

A Long Time

Love always wants to share itself.

This is surely why God chose to create, God, who is love, making planets and black holes and galaxy clusters, and bestowing his very self upon every microscopic atom of the exhaustive creation he had made.

What a privilege for us, what a gift. Surely this would have been enough.

But planets and asteroids could not receive God actively. They could not decide to let God in and then willingly love God in return. Their reception was passive, a relishment of their rough, craggy existence, being exactly what they were (are) created to be, but no more.

So God thought up a miraculously intricate trail by which something called life could come about. He chose a diminutive blue planet circulating insignificantly around a small star in what some folks would call the Milky Way, millions of years later. It was a new beginning.

It was Life. Life eked its way out of the seas and onto shore. And then into trees, skies, rocky shores and more. It took as its home the highest mountains, the coldest high specks of space, the hottest flaming deserts, and even the deepest oceans. God loved this abundant "Life" in the way a mother loves her children.

If you could have taken one look at the dinosaurs and apes and fishes and birds, you would have seen that these miraculous creations would have been enough. They were alive. What a delight. And God enwrapped them in love, a love in which they basked without knowing it.

So there was still more room. God's overflow of love sought out more space for being received.

A very interesting thing happened. God scooped out an openness in some living creatures so that they could actively receive the affectionate love that God was bestowing upon them, and now could return love to God.

As a result, the human race—slowly, cumbrously—doddered into being. Don't ask me the number of Cro-Magnon species that came to be, or how hunting turned into farming and cooking, how weaving and building and fences and fire came onto the scene. They did. And God took time to deepen within humans a spiritual hollow by which they could actually, even in fear and distraction, receive God's Glory. Not passively like a rock receives the sun, but actively and knowingly, welcoming unto themselves the gratuity of God's life, love and presence.

We are those human beings. Each of us is able to open up, wading at the apex of such a long history of God's love for us.

Advent is a treasured time to ask quietly, humbly, how we will love in return.

Will we take time to treasure the openness deep within? Will we let it thrive? It would mean bringing patience to bear on our nervous, ever worrisome life, letting God's presence be enough when we can. Presently, we are called to a way of patient listening and waiting instead of simply "going to church."

Would that be enough?

Not yet.

What if God's tender love wanted to make its way out of the church and into the world? Wouldn't it start (or continue) with the birth of the child Jesus? And wouldn't we carry such love, now within our hearts, out to the whole world? John Foley, SJ

Second Sunday of Advent December 6, 2020

St. Stephens Indian Mission

www.saintstephensmission.com

856-7806

33 St. Stephens Road

PO Box 250

St. Stephens, WY 82524

Fr. Jim Heiser.....Pastor

Sr. Monica Suhayda, CSJ.....Past. Asst./ Gift Shop 856-4330

Patti McMahan.....Director of Religious Education

Blessed Sacrament & St. Josephs

332-9090

Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Religious Education

Sacrament of Reconciliation & Sacrament of the Sick

You may call the office to schedule an appointment for confession. If there is no answer please leave your name and phone number and Father Jim will return your call. Please do not schedule an appointment if you are sick, please wait until you are well to protect yourself and the priest. Priest and penitent will be required to wear a mask and maintain a safe six foot distance during confession.

The Sacrament of the sick is available for those who are in need, terminal and to those who have an upcoming surgery. Please call the office if you or a loved one is in need of this sacrament.

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Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you Welcome!
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The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings December 7th through December 13th :

Mon: Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9ab-14; Lk 5:17-26
Tue: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38
Wed: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30
Thur: Is 41:13-20; ps 145:1, 9-13b; Mt 11:11-15
Fri: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
Sat: Zec 2:14-17; (ps) Jdt 13:18bc, 19; Lk 1:26-38
Sun: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; (Ps) Lk 1:46-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Parish Collection

Last week mail in collection \$1695

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

THANK YOU to all who have continued to make financial contributions to St. Stephens Indian Mission through these most trying times! God Bless!

Mass Intentions this week

12/6:	Sunday	Mark & Eric Heiser
	Sunday	For the people
12/8:	4pm Tuesday	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
12/9:	5pm Wednesday	Camdon Cole
12/10:	7:15am Thursday	Pauline Boyd
12/13:	Sunday	+Edward LaMorte
	Sunday	For The People

As we continue to celebrate Sunday Mass at St. Stephens, we are limited to 10 people in attendance as we follow the Wind River Intertribal Council's resolution. If you would like to be added to the rotating list of parishioners for Mass please call the office or email the parish office. Please also email the parish office (melissa.brown@saintstephensmission.com) to make sure your contact information is on file with the Parish as this is our primary way to contact you when things change or if we have an event you might be interested in. Thank you!

Please remember that Bishop Steven's general dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will remain in effect for the duration of Mass attendance restrictions. Mass is available for viewing on K2 Television at 9am and/or you may watch via livestream on St. Margaret's or Holy Rosary's FB pages.

Face masks are required at Mass. Please use hand sanitizer, refrain from exchanging handshakes during the Sign of Peace and maintain at least six feet apart from parishioners (except if you are in the same household) including processing to receive the Eucharist. If you are not feeling well and are scheduled to attend Mass please stay home and call the office so we can switch you with another parishioner until you feel well. Please keep our church family safe. We appreciate your cooperation as we move forward, safely, together.

Please pray for the family of the deceased:

+Evangeline Mead

+Harvey Brown

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Having Mass offered for an anniversary, marriage, special occasion, or in memory of someone is a special gift. Cards are available at the office.

Diocesan guideline is \$10.00 for Mass.

Today is the Second Sunday of Advent! There are many guides online for prayer during the Advent season. Find one that is good for your family!

Nominations for Parish Council are being accepted! You may either call Fr. Jim or mail us your nomination or nominate yourself! Please prayerfully consider serving in this capacity.

So our parishioners may plan as they need: There will NOT be a communal penance service this Advent. You may call the office and leave a message if you would like to schedule an appointment for confession.



Poinsettias

If you would like to donate poinsettias for the church please bring them to the parish office or leave in the church by December 22nd. Thank you and God Bless!

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always!