eucharistic Amazement.” Join us May 5 & 6, 2023 at Billings Central Catholic H.S. with special guests Dr. Scott Hahn, Archbishop Alexander Sample and musical guest Jaime Thietten. We all need healing, yet many of us are separated from the very source of our strength — the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Join the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings in the movement to restore understanding and devotion to this great mystery – The Most Holy Eucharist. We'll explore what the Eucharist means in each of our lives, how this Sacrament is meant to be adored, how we cultivate Eucharistic amazement in our lives. Ticket prices start at \$15. Visit [diocesegfb.org/revival](http://diocesegfb.org/revival) to learn more or register. Seating is limited!

### **Closing:**

Franklin House



Ak-baa-tat-dí-a-kaa-taa WE-LE Ak-baa-tat-dí-a-kaa-taa WE-LE  
*Precious Lord, Precious Lord,*

Dik áa - lee-tii-a-wa - kuh WE-LE Ak-baa-tat-dí-a-kaa-taa WE-LE  
*Please lead them by the hand, O Precious Lord.*

Ihch-áa-kii-hkaa-wa - kuh WE-LE Ak-baa-tat-dí-a-kaa-taa WE-LE  
*Help them prepare themselves for you, I pray, O precious Lord.*

# The Bulletin

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[crowcatholicparishes.com](http://crowcatholicparishes.com)  
[facebook.com/crowcatholicparishes](https://facebook.com/crowcatholicparishes)

Fr. Mike Dorn, OFM Cap. *Administrator*  
Br. Jerry Cornish, OFM Cap. *Youth Ministry*  
Fr. Michael Sullivan, OFM Cap. *Visiting Priest*

*CONFESSIONS before mass and on request.*

### **Sunday Mass Schedule:**

9:30am – Saint Dennis  
10:30am – Saint Charles Borromeo  
12:00pm – Our Lady of Loretto  
4:00 pm – Saint Francis Xavier (No Mass 12/11)

### **Daily Mass Schedule:**

6 PM @ Saint Dennis – Tues/Wed/Thurs  
6 PM @ Our Lady of Loretto – Fridays

**Mondays:** AL-ANON Meeting at St. Dennis, 5:30pm  
**Tuesdays:** Sewing Group @ 7pm, Meeting Room in Small Hall

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

December 18, 2022

OPENING SONG – O Come, O Come Emmanuel #39  
-No Gloria-

SCRIPTURE READINGS begin on page 38

CREED-Apostles' page 10

MASS PARTS – Mass of Creation #884-888

CLOSING SONG – Akbaatatdíakaataa Akbaatatdíakaataa

*The Roman Catholic Parishes of*

**Our Lady of Loretto**  
Lodge Grass

**St. Charles Borromeo**  
Pryor

**St. Dennis**  
Crow Agency

**St. Francis Xavier**  
St. Xavier

**St. Kateri Tekakwitha**  
Wyola