St. Alphonsus Liguori “Rock” Catholic Church

1118 North Grand Blvd. St Louis, MO 63106
314-533-0304 (ph) 314-533-4260 (fax) parish130@archstl.org (e-mail)
www.stalphonsusrock.org (website)

Rev. Stephen Benden, C.Ss.R., Pastor
Rev. Rodney Olive, C.Ss.R., Associate Pastor

Mission
“To Joyfully Preach, Teach, and Live the Word of God”

Theme
“One Hundred Fifty Years of Standing on the Rock”

PASTORAL STAFF
Sharon Cooney-Smith, Dir. Religious Education
Roberta George, Secretary
Deborah Grant, Clerical Support
Angela Harris, Bulletin Editor

SUPPORT STAFF
Bro. Steve Fruge, Pastoral Staff
Terrance Gipson, Maintenance
Terri Schneider, Dir. Hardin Food Pantry
Athletic Office: 314 533-0304
Teen Ministry: 314 533-0304

MUSIC MINISTRY
8:15 — Malcolm Speed
11:00 — Danny duMaine

REDEMPTORISTS IN RESIDENCE
Rev. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Dave Polek, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Peter Schavitz, C.Ss.R.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
(Call for Appointment)

SUNDAY MASSES:
8:15 & 11:00 a.m.

DAILY MASSES:
Monday 5:30 p.m.
(W, Th & F.) 11:30 a.m.
Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.
Saturdays 9:30 a.m.

MONDAY:
Eucharistic Adoration
4:30 p.m. — 5:15 p.m.

TUESDAYS:
Exposition & Benediction:
10:30 a.m. — 11:30 a.m. (1st — Tuesday) followed by our Perpetual Help Novena & Mass
One of the things that happen to every one of us is that we need to sleep, and when we sleep, we dream. Everybody dreams, but some people do not always remember their dreams. I know I dream every night, but most often do not remember my dreams. Not only do we have dreams at night while sleeping, but we are also encouraged to have a dream about our lives. For instance, what kind of career we might want to go into, or whether we want to get married or not, or to have children. These kinds of dreams are important because they give meaning to our lives. These dreams give us a sense of purpose. If we don’t have these types of dreams, we are probably not very motivated to do much of anything.

Joseph, the husband of Mary, and the foster-father of Jesus had a dream about his life. He was a carpenter and spent much of his time making things out of wood. Joseph dreamed about having a young girl named Mary to be his wife. In ancient Israel, you could be engaged for a year or so before actually living together, but while you were engaged legally, you were married. Well, Joseph’s dream turned into a nightmare. This young girl Mary becomes pregnant, and he is not the father. What is he to do? His whole world is turning upside down. He will divorce her quietly; he does not want to hurt Mary.

But then Joseph has a real dream. An angel of the Lord comes to visit him. The angel explains that it is by the Will of God that Mary has become pregnant and that he is still to take Mary into his home as his wife. I guess Joseph could have said no. Other people have said no to Jesus, but the dream Joseph had about taking Mary into his home is going to be fulfilled. It is just not going to be fulfilled in the way he thought. He was not only taking Mary into his home, he is taking Mary and the child she has within her womb into his house; and this child is not just any child, but is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Joseph had a dream about his life. When he saw the future for himself, there is no way he could have ever imagined that his future would mean sharing the same house as Jesus the Christ. Maybe God’s dream for Joseph was a lot better than Joseph’s dream for Joseph. We need to make room for God’s dream for us. Maybe God has a big plan for us in our lives that we have never dreamed. We have to be ready to let God’s dream become our dream.

**SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES**

**Sunday:**
4th Sunday of Advent

**Monday:**
St. John of Kanty, Priest

**Tuesday:**
Christmas Eve

**Wednesday:**
The Nativity of the Lord (holy day of obligation)

**Thursday:**
St. Stephen, the First Martyr

**Friday:**
St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

**Saturday:**
The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

**Sunday:**
The Holy Family

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**Weekly Readings…**

**Sunday:**
Is 7:10-14/ Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:

**Monday:**
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/ Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66

**Tuesday:**
2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/ Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 [2]/ Lk 1:67-79

**Wednesday:**
Day: Is 52:7-10/ Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14

**Thursday:**
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/ Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 [6]
Mt 10:17-22

**Friday:**
1 Jn 1:1-4/ Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12] Jn 20:1a, 2-8

**Saturday:**
1 Jn 1:5—2:2/ Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18

**Sunday:**
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/ Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23, 1-7/ Mt 1:18-24
**INTENTIONS 12/10/19**
- Ambus, Ruby
- Beasley, Walter & Family
- Bowers, Lynette
- Buford, Susan & Family
- Cloyd, Cori
- Cloyd, Kalonda
- Duncan, Ruth & Family
- George, Darrion
- Henry, Aliyah
- Jackson, Tamica
- Okpalake Family
- Parran, Kristin
- Pickett, DaShaun
- Reedy, Judy
- Reedy, Sid
- Smith, Paulette

**INTENTIONS 12/17/19**
- Cummings, Alice
- George, Roberta
- Hearns, Zeysean
- Miller, Jr., Antonio
- Perry, Kameron
- Sanders, Sharron & Family
- Schneider, Terri

**SICKNESS 12/10/19**
- Collins, Tamika
- Duplantier, Tyrond Sr.
- Fisher, Kyle Fr.
- Greer, Lois
- Holt, Gary
- Jones, Deborah
- Luster, Juanita
- Mosby, Jerry
- Parran, Rodrick
- Reedy, Christian
- Valle, Jr., Robert (Bobby)
- Watkins, Darnell (Chef D)

**SICKNESS 12/17/19**
- Atherton, Vertibe
- Banks, Anita
- Calhoun, Debi
- Caprese, Brittany
- Chapman, Bonnie
- Clancy, Jimmy
- Cummings, Cleophas
- Haine, (Bill) Wm
- Harris, Tobey
- Herron, David
- Hood, Rosalind
- Howard, Yvonne
- LaBerta, Steve
- Lane, Joan
- Latham, Jean
- Letterman, Annette
- Moore, Brenda
- Pointer, Patti
- Remsberg, Cory Sgt.
- Schneider, Jeanne
- Schneider, Roy
- Schnelle, Laverne
- Serio, Jessica
- Smith, Melba
- Thompson, Mary Ann
- Weaver, Stephen
- Vet, Alphonso

**HOSPITAL 12/03/19**
- Ambus, Larry

**SHUT-IN’s**
- Atherton, Andrew
- Bohannon, Ida
- Brack, Dorothy
- Clay, Irving
- Lee, Rosemary
- McCoy, Bernice
- McCoy, Carolyn
- Peters, Mae
- Thomas, Bernice
- Turner, Hortense

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**Prayer For Renewed Strength**

O Lord, my God,  
Please give those listed above the grace to  
 maintain their hope in You  
 Through all of life’s changes  
 and to taste and see Your goodness.  
 Amen

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**Lwanga Center’s Bible Study** group has resumed. Please join us on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. We are located at 4746 Carter Ave., St. Louis, MO 63115.

We are praying with and exploring the Book of Psalms. Please bring a Bible (New American Edition is preferred). There is no charge for the sessions.

Free will offerings are always welcome.

Call the Center for more information if needed at (314) 367-7929.

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**1st Reconciliation/1st Communion**

Classes begin on February 8, 2020 with an Introductory Session for Parents/Guardians and Children in the Parish Hall, Room 113.

Children must be at least 7 years old and in the 2nd grade or higher. Registration packets with a schedule of classes and registration form are on the Usher’s Table.

Please complete the form and return to the office no later than Friday, January 31, 2020.
LITURGY NOTES...

The length of the Fourth Week of Advent depends on when Christmas Eve and Christmas fall in the week. Perhaps we can use these days to try to heighten our awareness of whatever is going on in our lives these days, and how that can bring us to Christmas. So many of us experience the ironic reality that Christmas can be the loneliest time of our lives. Some of these “mixed feelings” or “sad feelings” are difficult to recognize or name.

For some of us, the Christmas we will celebrate this year pales in comparison to wonderful Christmases of our past—perhaps because we were younger or more “innocent” then, perhaps because some of our loved ones who were central to our Christmas are no longer living or not where I am, perhaps because the burdens and struggles of my life or the changes in our world and the conflicts around us have robbed this Christmas of something that was there before.

For some of us, Christmas challenges us with terrible financial burdens. Children today become victims of the gross commercial exploitation of the day. For those of us struggling to make ends meet on a day to day basis, feeling the cultural pressure of buying for our children things which we can’t afford, can lead us to put more debt on the credit card in ways that simply push us further and further behind.

Some of us, might be really looking forward to Christmas, and not be aware of these struggles with Christmas, yet feel that, in spite of our best efforts to make Advent different this year, there is still something missing, and we still feel un-ready for Christmas.

For all of us, the story behind these days can draw us in, and invite us to bring our lives to the mystery of how Jesus came into this world and why. Our best preparation for the Holy Night ahead and the Joyful Morning to follow is for us to reflect upon how he came. He came in the midst of scandal and conflict. He came in poverty. He was rejected before he was born. He was born in a feed trough. He was hunted down. And he grew up in obscurity.

He did not shun our world and its poverty and conflict. He embraced it. And he desires to embrace us today, in this day. Right where we are. Right where we are feeling most distant. Right where we are feeling least “religious” or “ready.” If we let him come into our hearts to be our Savior these challenging days, we will find ourselves entering the sacred night and morning of Christmas “joyful and triumphant” as never before.

Come, Lord Jesus. Come and visit your people. We await your coming. Come, O Lord.

“Taken from Praying Advent, on Creighton University's Online Ministries web site. http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html Used with permission.”

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION...

BAPTISM GUIDELINES:

Newborn – 6 years old. A parent or legal guardian and godparent(s) must attend a Baptism preparation class, instruction materials are provided.

Ages 7 – 10: The child must attend special Baptism preparation classes and the parent(s) or legal guardian and godparent(s) must attend a Baptism preparation session prior to the ceremony.

Ages 11 – 17: The young person must enroll in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) program.

Age 18 and Older: The Candidate must enroll in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) program.

MATRIMONY – Engaged couples, seeking to be married at the Rock Church, must meet with the Pastor before setting a date.

RCIA/RCIC – ARE YOU SOMEONE OR DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO...

• Has expressed an interest in becoming Catholic?

• Has a child over the age of seven who has not been baptized?

• Was baptized Catholic as a child, but has not celebrated the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist?

We offer an opportunity to come together in a group to learn more about the Catholic Faith. Sessions focus on the teachings and experience of the Church and prepare individuals to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. There are separate sessions for children and youth. You are welcome to participate in the process with your questions, insights and your faith story in a warm accepting setting.

For information on requesting any of the above Sacraments and/or to register for classes, please contact the Director of Religious Education, Sharon Cooney-Smith at 314-533-0304 ext. 1001, or via e-mail @ scooneysmith@stalphonsusrock.org.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Seeking Choir Members

Please lend your voice to the choir being formed for the Archdiocesan Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend Celebration Mass being held on Sunday, January 19, 2020, at the Cathedral Basilica.

Rehearsals will be held at Cardinal Ritter College Preparatory High School 701 N. Spring Ave. on the following Saturdays: December 28th, and January 4th and 11th, at 11 a.m. 12:30 p.m.

Final Rehearsal will be held on January 18th from Noon—3:00 p.m.

In Celebration of Kwanzaa Sunday (Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph), we are requesting parishioners wear African/Ethnic attire.

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Attn: Ushers and Security:

Ushers and Security are needed to serve in ministry for Midnight Mass, Christmas Day Mass (10 am) and New Year's Day Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (10 am).

Ushers, if you are able to serve please sign the Usher Sign-Up Sheet located on the Usher Table.

Security, if you are able to serve, please contact security leader Herb Parran.

A big Thank You for your work on Operation Door Hanger!

Ruby Brown  Deborah Grant
Sam Britts  Linda Kamp
Joy Camp  Jeffrey McDonald
Selena Cloyd  Derrick Pou
Mike Coffman  Pat Pou
Roberta George  Maria Thorpes

Linda R

Upcoming Bulletin Announcement Deadlines

All items must be in the office, faxed or emailed no later than 12 noon on the dates listed below:

(314) 533-4260 (fax)
parish130@archstl.org

Dec. 26th  January 5th issue

RCIA
(Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

RCIC
(Rite of Christian Initiation of Children)

The RCIA/RCIC is the Church’s process for educating and forming adults and youth (ages 11 through 18) who wish to be baptized in the Catholic Church. Those seeking baptism are known at various points in the process as inquirers, catechumens and elect. A parallel or even combined process is used for adults who have been baptized in another Christian denomination and wish to Profess the Catholic faith, be Confirmed and receive First Holy Communion. Included in this process are Baptized Catholics who have not been confirmed or made their First Holy Communion.

For information on the RCIA or RCIC, please contact Sharon Cooney-Smith via email
scooneysmith@stalphonsusrock.org or by phone at 314-533-0304

Inclement Weather
Office Closed When...
STL Public School Is Closed
December 24 — 27th
Parish Office Closed
December 24, 2019
Midnight Mass
Doors Open 11:30 p.m.

December 25, 2019
Christmas Day Mass
Mass 10:00 a.m.

December 29, 2019
Kwanzaa Sunday
Feast of the Holy Family
Mass 8:15 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

January 1, 2019
New Years Day
Mass 10:00 a.m.

For Sale:
Shelled Nuts, $11 per pound
Almonds, Black Walnuts, Cashews, Pecans & Walnuts
Contact Shirley Foster at 314 382-4282 to place your orders.

Thanks always for your support!

You shop! Amazon gives!
Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to St Alphonsus Liguori “Rock” Catholic Church.
AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
Support the “Rock” by starting your shopping at:
www.smile.amazon.com

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Support the “Rock” by starting your shopping at:
www.smile.amazon.com

From Amazon.com...
St Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church has been issued a $23.32 donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between July 1 and Sept 30, 2019. Funds were deposited Nov. 14th.
Financial Corner...

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Stewardship Prayer…
That we can put our complete trust in God and become a model of discipleship like Joseph.

“When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.”
(Matthew 1:24)

Putting our complete trust in the Lord without expecting anything in return. Striving to put God first in all things and follow Him wherever He may lead us. As we prepare for the birth of our Lord, pray for the strength and courage to be a model of discipleship, just as Joseph was.

Dynamic Catholic, Alive! – Betrothal of Mary and Joseph

Was Mary really an “unwed mother”? As Matthew makes clear in today’s Gospel, the answer is clearly no—Mary and Joseph were really “betrothed,” she was his wife, and Joseph was really contemplating divorce. Marriage customs were such that the last stage of the marriage was that the betrothed came together to live as husband and wife. The Annunciation—and the Incarnation of Jesus—take place after betrothal but before they lived together. What would you have done if you were Joseph? (CCC 437, 488, 1846) [archstl.org/dynamic]

Move to the Right is coming!
You will hear more about this in the coming weeks

In preparation for our stewardship campaign we ask that you reflect on the following:

Prayer for Generosity

Lord Jesus,
Teach me to be generous;
Teach me to serve you as you deserve,
To give and not to count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not to seek for rest,
To labor and not to seek reward,
Except that of knowing that I do your will.

Amen
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PRAYER MEMORIALS

Tillie Mae Alexander, Hortense Anderson, Elizabeth Henckler Aton, Lillian Barnes
Mother Dorothy Granberry Bennett, Deacon Morris E. Bohannon, Willie Steve Bowens, Dorothy Brady
Theodore Branch, Jr., Irma King Brown, James Buford, Kenita Bush, Anna Chopin, Betty Jean Colbert
Charmaine Davenport, Walterene Dougherty, Roger Downs, Sr., Sr. Antona Ebo, FSM, Jerome Fields
Ossie R. Foster, Queen E. Dunlap Fowler, Craig Franklin, Willie Goss, Ann Marie Hatchett
Cherry Ophelia Jackson, Mark Jones, Mother Ruth Jones, Eldwyn Lewis, Barbara McCalebb
Drenea Sanders, Eugene Sanders, Christine Slaughter, Irma Steen, Susan Colbert Threats
Ralph Tyler, Robert Joseph Valle, Juanita West, Marlene Williams, Richard Williams, Clarence Zacher

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION
Sharon Cooney-Smith, DRE
314-533-0304 ext. 1001

RCIA/RCIC
Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Baptism
First Reconciliation
First Communion
Confirmation
Matrimony

COMMISIIONS & CHAIRS
Christian Formation Jean Anthony
Christian Service TBD
Finance & Adm. Monica Huddleston
Liturgy Richard Buckley
Social Life Rose Graham
Youth & Young Adults TBD

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
Kurt Englander Angela Thames Linda Kamp
President Vice President Secretary
Linda Brown Reed Ben Phillips
Wanda Caldwell Angela Thames
Joy Camp Travis Threats
Mike Coffman Eric Thurman
Rhonda Graham Kevin Triggs

ATTENTION
If your telephone number or address has changed, please contact the office at 533-0304. You may also put your updated information in the locked multipurpose box located on the north-side entrance ushers’ table.

Bulletin announcements must be in the office by 12 noon Tuesdays. Please fax items to 314 533-4260 or e-mail to parish130@archstl.org

ANOTING OF THE SICK & VISITS
"Is anyone sick among you? Call in the priests of the church and they will pray for the sick person and anoint them with oil." (James) This is the sacrament of the sick. ARE YOU SERIOUSLY SICK, GOING TO THE HOSPITAL OR HAVING AN OPERATION? Call and leave your hospital information at the office.