

The Magnificat



Invitation into a Beautiful Advent

Happy New Year. Well, happy Liturgical New Year because the first Sunday of Advent is the first Sunday of our Liturgical calendar.

It seems fitting to begin our Liturgical year during Advent; because Advent is a season of laying down the old and taking up the new. New commitments, in many forms, that align us more fully with the Holy Spirit so that we can feel the presence of God moving, soothing, and shaping our hearts and lives.

Advent invites us into a deeper spiritual relationship with Christ.

It **beckons** us into this "set aside time" in our church calendar; a time that is specifically honored in our sacred tradition to allow us **space** to prepare our hearts for the coming, once again, of our Savior on Christmas morning.

We are meant to become just a little bit uncomfortable with ourselves; so that we can listen closely to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.

And to become comfortable enough with our uncomfortableness to step into a deeper **relationship centered experience with the one who adores us** as we awaken our spiritual wonderings during Advent.

These are the things we really want.

Unfortunately, it seems that the season of turning inward to create holy space is complicated by this material season of unholy busyness that is the result of modern life this time of year.

Before becoming a priest, I worked for seven at Holy Cross Episcopal Church as the Music Minister, Director of Christian Education, Children's Minister, and Family Life Minister. One Advent, I came up with a precious idea for the children.

On the first Sunday of Advent, I put the empty creche up on the altar. Then I hid several nativity figures around the Nave. When the children came from back Children's Chapel during the Peace, we played "Advent Hide and Seek". They ran all through Nave trying to find the characters. It was the cutest thing you've ever seen! Then when they found the donkey, a shepherd, a sheep, they would get to go up to the altar area and place it in the Creche.

So, over the course of the month of Advent, Sunday after Sunday, we began to have our little Nativity scene built before our eyes. Finally on the Sunday before Christmas all of the characters were in the Nativity scene except for Baby Jesus. We were all anxiously awaiting his arrival on Christmas Eve.

A couple of days before Christmas I was getting ready for our three Christmas services, I was rushing around the church trying to get everything perfect, I felt so stressed. At that moment I didn't even know if I liked Christmas anymore! Sound familiar?

As I was rushing past the altar, something whispered to my heart, "Stop".

The Nave suddenly seemed very quiet.

I looked down and saw our little Nativity scene that the children had built sitting on the altar and I walked over to it. I stood there looking down at it. Now remember, the children had 'built' it over the past four Sundays, so the characters were NOT all neatly lined up. They all seemed to be jumbling together in a big mess. An adorable mess, but a mess nonetheless.

But as I was looking down at it, I suddenly saw something beautiful.

Remember, no one had told these children how to place the characters that they found. And yet, instinctively, each Nativity character was placed looking inward. They had formed this little circle of anticipation. And right there in the middle was this little open place waiting for Jesus. This little spot that the children had left to place Baby Jesus in.

When I saw this little circle of hope that the children had created, I just stood there and cried like a baby. In their simple and unrehearsed way, they showed me the true meaning of Advent. These children believed that Jesus was coming, and they instinctively knew that they had to make space for him.

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven." *Mathew 18-3.*

This Advent let US make holy space for our Lord; let us embrace this hope, like those little children, that if we leave a sacred space for Jesus; he will surely enter in.

I invite you into the journey of your beautiful Advent.

Let your journey unsettle you, sometimes the path that is uncomfortable is the one we must travel in order to discover our true selves in Christ. Amen.

With Anticipation,
Mother Leanne+



Poinsettias are a Christmas Tradition here at St. Mary's to mark the holiday season. The time is coming to order your poinsettia as a dedication to a loved one, and as a part of the church decoration.

Envelopes will be provided in the pews to enclose your donation in, \$8.00 suggested donation. Be sure to print on the envelope who you would like the flowers to be in honor or memory of, along with your name.

Envelopes may then be placed in the offering plate on Sundays. All dedications must be submitted by Dec. 16th. Contact the office if you have any questions. 850-623-2905

Join us as the Patron Saint Nicholas teams up with Mother Leanne in delivering the sermon at the 9am service. At the 11am service, the children will Join M. Leanne and Saint Nicholas in a fun meaningful lesson.





St. Mary's Parishioners

you're invited to purchase the contents of the Allen House (The Shoppe) by donations.

It's time to Shop!
Come get the bargains Dec. 1,2,3, from 9am to 1pm. The Shoppe is open for Parishioners before opening to the public during Winterfest.

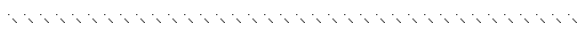
Sale Dates

*Sunday, December 1st
Monday, December 2nd
Tuesday, December 3rd
9:00am - 1:00pm*

**Find Great Treasures
Support St. Mary's**



"The Holy Family"—an Advent Study.
You're invited! Classes in the Parish Hall or attend online via ZOOM.
Contact Mother Leanne at prieststmarys@gmail.com or the church office stmarysmiltonflorida@gmail.com for the ZOOM link and password to join.



G A B R I E L

Please join us

this Advent Season

for an Enriching Class and Potluck Dinner

Tuesday Evenings at 5:30pm
December 3rd, 10th, and 17th

Mother Leanne will guide us through a Holy Family study of the Angel Gabriel, Joseph, and Mary & Jesus using Lectio Artisti, Lectio Devina, Lectio Musica as forms of prayer.

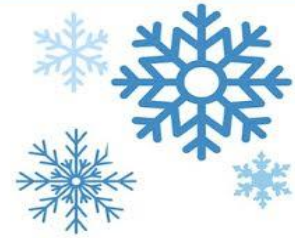
J E S U S

J O S E P H

M A R Y



WINTER FEST



at St. Mary's

ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

Friday, Dec. 6 11:00am to 6:00pm

Saturday, Dec 7 9:00am to 2:00pm

- Gifts - "A Festival of Vendors" *Jewelry, candles, handcrafted items, woodcrafts, Direct sales, holiday gifts & much more!*
- Bake Sale
- Vendors inside the parish hall & on the lawn
- Lunch sold - burgers (Men's Grill) & Food Trucks



St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 6849 Oak Street, Milton, FL
850-623-2905 stmarysmiltonflorida@gmail.com

Vendor Chair: Caroline Thompson - cthompson57@gmail.com

There are many ways to help with Winterfest—bring baked goods for the ECW bake sale, come browse & chat with the vendors, enjoy lunch at the Men's Grill, & please come on Saturday, 2pm, to help clean up/reset the hall. Those who have worked the entire weekend are tired & the more helping hands there are the easier cleanup will be. Thank you!

Christmas Open House at the Rectory



Please join your church family for a Christmas
gathering at the Rectory on

Saturday, December 21st from 2:00pm-3:30pm.

Bring food to share. All are welcome!

Our youth will be leaving from the Rectory at **3:30pm**
to go caroling in the historic district.





O' Come let us Adore Him.
You're invited to celebrate the Birth
of Our Lord with the Children & Youth
Christmas Pageant!
11am, Sunday, Dec. 22.



DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday.	Saturday
Advent One 1 St. Nicholas Day 9am H. E. Rt. II 10am Breakfast 11am H. E. Rt II	2	3	4 9:45am Centering Prayer 10:30am Bible Study 11:30am Holy Eucharist	5 9am Food Pantry	6 11am Winterfest School for Ministry	7 9am Winterfest School for Ministry
Advent 2 8 School for Ministry 9am H. E. Rt. II 10am Breakfast 11am H. E. Rt II	9	10 5:30pm: Joseph: Advent Class/Potluck	11 9:45am Centering Prayer 10:30am Bible Study 11:30am Holy Eucharist	12 9am Food Pantry	13	14 Catechism/Formation class
Advent 3 15 9am H. E. Rt. II 10am Breakfast ECW & Men's Mtg 11am H. E. Rt II	16	17 5:30pm: Mary & Jesus: Advent Class/Potluck	18 9:45am Centering Prayer 10:30am Bible Study 11:30am Holy Eucharist	19 9am Food Pantry	20	21 2:30pm: Christmas at the Rectory. 3:30pm: Youth Caroling
Advent 4 22 9am H. E. Rt. II 10am Breakfast 11am Christmas Pageant	23	24 Office Closed 5:30pm-H. E Christmas Eve Candlelight Service & Carol Sing-along	25 Office Closed 9:45am Centering Prayer 10:30am Bible Study 11:30am Holy Eucharist	26 Office Closed 9am Food Pantry	27 Office Closed	28
29 9am H. E. Rt. II 10am Breakfast 11am H. E. Rt. II	30	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed				

Jan, 1, 2024==Office Closed

STMARYSMILTON.ORG

New Website Launch

LIVE NOW!



VISIT OUR *New* WEBSITE TODAY!

You can serve at St. Mary's! Ushers are needed to help on Sunday mornings. Welcome guests as they arrive to church, hand out bulletins, assist with offering & communion. It's a great way to meet others!

Please contact the church office for more information 850-623-2905.

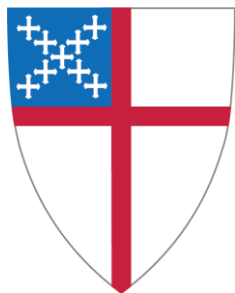
stmarysmiltonflorida@gmail.com

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) and the St. Mary's Men's group meets in the Parish Hall on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Both groups are vital to the community, campus and spiritual life of St. Mary's. Join the meetings to be involved in planning events, workdays & breakfasts. All are welcome!

December Birthdays

12/06 Omar Iung
12/07 Vickie Dollhausen

December Anniversaries



The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast
The Rt. Rev. James Russell Kendrick,
Bishop

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Clergy:

The Rev. Leanne Beaumont, Deacon
prieststmarys@gmail.com

Vestry:

Mary Salinas-Sr. Warden-
850-777-7882 mlydia10@gmail.com

Wayne Hamilton--2025
850-418-0350 episjay7@gmail.com

Don Thompson—Jr. Warden 2027
850-572-0432 dt1962@gmail.com

Ann Cole—2027
850-516-1775 sailo328@yahoo.com

Julia Hotmer-Drao—2027
518-596-4000
hotmermurphy@gmail.com

Prayer Requests

Family

Dawn McFadden
Carolyn Orchard
Jim Longshore
Jesse & Jennifer Reeves
John Kendall
Roy & Judy Whalen
Sam Harris

Our Friends

Kristie
Mary Raisler
Tom Faison

Military

Anthony Cunningham
Bradley James
Christopher Vance
Edward Estrada
Fischer Morgan Lay
Kevin Murphy
Lena Ryan
Leo Leon
Lou Andrade
Joshua Krause
Mary Dunn
Nick Rinaire
Phillip Holmes

A Big Thank You!
Thank you to everyone
at St. Mary's for the
attention and love that
was put into the
planning of Mother
Leanne's Ordination and
Bishop Russell's annual
visit.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
6849 Oak Street, Milton, Florida 32570
Office: 850-623-2905

website: <http://www.stmarysmilton.org>
email: stmarysmiltonflorida@gmail.com
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8:30am to 1pm

Sunday Services at 9am & 11am
"To build up one another in Christ."