

DECEMBER 21, 2014

Scripture Reflection

The second book of Samuel records the rule of David, the king of Judah, who joined both Judah and the northern realm of Israel into a united kingdom. In today's reading, David has settled into his palace and now desires to build a temple for God that will house the Ark of the Covenant. But that task will be given to his son, Solomon. Rather than David building God's house, God turns the tables. God will build up the house of David--a dynasty on whom God's favor will rest forever.

The Gospel presents us with the annunciation to Mary, a virgin betrothed to Joseph, of the house of David. The angel Gabriel announces that Mary has found favor with God, though we are not told what she has done to achieve this honor. The promise God made to David will be brought to fruition in Mary's child. He will be given the throne of David and will rule forever. It is not the fulfillment of God's promise that Mary questions, but the mechanics of conception. The angel explains that the Holy Spirit will come upon her, so that the child to be born will be holy, the Son of God.

God will establish David's lineage and his heir shall inherit a throne that will last forever. Christians have long interpreted this promise as finding its fulfillment in Jesus. As the angel tells Mary in the Gospel reading, God will give to Jesus "the throne of David his father." Jesus is the rightful heir to David; he is the one whose kingdom shall last forever. In the birth of Jesus, God is building David's house. But in another sense, God is also building a dwelling place for the divine presence. The dwelling place for God in the midst of the Chosen People, which David sought to build, is now definitively established in Jesus; he is the true temple of God, built not by human hands, but by the work of the Spirit. What we will celebrate at Christmas is the advent of the new dwelling place of God in the humanity of Jesus.

• **Our God keeps promises. David's reign continues into eternity in Jesus Christ. Can you name promises that God has fulfilled in your life?**

Living the Word, Brink and Bauerschmidt, World Library Publications, 2014, pages 22-23.

Calendar of Prizes 2015

Calendar of Prizes 2015 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 Monday, 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 **255** tickets to sell. Don't be left out! Some numbers came out four times in 2014! Please help with this annual fund-raiser.

Welcome Diocesan Director of Vocations

Father Matthew Reese, the Director for Vocations in our Diocese, will be speaking at all Masses this weekend. Vocation awareness and an openness to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to serve God as a priest or religious is at the center of Catholic life. We warmly welcome Father Reese. Is God calling you or someone you know to serve as a priest or religious?

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.

Charismatic Prayer Group

The Charismatic Prayer Group will NOT meet on Monday, December 22nd or December 29th. We will resume our meetings on Monday, January 5th, 2015. Have a Blessed and Merry Christmas!!

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.

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

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

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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2014

Readings: 2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

MASS INTENTIONS

December 22, Monday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: 1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk1:46-56

6:45 AM Dennis Irwin (Diane Irwin & Wendi Keeler)

8:00 AM Barry & Brian Elmers (M/M Duane Elmers)

12:00 PM Tom Moyer (Wife, Joyce)

December 23, Tuesday: Saint John of Kanty, Priest

Readings: Mal 3:1-4,23-24; Lk1:57-66

6:45 AM Joseph A. Keirn (Mom & Dad)

8:00 AM Leroy & Irmina Helfrich (Estate)

12:00 PM Bill & Patty Geis, Wed. Ann. (Patty & Family)

December 24, Wednesday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: 2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16; Lk1:67-79

6:45 AM No Mass

8:00 AM Deceased of Moloney-Vogel Family

12:00 PM No Mass

Vigil of Christmas

Readings: Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17,22-25; Mt 1:1-25

5:00 PM Deceased of Conzo & Jacobs Families

December 25, Thursday: **The Nativity of the Lord**

Readings: Is 9: 1-6; Ti 2: 11-14; Lk 2: 1-14

Midnight People of God

Readings: Is 52: 7-10; Heb 1: 1-6; Jn 1: 1-18

8:00 AM Jennie Calabrese (Steve & Patty Flanagan)

10:00 AM Amandus Gallagher (J. Tomlinson Family)

12:00 PM Camille McMullen (Pat & Kathy Sherry)

No evening Mass

December 26, Friday: Saint Stephen, The First Martyr

Readings: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22

6:45 AM No Mass

8:00 AM Bess Greinader (Daughters, Sally & Beth)

12:00 PM Francis A. Goss, Anniv. (Wife & Family)

December 27, Saturday: Saint John, Apostle, Evangelist

Readings: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:2-8

8:00 AM Eileen Lytle (Connie Blontz & Family)

12:00 PM Eileen Moyer, Birthday (Joyce Moyer)

Vigil: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Readings: Sir 3:2-6,12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40

5:00 PM Leo Winkler (Family)

Pray For Our Sick

Remember our sisters and brothers who are weakened by illness. Prayers are sometimes the best prescribed medicine.

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. If you did not receive a calendar last week, you may receive your calendar this weekend either from the ushers or in the main sacristy.

Please Note: Christmas Vigil Mass

The Vigil Mass for Christmas is at 5:00 PM. Seating is available in the choir stalls behind the altar in the sanctuary. There is **no evening Mass** on Christmas Day.

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas Midnight Mass Prelude - Cathedral Choir will present a half hour of prelude music on Wednesday, December 24, prior to the celebration of Midnight Mass. Choir members should gather in the Music Room by 11:00 PM.

Parish in Midst of Consideration

Religious Education for the Parish has been taking place in the Cathedral Hall. Last winter the furnace broke in the former school. Classes in the Hall are a temporary situation until a more permanent location can be provided. Both the former school building and convent building are in need of significant renovations and upgrades to meet code regulations. A building is for sale near the Cathedral and the Parish is considering its purchase for Parish Offices, Religious Education, and a Parish Activity Center. Both the Finance Council and the Parish Council are involved in these discussions. More information will be forth coming.

Winter Coats

We will continue our collection of winter coats throughout the Christmas Season which goes until Sunday, January 11th. Thank you for your participation in this service project.

Advent and Christmas 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 this evening for Liturgy of the Hours and Benediction.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, December 14 - **\$9,151.00**

Christmas Flower Memorials will appear in our special Christmas Day bulletin.

Looking Ahead - Holy Day!

Mary, The Holy Mother of God - January 1

Vigil at 5:30 PM Wednesday, December 31; on Thursday, January 1, Masses will be celebrated at 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM and 12:00 Noon. There will be no evening Mass on the Holy Day.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sunday: December 21st - 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.

FIRE: Class Sunday, **December 21st** 6:15 PM - 8:30 PM in Cathedral Hall.

No Classes are scheduled for **December 28th**.

Knights of Columbus

Star of the Sea Council 4245, Hollidaysburg, will hold its Free Throw Championship on Sunday, January 25, 2015 from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM at St. Patrick's Gym in Newry. Participation is free but bringing a non-perishable food item for Saint Vincent DePaul is encouraged and appreciated. Open to boys and girls 7-14 as of January 1, 2014. Must bring proof of age. Pre-register by calling Dennis Dombrosky at 695-1509 or email at dinapapt@aol.com.

Rest In Peace

Please remember in prayer Anastasia 'Annie' Hanlin, a member of Cathedral Parish who died in Georgia this past week and was buried from the Cathedral on Friday. May her family be comforted in the faith and may Emmanuel greet her in the heavenly kingdom.

Liturgical Reflection ...

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

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal directs that during Advent the *Glory to God* is not prayed in anticipation of the great feast of Christmas. The floral decoration of the altar is marked by a moderation suited to the character of this time of year, without expressing the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord. In Advent the use of the organ and other musical instruments is marked by a moderation suited to the character of this season. The four Sundays of Advent must always be celebrated and can never be replaced by any other alternative Mass selection. The choice of songs, the scriptures in the Lectionary, and the prayers in the Roman Missal all give witness to the nature of the season of Advent which is hope and anticipation.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Numbers 53, 305, 313, and 374.

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

CHRISTIAN INITIATION

Following the Prayer of the Faithful at 10:00 AM Mass each Sunday, our Catechumens and Candidates are dismissed to reflect on the Scriptures proclaimed. There follows an hour discussion on various aspects of the Catholic faith. Please remember these individuals in your Late Advent and Christmas prayers.

Catholics Returning Home

Have you thought about coming home to the Catholic Church? Is there something from the past that has separated you from your Catholic roots? Maybe now is the time to think about returning to your Church. Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 for information on the date and time for the next *Catholics Returning Home* informal listening session.

Have You Been Confirmed?

In 2015 Monsignor Mazur will have classes for adult Catholics who have never received the Sacrament of Confirmation. This Sacrament is one of the three Initiation Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. One must have received all three of these Sacraments in order to be a godparent at Baptism or a sponsor at Confirmation. A godparent or sponsor must have received these three Sacraments along with their regular practice of the Catholic faith. If interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, please call the Parish Office at 944-4603. Meetings will be scheduled over the winter months in preparing for an Easter Season reception of this wonderful Sacrament.

Please Remember Our Military In Prayer

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