

DECEMBER 4, 2016

Scripture Reflection

The Scriptures for today are full of hope. That hope, however, is tinged with a warning, as we discover in the preaching of John the Baptist. The First Readings for the four Sundays of Advent are taken from the great Hebrew prophet, Isaiah. Today he proclaims that a new king shall sprout from the family tree of Jesse (David's father). This new king will rule with wisdom and justice, and the world will be transformed.

The Gospel for today and next Sunday introduces John the Baptist. Each year during Advent we read John's call for repentance as he storms out of the wilderness! For him repentance is the necessary step for becoming part of the Reign of God. John harshly criticizes the religious leaders; not because he is the one to judge--that is the role of Jesus--but because he is adamant that all should be ready to accept the one who comes after him.

The repentance of Advent is a call for transformation. The struggle to "change our minds" can confer a brief glimpse into God's mind, and that is when the transformation takes place. How many times did Isaiah have to repent of hate before he could imagine his conquerors joining him in the covenant? How many times did Paul have to repent of hardness of heart before he realized the scriptures foretold Christ and fellowship with the uncircumcised?

Isaiah reminds us of the gifts of the Holy Spirit received at the Sacrament of Confirmation. When we turn away from sin and turn towards the Lord, we are transformed. Enemies begin to speak to one another. Adversaries join hands. People seek to meet together. Love overcomes hatred. Revenge gives way to forgiveness. Discord is transformed into mutual respect. Advent is a joyful call to change our lives. We turn to our God with renewed strength.

• **This Advent we open ourselves to transformation. God is always coming into our lives. Are you ready to receive Emmanuel?**

AT HOME WITH THE WORD 2016. (C) 2015 ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO, LITURGY TRAINING PUBLICATIONS, 3949 South Racine Avenue CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60609. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

AMERICA MAGAZINE: November 28, 2016 Issue, Michael Simone, S.J.

Mail Ministry to Elderly, Homebound, Seriously Sick, and Grieving

As we enter our third year of ministry, our thirty-person-committee would like to say thank you for your support. Many card recipients, and often their families, have expressed gratitude for the simple gift of a card sent on behalf of Cathedral Parish. Some ongoing relationships have developed into visits by phone on in person. Deb Jeffco shared at a recent meeting, "I have been able to become friends with an elderly couple through my weekly visit. I was even invited to their wedding! I can feel their joy as we share a prayer and laugh together. And all this started with a card."

We continue to ask for the Parish's help in identifying family members, friends, and neighbors who may also be encouraged by a simple message and greeting that comes to them through the mail from the "Cathedral Parish Family."

We also need your help. We would like to expand our ministry to people who are seriously ill and those who need special prayer in their time of grief from losing a loved one. This means we will need more folks on the committee. Everyone is invited to join.

Please call the Parish Office if you have information about men, women, children and youth in need of our simple outreach. Please call, also, if you want to join this important ministry. Lastly, we can always use more stamps!

Vendor of Religious Articles Visits Cathedral

This weekend, **December 3 and 4**, *Land of Peace* representatives will offer articles from the Holy Land for sale in the Vestibule of the Cathedral.

F.I.R.E. Session TONIGHT!

Students in Grades 9 -11 with parent or guardian, meet from 6:15PM until 8:30 PM in the Seton Suite on **December 4** and again on **18**.

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION For Teens Saturday, December 17, St. Mark Parish, Altoona

Please note: Change of date. Join Bishop Mark at 10:00 AM and spend some time in the presence of Jesus. There will be food and social time in the parish hall after Adoration.

Calendar of Prizes 2017

We are half-way there!! Calendar sales are going nicely but we still have **over 400** to sell. This makes a **great Christmas gift that lasts all year!**

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.

ANOINTING 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

EUCHARIST:

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

CHRISTIAN INITIATION TEAM - 944-4603

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME - 944-4603

MAIL MINISTRY TO ELDERLY, HOMEBOUND,
SERIOUSLY SICK, AND GRIEVING - 944-4603

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Web: www.holytrinitycatholic.school

Altoona Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 381-7011

Hollidaysburg Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 695-6112

Middle School Campus (Grades 5 thru 8) - 942-7835

BISHOP GUILFOYLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Web: www.bishopguilfoyle.org - 944-4014

DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Chris Laraia - Pre-K thru 8 - 312-7317

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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 4, 2016

Readings: *Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12*

MASS INTENTIONS

December 5, Monday: Advent Weekday

Readings: *Is 35: 1-10; Lk 5:17-26*

6:45 AM Derek Behe (Jim, Elaine and Family)
8:00 AM John Capouellez, Sr., Anniv. (Family)
12:00 PM Pat Rabine (Calendar of Prizes Winner)

December 6, Tuesday: Saint Nicholas, Bish., Doc.

Readings: *Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14*

6:45 AM Bill Crouse (Jack and Lois Steinbugl)
8:00 AM Bernadette Weakland (Frieda Conrad)
12:00 PM Betty McCabe (Al and Irene Schlecht)

December 7, Wednesday: Saint Ambrose, Bish., Doc.

Readings: *Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30*

6:45 AM BeBe Milliron (Mike and Sherry Byrne)
8:00 AM Jack Douglas (Kathleen, Mike and Troy)
12:00 PM John Casanave (Tom Byrne Family)

Vigil - Immaculate Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary

5:30 PM Mary Lou Oswald (M/M Greg Clemens)

December 8, Thursday: **Immaculate Conception**
Holy Day of Obligation

Readings: *Gn 3:9-15,20; Eph 1:3-6,11-12; Lk 1:26-38*

8:00 AM Julia Febbo, Birth. (Jim, Elaine & Family)
12:00 PM Joe Multet (Dave Capouellez)
5:30 PM M. Virginia Jones (Patricia Palumbo)

December 9, Friday: St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzinn

Readings: *Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19*

6:45 AM Eleanor Toth (Catherine & Mark Pacifico)
8:00 AM Maureen Wolf (Cathy Ford)
12:00 PM Capone Families

December 10, Saturday: Advent Weekday

Readings: *Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Mt 17:9,10-13*

8:00 AM Marian and Thomas Swires (Family)
12:00 PM Deacon John Rys, Birthday (Family)
Vigil: Third Sunday of Advent

Readings: *Is 35:1-6,10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11*

5:00 PM Conzo/Jacobs Families Dec. (Pam & Pat)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Advent/Christmas Prayer Partners

Sign-up forms are available once more this weekend at tables located at the church doors. You may complete the form or pick one up to take home with you. All Prayer Partners will be assigned and mailed by Thursday, December 8th.



Liturgical Reflection ...

This Thursday, December 8, is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a holy Day of Obligation for Catholics; all are expected to participate at Mass on this day. This feast celebrates that she who was to bear the Incarnate Word of God was immaculate herself from the first moment of her conception. Our country places itself under the protection of our patroness, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. Please check the times for Mass as we pray for the United States of America through the intercession of our Immaculate Mother.

2016, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION - Following the Universal Prayer at 10:00 AM Mass each Sunday, our Catechumens and Candidates are dismissed to reflect on the Scriptures proclaimed and to learn more about our Catholic faith and tradition. Please remember these individuals in your Advent prayers.

Advent Evening Prayer
with Exposition and Benediction

On the Sundays of Advent and Christmas we will gather at 6:30 PM to pray the Hours of the Church. Families are encouraged to make this a part of their Advent and 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 Sacrament in exposition on the altar. Please join us for Evening Prayer this Second Sunday of Advent.

Baptismal Preparation This Week!

Our next Session of **Baptismal Preparation** is scheduled for **Monday, December 5** at 7:00 PM in the Seton Suite. This required class is offered every other month and you don't have to wait until your child is born to attend class. Godparents are encouraged to attend as well. Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 to register.

"HOLIDAY TEA" During this time of holiday hustle and bustle, **Cathedral Christian Mothers** invite all women of the Parish, married and single, to the Seton Suite this **Wednesday** evening, **December 7**. The "tea", an evening of reflection on the true meaning of the season with a short program and refreshments, will be held following the 5:30 PM Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and will include a presentation by Amy Kanich, Campus Minister at Mount Aloysius College. Please feel free to bring your mother, sisters or daughters. There is no charge for this event. Questions? - Call Carol Galioto 946-3769.

Advent Wreath and Offertory Procession

Help is needed during the Advent Season to carry the Advent Wreath candles at the beginning of Mass and to present the gifts of bread and wine at the Offertory. Individuals/families are encouraged to volunteer. Please call Amelia at 944-3674 or the Parish Office. Also, all liturgical ministers are asked to be especially aware of what help might be needed when attending Liturgy.

Advent of Christmas Concert

The Cathedral Festival Choir will present an evening of classic music for the Advent and Christmas seasons on **Sunday, December 11** at **7:00 PM**. Take a bit of time from your busy December schedule to hear the sounds of the season in the glorious acoustics of the Cathedral. There will be a *Free Will Offering*.

Charismatic Prayer Group

The Charismatic Prayer Group will NOT meet this Monday, December 5th. There will be **Praise & Worship** on Monday, December 12th, at 7:00 PM in the Cathedral. Music will be led by the Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group. An Advent/Christmas Gathering will follow the meeting. All are welcome!

Did Your Remember to bring a non-perishable food item or paper product for the needy?

Liturgical Reflection ...

ORDER OF
CELEBRATING
MATRIMONY

Advent is a time of longing and expectation as we remember Mary awaiting the birth of the Son of God. The new ritual for the **Order of Celebrating Matrimony** (OCM) offers an *Order of Blessing an Engaged Couple*. The engaged couple is longing and expecting the day of the celebration of their marriage. The honorable betrothal of Christians is a special occasion for two families to pray together and receive a divine blessing. The blessing of the engaged couple is a formal beginning of what will be completed at the celebration of the Matrimony (OCM 218). This celebration of prayer is to be adapted to suit particular circumstances.

2016, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, November 27, 2016 - \$7,583.00

"Christmas For Families" - \$2,000.00

(Christian Mothers Collection - November 12-13)

Christmas Flower Memorials - Please remember to have your Christmas Flower Memorial envelope returned to the Parish Office by **December 18** to assure that your memorial will be listed in the Christmas bulletin. If you have misplaced this rose colored envelope, just place the name of your loved one on any envelope marked "Christmas Flowers".

Liturgical Readers

The **Workbook for Lectors 2017** is available in the main sacristy after Masses this weekend. Please use this workbook throughout the year as a source of prayer and preparation for the weekly proclamation of God's Word at Mass. Thank you to the men and women who share their time and talent as readers at Liturgy. The Parish is grateful.

Advent Penance Service

Our communal celebration of Advent Reconciliation is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 14** at 6:30 PM. All are encouraged to attend this seasonal Liturgy. This Reconciliation Liturgy will last one hour. Additional priests will be present to help with individual confessions. This Penance Service is for the entire Parish Family. Our second grade students will celebrate their First Penance during this Advent service. There will be a reception following the service at 7:30 PM to congratulate the First Penitents. All are welcome to join us in the Cathedral Hall.

Rest In Peace

Please remember in prayer, Derek Behe, Richard Anthony, Robert Schmitt and Cecelia Richardson, who died during November. May they rest in peace, and may their families be comforted in the faith.