

SAINT EDWARD THE CONFESSOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SERVICE WORSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE

*Website—[www.stedwardbowie.org](http://www.stedwardbowie.org)*

*Newsletter—December 3, 2017*

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***Upcoming Dates to remember***

- **Saturday December 2 and Sunday December 3** – Christmas Market on Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm and after all Masses
- **Sunday, December 3** – First Sunday of Advent; Saturday Vigil Mass at 5:30pm, Sunday Masses at 7:30am, 9:30am, and 11:30am; Pre-K CCD and Children’s Liturgy of the Word during 9:30am Mass
- **Tuesday, December 5** –Religious Education classes: K-Level 5 4:15pm to 5:30pm, Sacrament Class from 5:30pm to 6:30pm (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>), Confirmation Levels 1, 2 and 3 from 6:30pm to 8:00pm; Reconciliation during class time for Level 3 through Confirmation Level 3
- **Wednesday, December 6** –Religious Education classes: Sacrament Class from 5:30pm to 6:30pm (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>), K-Level 5 6:30pm to 7:45pm; Reconciliation during class time for Level 3 through Level 5
- **Thursday, December 7** – Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 6:00pm to 7:00pm
- **Friday, December 8** – The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Holy Day of Obligation; Mass times: 7:30pm Vigil on December 7, 8:45am, 4:30pm and 7:30pm on December 8; Handmaid of the Lord a musical meditation led by the Conmigis choir from 6:00pm to 7:00pm
- **Saturday, December 9** – Sandwich Sunday Service Project; No group project - students make sandwiches at home during December
- **Sunday, December 10** – Sunday of Advent; Saturday Vigil Mass at 5:30pm, Sunday Masses at 7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am, and 4:30pm (Filipino led); Pre-K CCD and Children’s Liturgy of the Word during 9:30am Mass
- **Tuesday, December 12** –Religious Education classes: K-Level 5 4:15pm to 5:30pm, Sacrament Class from 5:30pm to 6:30pm (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>), Confirmation Levels 1, 2 and Confirmation Level 3 Faith Sharing from 6:30pm to 8:00pm;
- **Wednesday, December 13** –Religious Education classes: Sacrament Class from 5:30pm to 6:30pm (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>), K-Level 5 6:30pm to 7:45pm;
- **Thursday, December 14** – Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 6:00pm to 7:00pm

**Saint Days December 3 – December 9**

December 3 – Saint Francis Xavier

December 4 – Saint John Damascene

December 5 – Saint Sabas

December 6 – Saint Nicholas

December 7 – Saint Ambrose

December 8 – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

December 9 – Saint Juan Diego

Please go to [www.franciscanmedia.org](http://www.franciscanmedia.org) to learn about the saints. At this website you can sign up for an email delivery for the “Saint of the Day.”

## December 3, 2017 – First Sunday of Advent

December 3 is the First Sunday of Advent. The First Reading is from Isaiah 63:16b-17,19b,64:2-7 (*Isaiah prays for the Lord's forgiveness of the people*). The Responsorial Psalm is from Psalm 80:2-3,15-16,18-19 (*A prayer for the Lord's protection*). The Second Reading is from 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 (*Paul gives thanks to God for the faith of the Corinthians*). The Gospel is from Mark 13:33-37 (*Jesus warns his disciples to be watchful so that they will be ready when the Son of Man comes*). You can find these all the readings for everyday of the year on the United States Bishop's Conference web site – [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org); there is a tab at the top of the page for "Readings". The following reflection on Gospels come from the website for our textbooks – [www.FindingGod.org](http://www.FindingGod.org). I encourage you to look at this website.

### **Background on the Gospel Reading**

*Today we begin the season of Advent, which marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church. The readings for Sunday Mass are arranged on a three-year cycle. Each year features a different Gospel—Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Readings from the Gospel of John are interspersed throughout all three years. With this year's first Sunday of Advent, we begin Cycle B of the Lectionary, which focuses our attention on the Gospel of Mark. This week and next week, our readings from Mark's Gospel present two important Advent themes: the Lord's return at the end of time and John the Baptist's preparation for Jesus.*

*Today's Gospel is taken from the end of Mark's Gospel, the chapter that immediately precedes Mark's account of Jesus' Passion. Having been questioned repeatedly by the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus is now questioned by his disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—who want details about his prediction of the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answers with many warnings about the difficulties that the disciples will face.*

*Today's passage comes at the conclusion of Jesus' warnings to his disciples. Jesus emphasizes the need for watchfulness. The Son of Man will come without warning; only the Father knows the exact hour. The disciples must not be caught unprepared when this time comes.*

*Scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark's audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus' warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.*

*Today's Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the Church's celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark's community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.*

### **Family Connection**

*In family life, we try to prepare ourselves for many future things: our next vacation, our children's education, our retirement. We are careful not to allow ourselves to be caught by surprise so that we can handle any challenges our family may face. Today's Gospel reminds us that we are called to be just as attentive and alert to the coming of the Son of Man so that it will not catch us unprepared. This means attending to our family's spiritual life as carefully as we attend to other important family matters.*

*As you gather as a family, talk about a time when you received surprise visitors at your house, perhaps a neighbor who stopped by or a relative who arrived unannounced. Was your household prepared to receive this unannounced guest? What might your family have done differently if you knew ahead of time that this*

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*visitor was going to arrive? Jesus told his disciples that no one knows when the Son of Man will return, except the Father. Read with your family what Jesus told his disciples in today's Gospel, Mark 13:33-37.*

*During Advent, we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also check to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. Talk about how your family can recommit to daily prayer, reading Scripture, and staying faithful to God's commandments. Pray together that through this Advent season your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again. Read as a concluding prayer Paul's words to the Corinthians found in today's second reading, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, or pray the Lord's Prayer.*

## Gospel Activities

Go to the Catholic Mom website – [www.catholicmom.com](http://www.catholicmom.com) for coloring pages and puzzles for this Sunday's Gospel – look under "Sunday Gospel Activities.

## ADVENT AT SAINT EDWARD'S

The season of Advent will begin on Sunday December 3. This is a time when we prepare for the coming of Jesus in our hearts at Christmas but also for the second coming of Jesus. Are you ready to face Jesus when he comes again? Here are some ways to spiritually prepare for Christmas:

1. Advent Wreath –
  - a. Each Sunday during Advent families are being asked to light the candles on the Advent Wreath at the beginning of Mass. You should have received an email from me through Signup Genius with the details. Thank you to all who have already signed up – we are full for the first Sunday in Advent and all 9:30 Masses throughout Advent, there are still some 5:30, 7:30 and 11:30 Masses available!
  - b. Light the candles on the Advent Wreath at home before dinner each night. Advent Wreath prayers are attached for you to use as you light the wreath. I suggest that you do this with as little light as possible so that the children can see that it gets brighter as we get nearer to Christmas and celebration of Jesus' birth.
2. Sacrament of Reconciliation –
  - a. The students in Levels 3 through Confirmation Level 3 Religious Education classes will be going to Reconciliation the week of December 5
  - b. Father Scott will have Reconciliation every Wednesday evening from 7:00pm to 8:00pm
  - c. Reconciliation is every Saturday at our church from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. The presider at the 5:30pm Mass hears the Confessions
3. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00
4. Prayer – There are several ways to enhance our prayer life during Advent:
  - a. You can pray with the Scriptures or Saints
  - b. Read new books or articles on the Catholic Faith
  - c. Participate in an on-line Advent program. Here are a few I know of:
    - i. Loyola Press – <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/sacred-advent-retreat>
    - ii. Dynamic Catholic – [dynamiccatholic.com/advent](http://dynamiccatholic.com/advent)
5. December 8 –
  - a. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception where we celebrate that Mary was conceived without sin in preparation for being the mother of Jesus is a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass times at Saint Edward's are: 7:30pm Vigil on December 7, 8:45am, 4:30pm and 7:30pm on December 8
  - b. The Conmigos choir will be presenting The Handmaid of the Lord: A Musical Meditation, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm
6. The Giving Tree (our December service project) – will be up on Thanksgiving.
  - a. Pick an ornament from the tree

- b. Write down your name and contact information next to the ornament number on the sign-up sheets
- c. Bring the wrapped gift back to church by December 10



## DECEMBER SERVICE PROJECT - CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

The Christmas Giving Tree is up. This will be our December Service Project. Please take an ornament from the tree and write your name next to the ornament number. Gifts are due back on Sunday December 10 by 12:30pm.

### Saint of the Week

Each week I will highlight a saint whose feast is that week. This week I have chosen Saint Juan Diego. His feast day is December 9. Saint Nicholas' feast day is also this week, December 6. I encourage you to also read about him. A coloring and word find page is attached. The reflection below comes from the Loyola Press website ([www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)).



**Saint Juan Diego, 1474–1548**

**Feast Day December 9**

*A beautiful picture of Mary can be seen on a cloak above the main altar in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The cloak belonged to Juan Diego, an Aztec who lived more than 450 years ago. Juan Diego and his wife, María Lucía, converts, walked 14 miles to religious instructions and Mass every Saturday and Sunday. On December 9, 1531, when Juan was a 57-year-old widower, he was walking to Mass. A beautiful lady dressed as an Aztec appeared. She told him she was the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of the true God. She desired to have a shrine there at Tepeyac Hill so that she could show her love for people. She said, "Ask for my help. Here I will listen to people's prayers and I will help them."*

*Mary asked Juan to tell the bishop of her desire.*

*The bishop didn't believe him, so Juan returned to the lady and suggested she send a better speaker. Mary told Juan that she chose him for this work and that she would bless him for helping her. Juan revisited the bishop. This time the bishop told him to ask his lady for a sign that she was the Mother of God. When Juan did, Mary told him to return the next day for a sign.*

*The same day Juan's Uncle Bernardino became ill, and Juan stayed home to care for him. When his uncle was dying, Juan went for a priest. On the way he met the Holy Virgin. He apologized for not meeting her the day before. Mary replied, "Now listen to me. Do not let anything bother you, and do not be afraid of any illness, pain, or accident. Am I not here, your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? What more could you want? Don't worry about your uncle. He is well already."*

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*Mary then sent Juan to the top of the hill to gather the flowers growing there. Juan knew that nothing grew on that rocky hill, let alone in winter. However, he did as the Lady said. Juan found gorgeous roses! He picked them and brought them to Mary, who arranged them in his cloak that María Lucía had made from cactus fibers. Mary told Juan to take them to the bishop.*

*When the bishop saw Juan, he asked what he had in his tilma. Juan opened it, letting the roses fall. Imagine the bishop's surprise at seeing roses in winter! Yet he saw an even greater miracle: on Juan's cloak a beautiful, life-size image began to appear. Juan gasped. It was his Lady! The bishop cried out, "The Immaculate!" Then he knelt and with tears asked the Blessed Mother's pardon for not believing Juan. On that same day, Mary appeared to Juan's uncle and cured him. Uncle Bernardino went to the bishop and told how he had been cured.*

*Juan Diego remained poor, simple, humble, and devoted to the Eucharist. He spent the next 17 years traveling throughout central Mexico, bringing others to the faith and delivering Guadalupe's message that Mary loves us and wants to help us. Juan Diego was beatified in 1990 and canonized in 2002.*

## Confirmation at St. Edward's

Preparation for Confirmation is a three-year program in the areas of knowledge, worship and service and includes students in Confirmation Levels 1 through 3 in our parish Religious Education program and the students of Saint Edward parishioners who are in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades at a Catholic school.

Students who do not attend Catholic school are required to attend classes in our parish Religious Education program during **all** three of these years:

- Confirmation Level 1 (6<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic school) – this year the curriculum focuses on the Old Testament. Students participate in at least 3 Sandwich Sunday Service Projects
- Confirmation Level 2 (7<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic school) – this year the curriculum focuses on the New Testament. Students participate in at least 3 Sandwich Sunday Service Projects
- Confirmation Level 3 (8<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic school) – this year the curriculum focuses on the Sacrament of Confirmation and the meaning of it in a Catholic life. Each of the previous eight years of religious education are tied into the curriculum for this year. Students participate in the Sandwich Sunday Service Project each month from September through April.

**The Confirmation Mass will be on Sunday April 29 at 2:00pm with Bishop Dorsonville.**



**CONFIRMATION LEVEL 3 (8<sup>TH</sup> grade in Catholic school) – please note schedule for December**

1. **Sunday, November 26** – Due: November Faith Sharing; many students have not handed theirs in yet
2. **Tuesday, December 5** – CCD class for Religious Education students from 6:30pm to 8:00pm; Reconciliation during class
3. **Friday, December 8** – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Holy Day of Obligation; Mass times: 7:30pm Vigil on December 7, 8:45am, 4:30pm and 7:30pm on December 8
4. **Saturday, December 9** – Sandwich Sunday Service Project; we will **not** meet as a group. Students are asked to make sandwiches at home
5. **Tuesday, December 12** – Faith Sharing class for all students from 6:30pm to 8:00pm
6. **Tuesday, December 19** - CCD class for Religious Education students from 6:30pm to 8:00pm
7. **Monday, December 25** – Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day), Holy Day of Obligation; Mass times: 4:00pm, 6:30pm and 10:00pm Vigils on December 24, 7:30am and 10:00am on December 25
8. **Tuesday, December 26** – NO CLASS, Christmas Vacation

9. **Sunday, December 31** – December Faith Sharing, Baptism Certificates (for those not baptized at Saint Edward's) and 12 Service hours due

## Sandwich Sunday Service Project

All of the students who are preparing for Confirmation (Confirmation Levels 1, 2 and 3 or 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in Catholic school) participate in a group service project that is referred to as the **Sandwich Sunday Service Project**. The students gather after the 5:30pm Saturday Vigil Mass on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month to make sandwiches; they are delivered to Martha's Table after the 11:30 Mass on Sunday. Please note the following:

1. Students in Confirmation Level 3 (8<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic school) participate the Sandwich Sunday Service Project each month from September through April
2. Students in Confirmation Levels 1 and 2 (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic School) participate in at least 3 Sandwich Sunday Service Projects during each of these years
3. We do not make sandwiches as a group in December – students are asked to make a loaf of sandwiches at home; this will be the weekend of December 9/10. The next Sandwich Sunday Service Project is January 13

## Reconciliation and Eucharist at St. Edward's

Preparation for Reconciliation and Eucharist is a two year program:

- Students who do not attend Catholic school start their preparation at Level 1 in our Religious Education program – this class is for children in first grade and children in second grade who have not completed Level 1. Level 2 classes are for children in second grade and third grade who have completed Level 1 and are still preparing to receive Reconciliation and Eucharist.
- Children in the third grade and higher who have not received their First Reconciliation or Eucharist register for the class at their grade level (for example 4<sup>th</sup> graders would register for Level 4) and also attend the Sacrament Class on Sunday mornings;
- The children of Saint Edward parishioners who attend a Catholic school receive these Sacraments at Saint Edward's but are prepared in the first and second grade at their school. You will receive a letter in September with details about the retreats and practices that all students, both Catholic school and religious education, participate in together.



**First Reconciliation will be on Friday, January 26 at 7:00pm. The First Holy Communion Mass will be on Saturday, May 5 at 11:00am**



## Music Ministry at Saint Edward's

The Music Ministry is gearing up after their summer break. Practices have begun! First of all, please welcome Ms. Megan Weeks as our new Music Director. Megan grew up at Saint Edward's and was part of the Children's, Youth and Adult Choirs and directed the Adult choir two years ago. Megan would love to have new voices in all of the choirs:

1. Children's Choir – for children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grades. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30. They will sing at the 9:30am Mass for the first time on October 8.
2. Youth Choir – for young people in 6<sup>th</sup> grade through high school. They rehearse on Monday

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- evenings from 7:30-8:30. They will sing at the 5:30pm Vigil Mass for the first time on October 7.
3. Adult Choir – rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:00.



## SAINT EDWARD'S FOR THE CHRISTMAS MARKET

**THE DAY IS FINALLY HERE!!!** The Christmas Market at Saint Edward's on December 2 and 3. Parishioners have been working very hard this year to make many items that will be for sale during the Market. PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT THIS EFFORT! The Christmas Market will be open on Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm and after all the Masses the weekend of December 2 and 3.

There will be a bake sale at the Christmas Market; all donations of baked goods are welcome. Bring them to the church on Saturday morning or when you come to the Christmas Market.

### **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

December 8 is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The First Reading is from Genesis 3:9-15,20 (*God confronts Adam and Eve after they have eaten of the tree forbidden them by God and curses the serpent for his action*). The Responsorial Psalm is from Psalm 98:1,2-3,3-4 (*Sing to the Lord for he has done wondrous deeds*). The Second Reading is from Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12 (*In Christ, we were chosen to be adopted children of God*). The Gospel is from Luke 1:26-38 (*The angel Gabriel appears to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus, and Mary responds, "Let it be done to me as you say."*). You can find these all the readings for everyday of the year on the United States Bishop's Conference web site – [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org); there is a tab at the top of the page for "Readings". The following reflection on Gospels come from the website for our textbooks – [www.FindingGod.org](http://www.FindingGod.org). I encourage you to look at this website.

#### ***Background on the Gospel Reading***

*Today we celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This feast celebrates God's choice of Mary to be the mother of Jesus. God preserved Mary from the stain of original sin from the moment of her conception. Thus, Mary was the first to receive the benefit of the redemption that her Son would merit for all.*

*To reflect upon this mystery, the Gospel reading for today presents to us the story of the Annunciation. It is through her exchange with the angel Gabriel that Luke, the Evangelist, introduces the person of Mary. The Annunciation begins in the context of Luke's account of the birth of John the Baptist. "In the sixth month," referring to Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel Gabriel appears to a virgin of Nazareth—Mary. Indeed, there are many parallels in Luke's accounts of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.*

*In this passage, Luke tells us much about Mary and the child she is to bear. We learn that Mary is a virgin from Nazareth who is betrothed to a man named Joseph, who was of the house of David. The angel greets Mary in the most glowing of terms, acknowledging the favor she has found with God. The son Mary is to conceive is described in messianic terms. He will be called "Son of the Most High" and the "Son of God."*

*Mary is bold in her exchange with the angel. She is troubled by his greeting and questions the message, asking "How am I to bear a son if I have no relations with a man?" Mary is told that she will conceive through the power of the Holy Spirit and is offered a sign in the miraculous pregnancy of her elder cousin Elizabeth.*

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*Mary's affirmative response to this seemingly impossible message gives evidence to the grace we know that she possesses from God. Only one who is "full of grace" can be so receptive to and cooperative with the will of God. Because of this, Mary is the model of discipleship for all Christians.*

**Family Connection**

*To be chosen by God for a particular task is an awesome thing. That is why we honor Mary, the one chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus. Yet we believe that each of us is chosen by God in particular and important ways, and each of us is given gifts and talents by God to share with the world. One of the tremendous responsibilities of parenting is helping our children determine the gifts and talents they have to share with others to serve the reign of God.*

*As a family, identify some of the gifts and talents that God has given each person in the family. Talk about the ways in which these gifts and talents might be used in the service of others. Recall that Mary was given a special task by God. Read together today's Gospel, Luke 1:26-38. Reflect upon Mary's humble response to God's call. Pray as a family that each person will be like Mary and respond to God with a resounding yes by using their gifts and talents to serve others in both large and small ways. Conclude by praying together the Hail Mary, or perhaps pray a decade of the Rosary, reflecting upon the Joyful Mystery, the Annunciation.*