

DECEMBER 14, 2014

Scripture Reflection

As if Advent were not joyous enough, this week we celebrate *Gaudete* ("Rejoice") Sunday, which takes its theme from today's readings. More than halfway to Christmas, we celebrate the impending nativity of Jesus. In the first reading, God's anointed one has been filled with the spirit of the Lord God and directed "to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives". The activities of preaching, healing, and liberating were understood to be signs of the coming Messiah. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus will read this passage in the synagogue in Capernaum, and announce "this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21).

The earliest existing letter of Paul is his First Letter to the Thessalonians, written in the late 40s or early 50s to a community of Gentiles he had recently converted. Near the end of his letter, he exhorts the believers to rejoice always and offers simple steps to remain faithful: pray without ceasing, don't quench the Spirit or despise prophetic utterances, and test everything, retaining what is good and refraining from evil.

Unlike the other three Gospels, the Gospel of John includes an encounter between John the Baptist and some priests and Levites. These religious authorities ask about his identity. The Gospel of John makes it very clear that John was not the Christ by its repetition: "he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." John responds that among them there is one they do not recognize who is coming after him. Throughout John's Gospel, recognizing Jesus is the sign of a disciple.

Do you find yourself rejoicing these Advent days? Are you a messenger of God's joy to others? What things in my life make me joyful? This is a holy season of gift giving. Have I shared the gift of joy with someone this Advent?

Living the Word, Brink and Bauerschmidt, World Library Publications, 2014, pages 19-20.

Calendar of Prizes 2015

Calendar of Prizes 2015 are being sold at the Cathedral Square door after all 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 a grand prize of \$5,000.00 for a Family Trip or Cash Option. The Calendar of Prizes makes a great Christmas gift. Please help with this annual fund-raiser. We still have **377** tickets to sell.

ALTOONA CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Please join ACCS today for the 5th annual **Soup Throw-Down! Sunday, December 14, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM** at Father Kelly Hall. Every class, Pre-K through 5th grade, will be making a homemade soup for a contest to determine who makes the best soup. Tickets will be sold at the door for 50 cents per sample or \$6 per quart. The day will also feature several vendors and a Chinese Auction. All proceeds go directly to ACCS. **Advent of Christmas Program** Tuesday, December 23, at 10:00 AM here in the Cathedral. All are invited. Dismissal follows.

Cathedral Music Ministry

Join us for an evening with Mary Castner as she performs titles from her album, "*By Faith*", along with some new songs. The concert will be held on **Saturday, January 3, 2015** at 7:30 PM! For more information on Mary, visit her website at <http://www.marycastnermusic.com/>. Her album is available for download on iTunes, Amazon, eMusic, Google Play, and Spotify. A free will offering will be received afterwards.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry

Shawls symbolize shelter, peace, and spiritual sustenance. The members of Cathedral Prayer Shawl Ministry have lovingly donated their time and talents by creating hand-knitted and crocheted shawls for those in need of God's comfort. Parishioners are encouraged to submit names of individuals for whom they would like to receive a Prayer Shawl. Please call the Parish Office or Lorraine Beck at 942-7774.

Collection of Food For The Poor

Baskets are placed at the church doors for donations of non-perishable food items and paper products for the poor.

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 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM
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
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SERVING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA SINCE 1851

Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, Bishop

Reverend Monsignor Robert C. Mazur, Rector

Reverend Father Dennis M. Kurdziel, Parochial Vicar

Reverend Father John J. Slovickovski, In Residence

Deacon John E. Rys

Deacon James F. Leap, Senior Deacon

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 14, 2014

Readings: *Is 61:1-2,10-11;1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8,19-28*

MASS INTENTIONS

December 15, Monday: Advent Weekday

Readings: *Nm 24:2-7.15-17; Mt 21:23-27*

6:45 AM Msgr. Thomas Madden (Estate)
8:00 AM Mike Smith (Bob & Chip Klisiewicz)
12:00 PM Dolores Fleming (Geraldine Stevens)

December 16, Tuesday: Advent Weekday

Readings: *Zep 3:1-2,9-13; Mt 21:28-32*

6:45 AM Donna Seidel (Jen & Cory Geishauser)
8:00 AM Vi Franchio (Fran Prosperi)
12:00 PM Intentions of Bob Gibbons (Friends)

December 17, Wednesday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: *Gn 49:2,8-10; Mt1:1-17*

6:45 AM Deceased Sisters IHM
8:00 AM Connie Eager (Tom Cole)
12:00 PM Mary Kathryn Kantoski, Birth (Mom & Dad)

December 18, Thursday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: *Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25*

6:45 AM Kevin Hanlin (McAndrew Family)
8:00 AM Ann Flanagan, Ann. (P. & B. McCloskey)
12:00 PM Amelia Hofbauer, Anniv. (Daughter)

December 19, Friday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: *Jgs 13:2-7,24-25; Lk 1:5-25*

6:45 AM Dorothy Sheehan (M/M Harold Sheehan)
8:00 AM Rose Grillo Skupien (Joe & Patty Pufka)
12:00 PM Charles Weidley, Sr. (Carol Leonard)

December 20, Saturday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: *Is 7:10-14; Lk1:26-38*

8:00 AM James Smith (Terry Smith)
12:00 PM James Roland (Paul & Kathy Vincent)
Vigil: Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings: *2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-28*

5:00 PM Nozzie & Jennie Calabrese (Nancy & Family)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Charismatic Prayer Group

There will be a **Eucharistic Festival of Praise** on Monday, December 15th, from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Cathedral. The evening of prayer will include Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with special Praise and Worship music led by the Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group. Deacon John Rys will also be giving a witness talk. There will be fellowship and refreshments following. All are welcome!

Advent of Christmas Concert Tonight!

The Cathedral Festival Choir will present an evening of classical and traditional music for the Advent and Christmas seasons on **Sunday, December 14** 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. Admission is free and open to the public; a free-will offering will be accepted. Make this Cathedral tradition a part of your preparations for the Christmas feast.

Please Note: Due to the Concert tonight we will not have Advent Evening Prayer. Plan to bring the family next Sunday evening at 6:30PM.

Advent Penance Service

The communal celebration of Advent Reconciliation is scheduled for this **Wednesday, December 17** 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 the parish service. There will be a reception following at 7:30 PM to congratulate the First Penitents. All are welcome to join us in the Cathedral Hall.

First Reconciliation This Wednesday

Parents and students should be seated in the reserved front-middle sections of the Cathedral no later than 6:15 PM. Please bring your son's or daughter's baptismal candle or a new white candle.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sundays: December 14, and 21 - Regular classes for Pre-K through Grade 8, 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM in Cathedral Hall. Pre-K and Kindergarten gather in the Music Room.

Sunday, December 14th - All Cathedral High School students will meet in Cathedral Hall this afternoon from 2:00 PM- 4:00 PM to wrap Christmas gifts and fill food boxes! This is our group Advent Service Project. **FIRE:** Our next class is Sunday, **December 21st**, 6:15 PM - 8:30 PM in Cathedral Hall.

CONFIRMATION PREP

All **Eleventh Grade** Candidates Confirmation Session II will be held on Sunday **December 14th** at 6:15 PM in the Seton Suite. The paper about your sponsor is due at this meeting.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, December 7 - \$9,750.00
Immaculate Conception - \$2,105.56

Christmas Flower Memorials - Please remember to have your Christmas Flower Memorial envelope returned to the Parish Office by next Sunday, **December 21** 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".

Land of Peace

Noel Alshomali thanks all for their kindness on the First Sunday of Advent. Noel had a variety of items for sale. Some of these items were made by handicapped Christians from the Holy Land. The sales totaled \$1,510.00 and there were also donations received for the Catholic Hospital in Bethlehem. The mission of the organization *Land of Peace* is to help and support our Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land.

Catholic Appointment Art Calendar

A gracious thank you to the **Jones Funeral Home** for providing the 2015 civil calendar. We are most grateful to Bob Jones for his generosity to Cathedral parishioners. Each household is invited to take a 2015 calendar home with you after the Masses this weekend. Please display this gift in a prominent place in your home. Enjoy the religious art. And follow the liturgical seasons with its special feasts and saints.

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. Also, all liturgical ministers are asked to be especially aware of what help might be needed when attending Liturgy.

Liturgical Reflection ...

**General
Instruction
of the
Roman Missal
Third Edition**

It is by baptism that the Christian people have a right and duty to participate at Mass. When the Eucharist is arranged in such a way that the fruits of the Lord's passion, death, and resurrection are remembered, then the assembled believers are led to a conscious, active, and full participation in the sacred mysteries. This is a participation in body and in mind, a participation fervent with faith, hope, and charity that is required by the very nature of the Eucharist. Thus the ecclesial nature of the Mass is made manifest and the body of Christ becomes one in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Number 18.

2014, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

The Rite of Acceptance

**into the Order of Catechumens
The Call of Continuing Conversion
of Those Already Baptized**

The Cathedral Parish recently celebrated the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens with these sisters seeking the Sacrament of Baptism along with Confirmation and Eucharist. The following Catechumens are warmly welcomed: Jessica Roland and Alexis Williams. The rite to the Call of Continuing Conversion was also celebrated with these baptized sisters and brothers seeking the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. The following Candidates are warmly welcomed: Dylan Allen, Benjamin Barr, James Farrell, Richard Kerr, Stephane Tonello and Michelle Verba. These catechumens and candidates now begin their formal journey to the Easter Sacraments. Remember them in prayer and let them know of your support when you meet them here at Cathedral Parish.

Baptism Congratulations!

On Sunday, December 7, with permission of her Pastor from Saint Ursula Parish, Allison Park, PA in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Claire Anne Rhoa, daughter of Patrick and Kara Rhoa, was baptized here in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. Congratulations also godparents, Erin and Ted, grandparents, Dave and Karen, great-grandma, Pat, aunts, uncles and cousins. Claire will grow in her Christian identity to the degree that family and friends model the faith.

BASKET BINGO COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, December 15, at 7:00 PM in Seton Suite. Please 'Save the Date': Sunday, April 26, 2015 Longaberger and Vera Bradley Bingo in Cathedral Hall.