

## Pope Francis: 'Our World, Which at Christmas Became His World, Is Important to Him'

Rome, Dec 18, 2015, Zenit.org

*The nativity scene reminds us that God came from heaven to stay with us, that "our world, which at Christmas became His world, is important to Him."*

*Pope Francis said this today when he received in audience some 700 people from the Bavarian municipalities of Hirschau, Schanaittenbach and Freudenberg, who donated the Christmas tree adorning St. Peter's Square this year, and representatives from the Italian province of Trento who, along with the archdiocese, created the Nativity display. The decorations on the tree are from the Lene Thun Foundation of Bolzano and, as the Holy Father commented, represent the dreams of the children who decorated it, whom he thanked.*

*"These wishes that we carry in our heart are now in the most suitable place, because they are close to the child of Bethlehem: they are entrusted to Him, He Who came to live in our midst. Indeed, Jesus did not simply appear on earth, and did not dedicate just a little of His time to us, but rather came to share our life and to receive our desires, as He wanted and still wants to live here, along with us and for us. Our world, which at Christmas became His world, is important to Him. The creche reminds us of this: God, in his great mercy, descended to us to stay with us".*

*The Nativity also tells us that the Lord "never imposes upon us with force. To save us, He did not change history by performing a grand miracle. Instead, He lived with simplicity, humility and meekness. God does not like the dramatic revolutions of the powerful of history, and does not use a magic wand to change situations. Instead He makes Himself small, He becomes a child, to attract us with love, to touch our hearts with His humble goodness, to draw attention through His poverty to those who worry about accumulating the false treasures of this world".*

*The Holy Father recalled that this was the intention of St. Francis when he invented the creche – to pay homage to the Child who was born in Bethlehem so as to be able to in some way perceive with the eyes of the body the hardships He suffered for the lack of the basic necessities for a newborn. Indeed, the scene honors and praises simplicity, poverty and humility. "I invite you, then, to pause before the Nativity scene, for there God's tenderness speaks to us. There we contemplate divine mercy, made flesh so that we gaze tenderly upon it. Above all, it wishes to move our hearts".*

*In this regard, Francis indicated that in the crèche there is a figure who reveals the mystery of the Nativity. "It is a character who performs a good act, stooping to assist an elderly person. He not only looks to God but also imitates Him, as, like God, he inclines mercifully to one in need. May these gifts of yours, which will be lit up this evening, attract the gaze of many and above all revive in our life the true light of Christmas."*

# St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE  
Aiken, SC 29801  
803 649-3203

### SUNDAY READINGS

#### First Reading:

1 Samuel 1:20-22,24-28 (17C0)

#### Responsorial:

Psalm 84:2-3,5-6,9-10

#### Second Reading:

1 John 3:1-2,21-24

#### Gospel:

Luke 2:41-52

### Lectionary Readings for the week of December 27, 2015

Monday: 1 John 1:5-2:2;

Matthew 2:13-18

Tuesday: 1 John 2:3-11;

Luke 2:22-35

Wednesday: 1 John 2:12-17;

Luke 2:36-40

Thursday: 1 John 2:18-21;

John 1:1-18

Solemnity of Mary January 1st

Numbers 6:22-27 (18C)

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:16-21

**Mass Times:** Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM, First Friday Benediction after Mass  
Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:15 AM

**Confessions:** after weekday Masses and by Appointment

**Office Hours:** 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

**Bible Study:** Fridays 10:00 AM (Insight to the scriptures)

**Baptisms, Confirmations and Marriages:** By Appointment, Contact the office.

**Contact Us:** Phone 803 649-3203, E-Mail [stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net)

**Facebook** @stgerardaiken,

**Emergency number for Father 803 637-2027**

## The Holy Name of Jesus, Mary & Joseph December 27, 2015

### Mission Statement

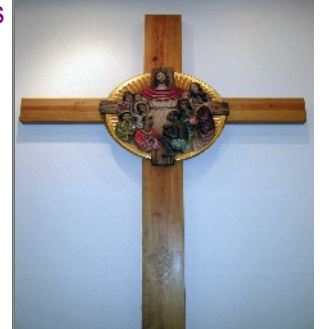
*Called to be a People for Others*

### Vision Statement

*Anchored by faith hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.*

### Fr. Emmanuel Andinam: Administrator

*They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' He replied, 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he meant. He went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and with people.*





**Pray for our sick:**

Gary Gilbert  
Marge Glouser  
Leonard Saunders  
Shirley Paige  
William and Jackie Cobbs  
Woody Alexander  
Lena Mickens  
Rosa Johnson  
Brenda Ligon  
Joe Fulmer  
Patricia Bailey

During Advent we receive constant reminders that Jesus and his ministry are gifts of God. We did not and do not earn them. They flow to us from the grace of God. During this season of giving, let us remember the most important gift we have received – being children of God. As God’s children, it’s important that we express our love for others as well.

**Mass Intentions**

4:00 PM Mass will be said for your own personal intentions. 7:00 AM For the soul of Fred Asbra From: The Rileys 11:15 AM For The wedding anniversary of David & Veronica Barker

**Pastoral Council:**

Wayman Johnson, Chairman  
Payson Borst  
Jacqueline Brown  
Fredrick Cadek  
Nancy Durden  
Marge Glauser  
Janet Menefee  
Gregory Wright  
Joan Hesik

**Finance Council:**

Robert Erikson, Chairman  
Leon Gagnon and Anna Marie Key, Auditors.  
Lisa Solenberger  
Art Wagner

**Sunday Offering December 20, 2015**

Collection	\$2,639.00
Needed	\$2,612.00
Over	\$27.00
Attendance	148

The Gathering Hymn	68 M
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	
The Offertory Hymn is	91 M
What Child Is This?	
The Communion Hymn is	74 M
Silent Night	
Our Song of Praise is	63 M
Angels We Have Heard on High	



Stewardship a way of life

**Lay Ministers**

	Saturday January 2	Sunday January 3	Sunday January 3
	4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:15 AM Mass
Lector:	Joan Hesik	Mary Kay L’Esperance	Sheila Wagner
E E Ministers:	Mary Rose	Gerard L’Esperance	Wayman Johnson
	Saturday January 9	Sunday January 10	Sunday January 10
	4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:15 AM Mass
Lector:	Diane Begic	Mary Kay L’Esperance	Richardean Paige
E E Ministers:	Open	Gerard L’Esperance	Jacqueline Brown
Refreshments January 3		Counters January 3	
Richardean Paige/Marilu Alarcon		Nancy Durden	



**CONSIDER A TAX DEDUCTIBLE YEAR END DONATION TO ST GERARD**

As Christmas approaches, we ask that you remember St Gerard in your holiday plans. While shopping for gifts and gatherings with loved ones, please consider setting aside part of your budget to support St Gerard with a tax-deductible charitable donation. If you read the Sunday offering section of the bulletin you will notice that our collections are often below what the parish needs. Now is the season we give thanks to God for all He has done for us this past year and throughout our lives. It is also a good time to begin considering how we might give back some of our wealth or assets to Him through His Church with a special year-end gift. Your generous, tax-deductible donation to St Gerard enables us to continue to be a vibrant and active parish and be a community that supports itself. Any amount you can share will be greatly appreciated!

**COLLECTION FOR ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE RECTORY**

As you know, our Rectory is in the process of being renovated. This work has been on-going for the last six month. The goal is to be done early next year. Upon the completion, there will be many items needed to furnish the rectory, such as furniture, kitchen items, linens, towels, etc. Donations for these items are needed. If you would like to make a donation, please place it in an envelope and put it in the collection basket. Please indicate on the envelope "Donation for Rectory Items". If you want to designate what your donation should be used for, please note that on the envelope as well. No donation to small. Thank you for your support of our parish community.

We collected \$1,020 over and above the regular collection last week for renovation..

Sr. Catherine Mare Lowe, the administrator at Our lady of the Valley Catholic Center, thanks St. Gerard Catholic Church for the assistance received this past year. We have helped supply food for individuals and families in crises. Sr. Catherine wishes The St. Gerard family Merry Christmas and a Blessed Holiday Season.

Shirley Acosta died on the 18<sup>th</sup> of this month. A Mass was said for her on the 19<sup>th</sup> and we will inform the parish about any funeral plans. Shellhouse is assisting the family. Please keep her and Frank in your prayers.

Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass.

**Volunteer Corner**

There will be a catered supper for all volunteers and ministries. January 15 at 6:00 PM and invitations will be sent out on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December. When you receive an invitation please RSVP by January the 8<sup>th</sup> so the caterer knows how much food to prepare.

Father Don’s address is Carter May Home/St. Joseph Residence, Room 201, 1660 Ingram Rd., Charleston, SC 29407 Cell # 843 599-1620. Call or write him please.

The Solemnity of Mary The Holy Mother of God January 1, 2016	
The Gathering Hymn O Little Town of Bethlehem	83 M
Gloria:	
First Reading: Numbers 6:22-27 (18C)	
Responsorial: Psalm 67:2-3,5-6,8	
Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7	
Gospel: Luke 2:16-21	
The Offertory Hymn is What Child Is This	91 M
The Communion Hymn is Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly	271
Our Song of Praise is Joy to the World	60 M


We have had to take several people off the ministries schedule for a number of weeks between Jan. 9 and Apr. 9. This left us with 6 weeks with no one for the 4 PM mass as Eucharistic Ministers. We have since had a volunteer take most of those days. Please check the new schedules, under the current schedules, and let me know about any concerns. ASAP. Thank You, Mike

We will need a couple of people to assist with sending out the 2015 donation info for tax purposes. Let me know if you can help and we will work out a date to do this.

The current collection counting system is going to be changed. We will be looking for people to count on Mondays. If you are interested in counting please call the office.

There will be no week day Masses during the week of January 11<sup>th</sup>. Father will be at the convocation in Myrtle Beach, SC. Please pray for a safe trip and return.

Begin 2016 with Praise,  
Worship and Eucharistic Adoration  
Featuring  
Audrey Assad



Free of Charge Live  
Praise and Worship Concert  
St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church  
4921 Columbia Road  
Grovettown, Georgia  
7:00 PM, Friday January 8<sup>th</sup>  
Following Daily Mass at 6:00 PM

Show your thanks for all your blessings by giving back. Sign up this holiday season to become an ACTS volunteer. ACTS is in desperate need of volunteers to serve in our Resale Store and Client Room assisting clients with their clothing vouchers. Shifts are available Monday thru Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Commit to as few or as many hours and/or days as fit your schedule. It's not only rewarding but fun, as well! Just e-mail us at volunteer@actsofaiken.org, or call 803.649.3800 for more information.

Our Lady of The Valley still needs food donations. All food collected here at St. Gerard is donated to OLV. Please continue to be generous. If you know of someone that needs The Blessed Sacrament brought to their home or hospital please call the office.

**No Bible study on Friday 1/1/16  
New Years Day**

**The next parish council meeting is 19 January at 6:30 PM.**

The Salvation Army needs help at the shelter on Park Ave. They are losing older people that have been helping with serving lunch. We already have at least one parishioner helping. Please if you have the time to help call Rose at 641-4149 or call Mary Welsh at 648-2140. Feed God’s children.

Just a reminder that the office will only be open on December 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. I will be out of town. The office will reopen on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM. Thank you and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and thank you for your help and support this past year. Mike

**In Harms’ Way:** Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms’ way: James Ligon, Robert McHugh, Jacob Hershey, and James Rossini. Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

**Hospital Visits:** If you or a loved one is in Aiken Regional Hospital (ARMC) please let St Gerards know. Remember - ARMC does not inform us of Catholic patients, even if you register as a Catholic; it is up to the patient or family to do so. You can: ask the ARMC Chaplain to call the Catholic church, ask your nurse to inform the Catholic church ( name & room number), call-St.Gerard at 649-3203 and leave a message or email St Gerard at stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net.