

DECEMBER 27, 2015

Scripture Reflection

The only story of Jesus' boyhood in the canonical Gospels places the boy Jesus in the midst of an extended kinship network: "Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends." His parents do not seem overly worried initially about the fact Jesus is missing, because they would expect him to be among their extended family of relatives and neighbors, including perhaps elderly grandmothers and wobbling toddlers.

When they find him, the parents of Jesus ask, "Why have you done this to us?" Jesus says, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Jesus calls the attention of his earthly family to the precedence of God the Father in his life. Jesus' response points to the priority of God the Father over human family in general. A tension persists, even though Jesus has been found. The lost child was truly at home with God. As much as he is a child of Mary and Joseph, he is even more a child of God--in his case, the Son of God.

Christianity, following Judaism, did refocus the understanding of family to recognize the true family, which ultimately encompasses all of humanity and sees the true Father as God. Still, Jesus, like all of us, had responsibilities to the family and a place in the earthly family, as do 1-year-olds, 90-year-olds and everyone in between. Luke's account ends with Jesus acknowledging his earthly parents' authority, and Luke states that Jesus was obedient to them following his adventure. The way we come to know our heavenly family and heavenly call is through our parents, our extended families, those who raised us, who in encompassing us with love draw us nearer and nearer to God and our home with God.

• **Are you thankful for your family? Have you ever felt a pull between family and God?**

AMERICA MAGAZINE: December 21-28, 2015 Issue, John W. Martens.

More On *Moving Forward In Faith* Our Capital Campaign

Once again, I am pleased to provide an update on the progress of our *Moving Forward In Faith* campaign. On Monday, December 21, the office reported a new pledge total of **\$1,090,738.00**. This total has been generated through the sacrificial generosity of almost 250 parishioners and families. I would like to thank everyone for their support and commitment to our parish and I ask that the remainder of our Parish Family join us in this important project.

If you have not had the opportunity to make your gift previously because you were not at home when our volunteers called - or for other reasons - you may do so today. For the convenience of those who may have misplaced their pledge card or confidential return envelope, there is a supply of extra brochures and other material on the table at the Cathedral Square entrance. If you need a pledge envelope or any information about our campaign please take a brochure from the table.

Please remember that every contribution, from the smallest to the largest, is necessary since we are doing this together as a parish family. After determining what you can afford each month, simply multiply it out over 60 months to determine your total pledge amount. Thanks to your sacrifice, we will show that as a parish family we came together in our time of need.

New and Expectant Parents Please Note:

Our next Session of **Baptismal Preparation** is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 6** at **7:00 PM** in the Seton Suite. This required class is offered every other month and is necessary before a Baptism is scheduled at Cathedral. You do not have to wait until your baby arrives to come to class. Godparents are encouraged to attend as well. Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 to register. Please also note that no Baptisms are scheduled during Lent which this year begins on February 10th. Easter Sunday is March 27th. Next class will be early in March.

Please Remember Our Military In Prayer

Please keep all of our Cathedral men and women in the armed services in your Christmas prayers.

THE CHURCH OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN

THE CATHEDRAL OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

ONE CATHEDRAL SQUARE, Altoona, Pennsylvania 16601-3315
Church Office: 814-944-4603

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS:

The process of formation for those seeking God through membership in the Catholic Christian community.

INFANT BAPTISM:

Arrange in advance for pre-baptismal instructions.

CONFIRMATION:

Ninth, tenth and eleventh grade students are invited to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process.

RECONCILIATION:

Wednesday: 7:00 PM, Saturday: 12:30 PM.

Communal Penance Services: Advent and Lent.

ANOIDING OF THE SICK:

Communal celebration Easter Season.

MARRIAGE:

Arrange nine months in advance. Couples expected to participate in pre-marriage preparation program.

DEVOTIONS:

Novena of the Miraculous Medal - Monday 7:45 AM.

Rosary - Wednesday 6:00 PM.

Charismatic Prayer - Monday 7:00 PM.

Evening Prayer within Eucharistic Exposition - Advent and

Christmas, Lent and Easter Seasons - Sunday 6:30 PM.

Eucharistic Day - Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

September through April: Pre-Kindergarten thru 12.

Sunday morning 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM

Pre-Kindergarten thru 8.

Sunday evening 6:15 PM - 8:30 PM

Grades 9 thru 12.

WEB: WWW.ALTOONACATHEDRAL.ORG

FAX: 814-942-4337

E-MAIL: ALTCATHEDRAL@DIOCESEAJ.ORG

EUCCHARIST:

Sunday: 5:00 PM (Vigil)
8:00 AM
10:00 AM
12:00 Noon
5:00 PM

Holyday: 5:30 PM (Vigil)
8:00 AM
12:00 Noon
5:30 PM

Weekday: 6:45 AM
8:00 AM
12:00 Noon
Saturday: 8:00 AM
12:00 Noon

Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, Bishop

Reverend Monsignor Robert C. Mazur, Rector

Reverend Father Dennis M. Kurdziel, Parochial Vicar

Deacon Michael A. Anna

Deacon John J. Szwarc, Senior Deacon

CHRISTIAN INITIATION TEAM - 944-4603

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME - 944-4603

ALTOONA CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Web: www.altoonacentralcatholic.com

Elementary - Pre-K thru Grade 5 - 381-7011

BISHOP GUILFOYLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Web: www.bishopguilfoyle.org - 944-4014

DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Chris Laraia - Pre-K thru 8 - 946-3475

Jean Koury - 9 thru 12 - 949-2777

Religious Education Office: Sundays - 943-7424

MUSIC MINISTRY

Nina M. Tedeschi

Choir Director and Head Organist - 944-2044

Kevin J. Luke - E-mail: kluke@dioceseaj.org

Administrative Duties and Organist - 944-2044

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA SINCE 1851

**THE HOLY FAMILY OF
JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH
DECEMBER 27, 2015**

Readings: Sir 3:2-6,12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:41-52

MASS INTENTIONS

December 28, Monday: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

Readings: 1 Jn 1:5--2:2; Mt 2:13-18

6:45 AM No Mass

8:00 AM Myron Yeager (Kilcoyne Family)

12:00 PM Pat Rabine (Patti Koch)

December 29, Tuesday: Fifth Day-Octave of Nativity

Readings: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:22-35

6:45 AM Fred Martynuska (Family)

8:00 AM Sam Coen (Greg and Kathy Clemens)

12:00 PM Paul Rose (Mary Kowalski)

December 30, Wednesday: Sixth Day- Octave of Nativity

Readings: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Lk 2:36-40

6:45 AM Bernadette Weakland (M/M Paul Cassarly)

8:00 AM Mildred Burchfield, Birthday (Family)

12:00 PM Danyll Rougeux (John & Alice Joyce)

December 31, Thursday: Seventh Day-Octave of Nativity

Readings: 1 Jn 2:18-21; Jn 1:1-18

6:45 AM Merle & Joan Hirt (Children and Families)

8:00 AM Joseph S. Thompson (David & Jeanne)

12:00 PM Francis & Eileen Lytle (Children and Families)

Vigil of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

5:00 PM Rita Kantoski (Cathedral Parish)

January 1, Friday: **Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

Readings: Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

8:00 AM People of God

10:00 AM George Weamer (Kathy, Judy, & Families)

12:00 PM Birthday Int. of Geraldine Petrunak (Family)

No evening Mass

January 2, Saturday: Saints Basil & Gregory, Doctors

Readings: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28

8:00 AM Nathan Boslet (Dombrowski Family)

12:00 PM Herb Kutruff (Randy & Jean Koury)

Vigil: The Epiphany of the Lord

Readings: Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3,5-6; Mt 2:1-12

5:00 PM Deacon John Rys (Cindy Geiner)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group

The Charismatic Prayer Group will NOT meet this Monday, December 28th. We will meet again on January 11, 2016. Have a blessed Christmas!



Liturgical Reflection ...

On Friday, January 1, the Church acclaims Mary with her most ancient title, Mother of God. Raising her child in the tradition of the Hebrew faith, Mary teaches her Son about God the Father's love for his people. Over the generations God's mercy is proclaimed in the sacred texts. Israel celebrates the love, kindness, and compassion of God. Jesus learns of God's mercy through the loving guidance of his mother. The Diocese also prays for peace on the first day of the civil calendar. Through the intercession of the Mother of God, may justice and peace become a reality in our time.

2015, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Our Bishop, priests and staff are most appreciative of your cards, gifts, baked goods, fruits and assortments. Your taking the time to be especially kind is affirmative to our ministry here at Cathedral Parish. Your generosity to us has added to the delight of the holy season. Thank you for taking the time to remember.

Liturgical Ministers, Parish Council, Finance Council and Catechists

You are invited to come to the Main Sacristy after Mass to receive a Christmas gift in the name of the parish. Thank you for all you do in service to the Cathedral Parish. Your time and talent are acknowledged and appreciated.

Christmas Evening Prayer with Exposition and Benediction

On the Sundays of Christmas, December 27, January 3 and 10, we will gather at 6:30 PM to pray the Hours of the Church. Families are encouraged to make this a part of their Christmas prayer. We are the Parish Family of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, and all those with a deep love of the Eucharist are invited to be present before the Blessed Sacrament in exposition on the altar. Evening Prayer and Benediction go about forty minutes.

Gifting the Cathedral Parish

As wills and insurance policies are established with your attorney, remember the Cathedral Parish as a beneficiary of your estate. Perhaps you would like to direct your gift to a particular ministry or project at the Parish. Please realize that Mass Stipends go directly to fulfilling that canonical wish and do not aid the financial life of the Parish.

Christmas For Families

Thank you to all parishioners who participated in the Cathedral Christmas for Families Program. Your donations of gift cards and requested clothing were deeply appreciated by many people. A special thank you to Jean Koury who coordinated this project, and to all those who did the shopping!

Calendar of Prizes 2016

Calendar of Prizes 2016 are being sold at the Cathedral Square door after all weekend Masses. Like last year, each calendar costs \$20.00. There is a \$10.00 daily prize; an additional \$1,000.00 in special monthly prizes awarded throughout the year; and on Wednesday, September 7, the Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral, someone will win our **Grand Prize of \$5,000.00** for a Family Trip or Cash Option. The Calendar of Prizes makes a great Christmas gift that lasts all year! We still have **300** tickets to sell. Please help with this annual fund-raiser. These monies help the Parish support our commitment to Catholic Education.

Catholics Returning Home

Have you thought about coming home to the Catholic Church? Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 for information on the date and time of the next *Catholics Returning Home* informal listening session.

JUBILEE

YEAR OF

MERCY

Liturgical Reflection ...

Always located between Christmas and January 1st is the solemnity of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Where does mercy show itself so clearly - when parents show love and understanding to children; when sons and daughters show mercy to each other, and give reverence and love to parents; when the wisdom of grandparents enlightens the family to God's eternal mercy. Patience, compassion, and mercy, these are gifts every family celebrates.

2015, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, December 20, 2015 - \$8,563.00

The Christmas Season concludes with the Baptism of the Lord on Sunday, January 10th. Christmas totals - Christmas Collection and Christmas Flower Memorials - will be provided in the January 17th bulletin as the Cathedral continues to receive your generous gifts.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION

Our Catechumens and Catechumens have been on break for Christmas. We continue to remember them in prayer as they journey to the Easter Sacraments. Next Sunday, they will return to 10:00 AM Mass and will be dismissed to reflect on the Scriptures proclaimed and to learn more about our Catholic faith and tradition.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

No Classes are scheduled for **December 27th**. **FIRE Classes** for January are on the 10th and 24th.

First Friday Communion Calls This Month

Because January 1, 2016 is the First Friday but also Holy Day of Obligation, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, our priests will be visiting our shut-ins next Friday, **January 8**. Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 to arrange a visit for yourself or a loved one. Please also call to let us know if you are admitted to the hospital so Father can visit as soon as possible

Nocturnal Adoration

Friday, January 8th at Saint Rose of Lima Parish. Cathedral hour is 8:00 PM- 9:00 PM. All are welcome

Rest In Peace

Please remember in prayer, Carl Drexler, eldest brother of Fred and Dwight Drexler, and Barbara 'Joanne' Barrett, who resided at Garvey Manor. Carl and Joanne were buried from the Cathedral this past week. May they rest in peace and may their families and friends be comforted in the faith.