

november 30, 2014

Scripture Reflection

As we cross the threshold into a new liturgical year, we enter Advent, an intentional period of preparation. We look forward to Christ coming -- both at the great solemnity of Christmas and at the end of time. Our Scriptures insist we assume a stance of alertness and that we turn our attention to the Lord, while our secular world insists we launch into frantic consumerism and indulgence.

We are losing the sense of wonder and contemplation, unable to read the signs of the times because of distractedness. This has an impact on our prayer, sense of community and family, and spiritual reflection. Distraction has permeated our daily lives so completely that intellectual, spiritual and emotional focus can no longer be taken for granted. Distractedness does not allow us to wait; it does not allow for patience, for it wants what it wants now.

We need to adopt an internal quiet to wait with and for Jesus. Before his arrest and crucifixion, Jesus taught his disciples how to wait patiently for his return by means of a parable. He taught them to "Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come." This is not an instruction to anxiety, but guidance on attentiveness. The instructions for waiting on Christ are outlined in the parable. The slaves were asked to take charge of the household. "Each with his work," and the doorkeeper was commanded "to be on the watch." The household is asked to continue its work and its daily routines with their minds attuned to when the master would return. Jesus calls for vigilance. In the final part of the image, Jesus instructs his disciples: "Therefore, keep awake--for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

- **What can you do this Advent to be less distracted and more focused on spiritual alertness?**

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AMERICA MAGAZINE: November 24, 2014

FIRE: Class Sunday, **December 7th**
6:15 PM - 8:30 PM in Cathedral Hall.

All Cathedral High School students will meet in the Cathedral Hall on Sunday, **December 14th**, in the afternoon from 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM to wrap Christmas gifts and make food boxes! This is our group Advent Service Project.

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

Confirmation Prep

All Ninth Grade Candidates
Baptismal Retreat is Saturday, **December 13th** in the Cathedral Hall followed by the 5:00 PM evening Mass. A parent or sponsor must attend with you.

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

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.

Charismatic Prayer

The Charismatic Prayer Group will meet this Monday at 7:00 PM in the Cathedral. Father David Rizzo will be giving a spiritual teaching. Praise and worship music will precede his talk. Also a big thank you to all who helped with the Healing Mass on the 24th. All who attended were truly blessed.

Rest In Peace

Please remember in prayer Rita Shannon Dittsworth, a member of Cathedral Parish who died and was buried this past week. May her family be comforted in the faith and may she know the peace of the Risen Lord.

Larger Size to Weekly Bulletin

Beginning this week the Cathedral Bulletin will be printed on larger sized paper. It is hoped this will make for easier reading.

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 - 943-7423

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
NOVEMBER 30, 2014

Readings: Is 63:16-17,19: 64:2-7; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk12:33-37

MASS INTENTIONS

December 1, Monday: Advent Weekday

Readings: Is 2:1-5; Mt8:5-11

6:45 AM John Capouellez, Anniversary (Family)
8:00 AM Mike Smith (Joe & Patty Pufka)
12:00 PM Debbie & Jerry Fowler (Blazewicz Family)

December 2, Tuesday: Advent Weekday

Readings: Is 11:1-10; Lk 10:21-24

6:45 AM Msgr. Thomas Madden (Estate)
8:00 AM Leroy & Irmira Helfrich (Estate)
12:00 PM Joseph Prendergast (Ed & Lois Simanski)

December 3, Wednesday: Saint Francis Xavier, priest

Readings: Is 25:1-6; Mt 7:21,24-27

6:45 AM Nozzie, Jennie & Sandy Calabrese (Family)
8:00 AM Homer Morris (Alley Cats)
12:00 PM Joseph Pagliaro (Bob & Eileen Douglass)

December 4, Thursday: Saint John Damascene, doctor

Readings: Is 26:1-6; Mt 7:21,24-37

6:45 AM Dan Savine (Jolene McCullough)
8:00 AM Bill & Kathleen Walcutt (Family)
12:00 PM Fr. J. Joseph Strittmatter (R. & M. Jacobs)

December 5, Friday: Advent Weekday

Readings: Is 29:117-24; Mt 9:27-31

6:45 AM Fred Martynuska (Gail & Fred)
8:00 AM Joe & Josephine Heverly (Skip Cowan)
12:00 PM Camille McMullen (H. Donna & F. Fornwalt)

December 6, Saturday: Saint Nicholas, Bishop

Is 20:19-21,23-26; Mt 9:35--10:1,5,6-8

8:00 AM Dennis Irwin (Diane Irwin & Wendi Keeler)
12:00 PM Benedict Kedzuff (Wife, Maureen)
Vigil: Second Sunday of Advent

Readings: Is 40:1-5,9-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk1:1-8

5:00 PM Robert Smithmyer (Don & Diane Carnell)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Gratitude to Charismatic Prayer Group

During the Healing Mass sponsored by the Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group on Monday evening, November 24th, donations were received for the Parish. We are grateful for this generous gift of \$469.00. May the Lord continue to bless the Monday evening gatherings where the Holy Spirit is invoked giving honor and praise to God.

Advent Season Begins

The Advent wreath is lighted. The Church displays her violet colors. The Scriptures proclaim anticipation and hope. There is no *Glory to God* at Mass. We prepare. The long awaited Messiah is coming into our lives, now and at the end of time. Advent is a season of joy. Rejoice in the knowledge that God comes to be with his people. We will be collecting non-perishable food items, paper products and cleaning products throughout the season of Advent. Baskets are placed at the church doors to receive donations whenever you visit the church. Be conscious of the needy this Advent.

Liturgical Note - Advent begins a new liturgical year. The Sunday readings are from Cycle B; the weekday readings are from Cycle I.

Advent/Christmas Prayer Partners

Sign-up forms will be available this weekend and next at tables located at the church doors. You may complete the form or pick one up to take home with you to return by mail.

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. Evening Prayer and Benediction go about forty-five minutes. Please join us tonight for Evening Prayer this First Sunday of Advent.

Advent/Christmas Mailing

All registered members of the Cathedral Parish Family should have received the annual Advent/Christmas mailing this past week. If you did not receive this important mailing, please call the Parish Office. Thank you to Mary Louise Ball, Janet Belsey, Paula Clemens, Benita Jorkasky, Bill and Grace Smith, Theresa Vaughn and Madeline and Mary Gene Vogel who helped prepare the mailing.

Winter Coat Drive

Our donations will be distributed to local families. Place items on the clothes rack to the far left as you enter the body of Cathedral through the front doors.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, November 25 - \$8,589.00

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

Cathedral Music Ministry

The music ministry at Cathedral will be a shared responsibility between Nina M. Tedeschi and Kevin J. Luke. We warmly welcome Nina Tedeschi. Nina is the Choir Director and Head Organist. She rehearses with the choir, cantors, and psalmists. Kevin Luke oversees Administrative Duties and is Organist. He selects liturgical music for Masses and the seasonal Music Aids. Both will collaborate with diocesan events and work on the annual concert series for *Concerts Under the Dome*.

Advent of Christmas Concert

The Cathedral Festival Choir will present an evening of classic 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. There will be a *Free Will Offering*.

Lectors

The books containing the scripture readings for Mass for the Year of Grace 2015 are available in the main sacristy for those who were unable to participate in our morning review of this ministry.

First Friday Communion Calls This Week

Our clergy visit the sick and home-bound of the parish each month. Call the Parish Office at 944-4603 to arrange a visit for yourself or a loved one. Please call also, if admitted to the hospital, so our clergy may visit as soon as possible.

Liturgical Reflection ...

General Instruction of the Roman Missal Third Edition

The **General Instruction of the Roman Missal** will be the focus of this liturgical year's inserts. The Roman Missal is the official book for the celebration of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church. Your priest has this Missal at every Mass for the prayers (Opening, Over the Gifts, and After Communion), the Preface, and the Eucharistic Prayer at the altar when bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The third edition of the General Instruction directs how the Mass is to be prayed. Time will be taken to review the varying aspects of the most sacred prayer of the Church, the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

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

CHRISTIAN INITIATION

Last Sunday at the 10:00 AM Mass we celebrated the *Rite of Welcoming and Acceptance* with six individuals planning to join the Catholic Church. They publicly expressed their desire to become active, fully initiated members of our Cathedral Parish Family. Please keep them in your Advent prayers.

LAND of PEACE, a nonprofit organization, is with us today. Religious articles, made from wood of the holy land, are being sold in the vestibule of the Cathedral. Support is given to Christian families in the holy land through the Patriarch of Jerusalem. These religious items make great Christmas gifts.

ALTOONA CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Please join Altoona Central Catholic School (ACCS) for the 5th annual **Soup Throw-Down! Sunday, December 14**, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Father Kelly Hall, 25th Avenue and 5th Street, Altoona. 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 from this event go directly to ACCS.

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 Family Trip or Cash Option. The Calendar of Prizes makes a great Christmas gift. Please plan to help with this annual fund-raiser.