



# ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

A DIVERSE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY IN ACTION

## Mission

A diverse spiritual community in action, dedicated to drawing people to Christ and making church and worship matter. We do this through our liturgical worship and living out our stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

## MASS SCHEDULE

**Daily Mass: Monday—Friday**  
8:30 am, 12:00 Noon

### Saturday

Mass: 8:30 am  
Confession: 1:00 pm—2:00 pm  
Saturday Vigil Mass—5:30 pm

### Sunday

7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am,  
12:00 Noon

## PASTORAL STAFF

**Rev. Msgr. Anselm I. Nwaorgu**  
Pastor

**Rev. Camilo Lopez**  
Parochial Vicar

**Deacon Michael Alfano**  
Permanent Deacon

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Principal

**Mary Jo Arnaldo-Sipe**  
Parish Secretary/Bookkeeper

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**Lois Scanio**  
Religious Education

**Cristina Manochio**  
**Joseph Santillo**  
Youth Ministry

**Fran Engleman**  
Music Ministry

**Tiago Rodrigues**  
Property Manager

**Pastor Emeritus**  
**Rev. Charles McDermott**

## PARISH OFFICE

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Fax: 908-810-1076

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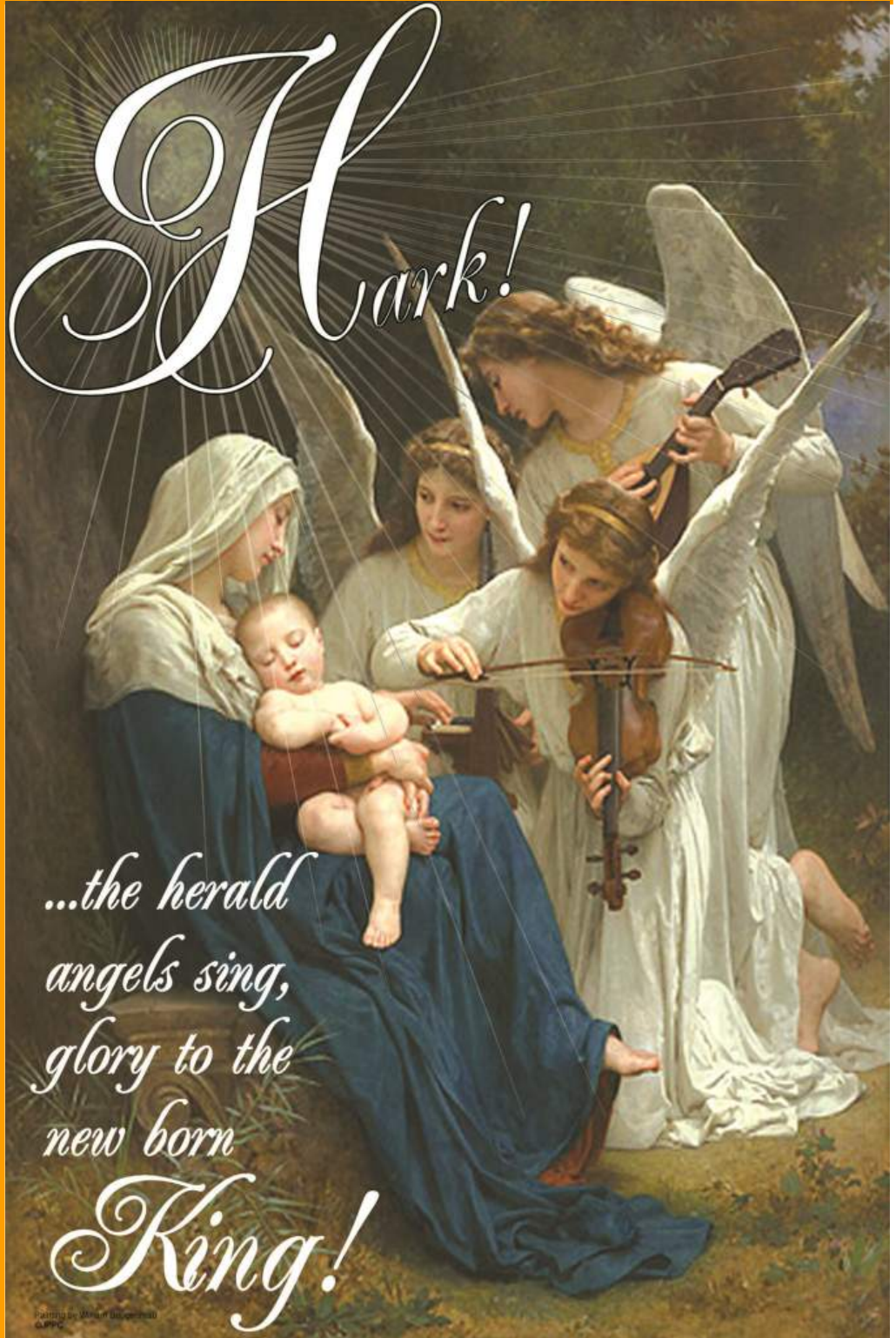
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December 24, 2023

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



**I Am Who I Am By the Grace of God**



On this fourth Sunday of Advent and as we celebrate Christmas, the gospel reading tells the Story of how our Blessed Mother, Mary, came to conceive Jesus; an unknown, non-

important, unrecognized, slightest thought of, and a nobody village girl from an obscure village called Bethlehem; a village considered to be too small to be among the clans of Judah. Yet, from her was to be conceived and to give birth to the King of kings, Emmanuel, the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

It reminds me of the story of the anointing of David by the Prophet Samuel, the shepherd boy, who, despite all the majestic posturing of his siblings, was the one appointed by God to be king, and the party was not to start until he arrives. I also remember when Gideon told the angel of the Lord, "My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family," and the angel of the Lord responded, "[No], you are a mighty warrior. Go in the strength you have and save Israel" (Judges 6:1-11). Notice the phrase: "GO IN THE STRENGTH YOU HAVE."

My friends, have you ever asked, "What does God think of me? Who does God say that I am? We often tend to care more about what people think of us than what God thinks of us. We are not what others think we are; we are what God knows us to be. God knows us to be wired with the ability and inner strength to do great things, stand strong in the face of opposition, and call forth the David within us in the face of life-Goliaths. There is a Gideon in us to go further than we thought we could and to live a life beyond what limits us. When we focus on what others think of us, we risk not becoming who God knows us to be and who God wants us to be. Focusing on what others think of us boxes us into the corner of their judgment,

only for us to, consciously or unconsciously, act and behave in ways that line up with their prejudice, and like Gideon, begin to look down on ourselves, doubt our abilities, and end up living a life that we were not created to live. No wonder Scripture says, "It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you" (Proverb 29:25). Using the opinions of others as the measuring stick of our worth is always a losing battle. We can never please God if we are disgusted with the person looking back at us in a mirror.

God thinks good thoughts about us, so let us also think good thoughts about ourselves. Never look down on yourself, no matter who you are, where you come from, your profession, or whatever imperfections you have. There is always someone looking up to you—God, your creator. We know that beliefs are compelling because they have the power to create and the power to destroy. So, we ought to believe in ourselves, trust in our worth, be full of expectations, and stand with St. Paul when he says, "I am who I am by the grace of God." Because we are who we are by the grace of God, other persons also are who they are by God's grace. So, we should never look down on anyone because only God sits up that high to do so. Merry Christmas!

*Msgr. Anselm Nwaorgu*

# Stewardship of Treasure

## Merry Christmas

*"...this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
...the babe, the son of Mary."*



### CHRISTMAS FLOWER OFFERING ENVELOPE

In your envelope package and at the vestibule of the Church, you will find envelopes for Christmas Flower Offerings. Please be generous in your donations to keep our Church beautifully decorated for Christmas. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

**Christmas Flowers Budget: \$3,500**  
**Actual as of 12/11/23 \$1,527**

"Give and gifts will be given to you ... the measure with which you measure will in turn be measured out to you." **Luke 6:38**

### COLLECTION & SOS

	<b>NEEDED WEEKLY</b>	<b>ACTUAL WEEKLY</b>	<b>OVER/UNDER</b>
<b>DECEMBER</b>			
<b>Week 1</b>	\$ 7,079	\$ 8,171	\$ 1,092
<b>Week 2</b>	\$ 7,079	\$ 9,141	\$ 2,062
<b>Week 3</b>	\$ 7,079	\$	\$
<b>Week 4</b>	\$ 7,079	\$	\$
<b>Monthly SOS</b>	\$10,040	\$ 6,491	\$ 3,549
<b>Christmas Collection</b>	\$25,000	\$ 595	

*Dear Parishioners,*

In order for us to stay in the **GREEN**, it is important that we meet our weekly budget collections and SOS. Please let us continue to support the weekly Sunday collection so that we can achieve our goals of balancing the budget going forward.

Thank you for your support of the parish and your continued generosity.

*Msgr. Anselm*

## 6 Ways To DONATE

<p><b>ONLINE GIVING:</b></p>  <p>—SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING— stmichaelunion.org</p>	<p><b>BANK TRANSFER:</b></p>  <p>stmichaelunion@comcast.net</p> <p>In the Comment section, indicate where your donation should be accounted for, e.g., USAN (with your Group Name), Offertory, Tithe, etc.</p>	<p><b>CONTACT FREE: QR CODE</b></p>  <p>Scanning the code above with your mobile device directs you to the online donation page</p>
<p><b>MAIL IN:</b></p>  <p>1211 Orange Ave, Union, NJ 07083</p>	<p><b>DROP OFF: AT THE PARISH CENTER</b></p>  <p>1211 Orange Ave, Union, NJ 07083</p>	<p><b>DURING OFFERTORY: AT MASS</b></p>  <p>You can use designated envelopes OR use your envelope but indicate where your donation should be accounted for.</p>



### Prayer to ST. MICHAEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

## Mass Intentions & Novenas

### MASS INTENTIONS

#### **SATURDAY**

**December 23**

8:30 am Novena of Masses  
Dagat Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
Christopher Morales (Living)-Birthday  
5:30 pm Victoria Espiritu, Richard Miller  
Anelito Almosa, Sr. (18th Ann.)

#### **SUNDAY**

**December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE**

7:30 am Henry & Carol Manzella  
9:00 am Auguste Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
10:30 am Espiritu Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
Maria Grullon  
12:00 noon Manuel Fazendeiro  
Marylou Morales (Living)-Birthday  
5:00 pm Family Liturgy  
8:00 pm Roger Boetsch  
Ume Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
Montano Family (Living)

#### **MONDAY**

**December 25 CHRISTMAS DAY**

7:30 am Christmas Novena of Masses  
Living & Deceased Members of the Manzella  
& Minneci Families-Thanksgiving  
9:00 am Christmas Novena of Masses  
Jose & Lucille Arnaldo  
Sipe Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
10:30 am Christmas Novena of Masses  
Judenique Auguste (Living)-Thanksgiving  
12:00 noon Christmas Novena of Masses  
Tony & Mae Lopina & Family (Living)  
Kent Charlotin (Living)-Birthday

#### **TUESDAY**

**December 26**

9:00 am Matthew Boulin (Living)-Birthday  
Luther & Shela Boulin (Living)-20th Wedding Ann.  
Cornelius Silvey

#### **WEDNESDAY**

**December 27**

8:30 am Amoakon Mian, Maria Tavares  
Mike & Marj Catuncan (Living)-20th Wedding Ann.  
12:00 noon Doug & Mary Jo Sipe & Family (Living)  
Jeff Pogorzelski (Living)-Healing

#### **THURSDAY**

**December 28**

8:30 am Jerry Crincoli, Robert Neufeld  
Marc Calixte, Cecile Le Blanc  
12:00 noon Eleanor Kachelress (2nd Ann.)  
Emmanuela Leon (Living)-Birthday

#### **FRIDAY**

**December 29**

8:30 am Novena of Masses, Frank Ausan (Living)  
12:00 noon Cyril Nwako (10th Ann.)  
Paul & Lucy Sefia (Living)-22nd Wedding Ann.

#### **SATURDAY**

**December 30**

8:30 am Maureen Reilly, Novena of Masses  
5:30 pm Mark Frederickson (1st Ann.)  
Francesca Espana (Living)  
Rebecca Signar (1st Ann.)

#### **SUNDAY**

**December 31**

7:30 am Antonio Mendes Goncalves  
9:00 am Patrick Menezes  
Carol & Joe Furnari (Living)-Healing  
10:30 am John Mcknight, Jose Lora  
12:00 noon Charismatic Group-Protection & Blessings  
7:00 pm Grandeza Family (Living)-Thanksgiving  
Regina Montano (Living)

#### **ALTAR OFFERINGS**

*The Altar Bread, Altar Wine and Sanctuary Lamp are offered for the Czapla and McMahon Families.*

### NOVENA OF MASSES

**December 2023**

<b>Jose &amp; Lucille Arnaldo</b>	<b>Phil Matrale</b>
<b>James Ford, Sr.</b>	<b>Jorge &amp; Hilda Criado</b>
<b>Anthonia Emeana</b>	<b>Fritz Maddy</b>
<b>Pierre &amp; Rubinetti Families</b>	<b>Frank Rubinetti</b>
<b>Mary &amp; Idolo Russomano</b>	<b>Artemia Tan</b>
<b>George Rinehart, Jr.</b>	<b>Abe Maksom</b>
<b>Juan Carlos Araneta</b>	<b>Ramon Valera</b>
<b>Linda Lopez Grino</b>	<b>Jaime Gonzaga</b>
<b>Mary Lou Lamotta</b>	
<b>Lourdes Marasigan (Living)-Healing</b>	
<b>Matthew Boulin (Living)-Birthday</b>	
<b>Antonio Simao Del Melo Madeiros</b>	
<b>Socorro Dagat (Living)-Healing</b>	
<b>Micheline &amp; Joseph Kmetz</b>	
<b>Michelle Sumabat (Living)</b>	
<b>Erma Barce &amp; Family (Living)</b>	
<b>Dolores Montano &amp; Family (Living)</b>	
<b>Felicitas Tan &amp; Family (Living)</b>	
<b>Rodrigues, Medeiros &amp; Araujo Families</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of Terriaca Families</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of DiFabrizio Families</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of Santoriello Family</b>	
<b>George, Ruth &amp; Barbara Rinehart</b>	
<b>Jeff Pogorzelski (Living) - Healing</b>	
<b>Filipe Manuel Araujo Pais (Living)</b>	
<b>Grace Marie Araujo Cadenas (Living)</b>	
<b>Anamaria Araujo Pais (Living)</b>	
<b>Patsy Scalgione &amp; Deceased Family Members</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of the Orlando,</b>	
<b>Landolfi, Siciliano &amp; LaManna Families</b>	
<b>Manuel Pereira Araujo &amp; Lucilia Sousa Araujo</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of Santoriello Family</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members of the Del Rosario &amp;</b>	
<b>Perez Families</b>	
<b>Living &amp; Deceased Members Onyenanu &amp;</b>	
<b>Durugo</b>	

### PRAYERS OF HEALING FOR

Grace Fortino, Dolores Rust, Lucy Nwauku, Judy Reid, Ana Torres, Rita Homiak, Stephen Berberabe, Norma Tuano, Jeff Pogorzelski, Virginia Attanasio, Mary Leeman, Marie Esposito, Jose M. DeJesus, Andre Graigwell, Nicole Pozeinick, Amy Dombroski, Samantha Lopes, Jacob & Jaxson Rivera, Ken Lang, Valerie Carter, Willie Green, Shirley Dobard, Joyce Toth, Maria Ferrara, Coady Brown, Alex Pretto, Paulo Goncalves, Frances Machado, Antoinette Agriloo, James Scholz, Giovanna Di Biase, Michael Nworu, Victoria Nworu, June Musa, Marivic del Rosario, Denise Lucarello Aliseo, James Mariusiak, Theresa Ojeawere, Kathleen Sarno, Kathy Chavez, John McEvoy, Sofia Teixeira, Carlos Dacruz, Anthony Staynings, Socorro Dagat, Peter & Cathy Fortunato, Anna Lepski, Nicole Ferlo, Therese Ferlo, Dolly Kramer, Juanita Oktensbroer

### DECEASED RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

Please remember in your prayers our parish, friends and family members who have passed on to the Lord, that they may inherit the promise of everlasting life in heaven.

**Especially members of St. Michael's Church**

# Ministry Happenings

## CYO YOUTH MINISTRY



We would like to congratulate our CYO members on their presentation of the **FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS** for all of us to enjoy this Christmas Season! They presented the true meaning of Christmas for all of us!

### FESTIVAL CAST

Mary.....Jasline Hernandez  
Joseph .....Ryu Javate  
Angel Gabriel.....Anahi Toral  
Elizabeth.....Amelia Rabanal  
Angels.....Abigail Sheridan & Aeryn Perez  
Inn-Keeper.....Ryan Parmenter  
Servant Girl.....Ana Ruiz  
(King Herod) .....Gavin Andrade

### WISE MEN

Oscar Franco, Andres Franco & Nicholas Laube

### SHEPHERDS

Shana Osemwegie, Ian Galing, Sam Torres, Nichole Silverio

### READERS

Angelina Holandez, Kayla Ciaccio, Steven Lasso, Ethan Woodruff, Daniela Rojas, Justin Cross, Grace Cadenas, Erin White, Martin Rodriguez, Matthew Almeida, Randy Andrade, Gabriel Spassione & Gabriella Tubio Rodriguez

Lights / Stage.....Chloe Geohagen

A special THANK YOU to all those who shared their musical talents with us! The music shared was Beautiful and Inspirational!

There will be no CYO meetings on Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, December 26<sup>th</sup>, or January 2<sup>nd</sup>. CYO will resume on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Have a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year Everyone!**



## CHARISMATIC RENEWAL PRAYER GROUP

COME AND EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT **PERSONALLY**  
WITH ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH  
Catholic Charismatic Renewal Prayer Group

DAY: Wednesday  
TIME: 6 PM-7:30 PM  
VENUE: Murphy Room, Phil Matrale Hall (LC)



## WELLNESS MINISTRY

(FREE) DANCE/EXERCISE Class For the Family

Saturdays 9:30—10:30 am  
Phil Matrale Hall (LC)



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



**Christmas Blessings from the staff of the Religious Education Office  
Clare Andriola and Lois Scanio**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STUDENTS:** There are **no religious education classes** on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>; Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>; and Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Classes will resume beginning Sunday, January 7, 2024.

The **Religious Education Office** is open Monday through Thursday 9:30AM to 2:30PM (except holidays) or by appointment. We are located in the Parish Center at 1211 Orange Avenue. You can also contact us by phone 908-964-0965 at any time and leave a message or via email at [smccd@comcast.net](mailto:smccd@comcast.net). **The office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's.**



"Behold, I make all things new." REVELATIONS 21:5

May God bless you in the New Year!



## HANDS OF GRACE (HUGS)

HUGS **Giving Tree** has been decorated and lit! Please stop by the Church vestibule to pick a gift request. Your help keeps our inventory going. Presently we distribute grace bags to 50 families in our community.



## ST. ANN'S FOOD PANTRY

Please bring all holiday food donations to the Parish Center (1211 Orange Ave). Thank you for your generosity.

## Announcements



### CHRISTMAS MASSES

*Sunday, December 24th*

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon

#### Christmas Eve

5:00 PM Family Liturgy

8:00 PM Christmas Midnight Mass

#### Christmas Day

*Monday, December 25th*

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon

### NEW YEAR MASSES

*Sunday, December 31st*

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon

#### New Year's Eve

7:00 PM Vigil Mass & Prayer Service

#### New Year's Day

*Monday, January 1st*

9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon

## 2024 MASS BOOK IS OPEN

Please stop by the Parish Center (1211 Orange Ave.) to book your Mass Intentions for birthdays, wedding anniversaries, death anniversaries and any other special occasions. The Parish Office is open Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

**PARISH OFFICE will be closed on Friday, December 22, 2023 to Monday, January 1, 2024 for the Christmas Holiday. The Parish Office will reopen Tuesday, January 2, 2024.**

**Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!**



The Archdiocese of Newark takes very seriously any and all complaints of sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, Religious and lay staff of the Archdiocese. We encourage anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct to inform the Archdiocese immediately so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and to provide support to victims of sexual abuse.

Although we will report all allegations of abuse immediately to the appropriate County Prosecutor, we encourage anyone with an allegation of abuse to reach out to the prosecutor.

Individuals who report an allegation of sexual misconduct may do so by calling the Victim's Assistance Coordinator of the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at (201) 407-3256.

The phone numbers for the County Prosecutors with the Archdiocese are:

Bergen (201) 646-2300

Essex (973) 621-4700

Hudson (201) 795-6400

Union (908) 527-4500

## Mind and Spirit Ministry

The month of December is a time of new beginnings, a time for family but also a time to reflect on the year as it comes to an end. While there is a strong emphasis on family, togetherness, and community during the holidays, all of us at Mind and Spirit Ministry understand that this time of year can bring up a lot of mixed emotions, as well as being very busy in the Church calendar.

As we move through Advent, we have opted not to host a group session in respect of the many commitments afforded to all of us during this time. Our next group meeting will be after the Christmas and New Year period on **Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**. We will share more information about that group session in due course.

For any parishioners experiencing difficulty, we ask that you reach out to available local and emergency support services when you require. We also encourage parishioners to attend mass and the numerous activities hosted by St. Michael. This is also a good time to volunteer and support others as these things can often uplift and where possible, seize the opportunity to take restorative time for yourself also.

Please do email us at [ourmindandspirit@gmail.com](mailto:ourmindandspirit@gmail.com) if there are things you would like us to pray for, or for us to keep you in mind during this time. We would like to share with you this prayer sent to us from our friends in the Sanctuary Team. May these words be of comfort to you throughout this time.

### A Prayer for Hope at Christmas

*God of all seasons, as we move through Advent and Christmas, we look for you. You ask us to hold onto hope: the hope that Jesus truly is Emmanuel, God with us; the hope that you will bring light to the darkness; the hope that this good news will reach everyone, even our own hearts.*

*It can be so hard to live in hope—to wait and wait, through seasons of flourishing and seasons of languishing.*


*If we are able now to lean into hope, may we hold hope for our neighbors who cannot. And if we feel hopeless, may we trust in the truth that our hope is held by you and by our fellow saints on our behalf.*

*Jesus, as we hear the story of your coming, and we wait on your promise to come again, we ask that you show your presence among us here and now.*

*Help us to find our rest in you. Be our strength and consolation and bring joy to our longing hearts.*

*By the power of the Holy Spirit, fill us with your joy and peace, and help us to abound in hope.*

*In Jesus' name,  
Amen.*



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 (973) 440-8657  
[info@mallorysarmy.org](mailto:info@mallorysarmy.org)

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**Text MALLORYSARMY to 22828 to get started.**

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