

**DECEMBER 9, 2018**

*Scripture Reflection*

All four Gospels include, near their beginning, a description of John the Baptist's preaching and baptism, reminding their audiences then and today of John's importance to the early Christian community. John's preaching was popular. Many longed for an end to the world's disorder. Sin had poisoned politics, economics, law and everyday social interactions. The world was haunted by evil. Something was very wrong, but no one could figure out what it was or how to address it.

John countered these fears by affirming that God was indeed at work, preparing a savior who would clean out Israel's spiritual and moral corruption. To prepare for the savior's appearance, each individual had to purge all personal corruption as well. This was the point of John's baptism. John had adapted the normal ritual washings practiced in every Jewish household into an act of total rebirth. John's ritual bath symbolized inner transformation, gave individuals a clean break with their past and prepared them to recognize the savior to come.

John's ministry also pointed forward to the coming kingdom. John's preaching, recounted in Luke's Gospel, emphasized generosity, honesty and humility. John's preaching also insisted that the arrival of the Messiah was at hand, and that repentance and a change of life were necessary for redemption. John's very life affirmed that God was doing something new and the individuals who wished to be part of the new thing God was doing had to renew themselves as well.

John's mission has become ours today. We live in an age of anxiety. Beyond his words and ministry, John's presence on earth was a sign that God remained faithful. As we prepare to celebrate Christ's coming, may our own lives be a sign to someone that God is still at work, still interested and still ready to save.

- **How can you offer hope to someone who needs to hear Good News? What words do you speak? What actions do you take?**

AT HOME with the WORD 2019, Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, pg. 21. AMERICA MAGAZINE, "How are you preparing for Christ's coming?" Michael R. Simone, S.J., November 16, 2018.

**The Advent Wreath**

The concept of the Advent wreath originated among German Lutherans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, it was not until three centuries later that the modern Advent wreath took shape. In the 1800s a Protestant pastor in Germany, in response to children asking if Christmas had arrived, built a large wooden ring (made out of an old cartwheel) with 20 small red and 4 large white candles, The red candles were lighted daily and the white candles were lighted on Sundays. The custom gained ground among Protestants churches in Germany and evolved into the smaller wreath with four candles known today.

Roman Catholics in Germany began to adopt the custom in the 1920s, and in the 1930s it spread to North America. More recently, some Eastern Orthodox families have adopted an Advent wreath with six candles symbolizing the longer Christmas waiting in Orthodox tradition their celebration of Christmas is always Epiphany. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Advent wreaths are popular in almost all mainline churches.

Advent wreaths are circular, representing God's infinite love, and are usually made of evergreens, which represent the hope of eternal life brought about by Jesus Christ. Within the Advent wreath are candles that generally represent the four weeks of Advent season as well as the light of God coming into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ. In many Catholic and Protestant churches, the most popular colors for the four surrounding Advent candles are violet and rose, corresponding to the liturgical vestments for the Sundays of Advent. Violet is a Liturgical color associated with seriousness and turning towards the Lord. The rose candle is lighted on the Third Sunday of Advent, *Gaudete Sunday* (Latin word meaning "to rejoice," as this Sunday is marked by Advent joy.

Early December possesses the longest nights and shortest days of the year. The four candles symbolize the Light that arrived on our earth to dispel darkness. Once Christmas arrives, the days begin to become longer and the nights shorter. Truly the light of the world has arrived and dwells among us. Advent season finds us preparing for the coming of the Lord at the end of time and, also, preparing to commemorate the first coming of the Word-Made-Flesh at Christmas. The light of the Advent candles remind us of the Eternal Light, Jesus Christ. Here at the Cathedral Parish we have members of the family carry in Advent candles in the opening procession at Mass.

# 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.

Charismatic Prayer - Monday 7:00 PM.

Eucharistic Adoration - First Wednesday - 12:30 PM - 8:00 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 afternoon 2:00 PM - 4:00 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, J.C.D., 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](http://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](http://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

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY**

Leslie C. Thayer, MM, CAGO

Music Ministry Office - 944-2044

E-mail: [lthayer@dioceseaj.org](mailto:lthayer@dioceseaj.org)

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

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 9, 2018

Readings: Bar 5:1-9; Phil 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6

### MASS INTENTIONS

December 10, Monday: Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM Maureen Wolf, Anniversary (Kathy Ford)  
8:00 AM Joe Wiedemer (Patty and Bear McCloskey)  
12:00 PM Steve Flanagan (Pat Byrne and Family)

December 11, Tuesday: Saint Damasus I, Pope

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

6:45 AM Dwight Dittsworth (Cathedral Parish)  
8:00 AM Deacon John Rys, Birthday (Family)  
12:00 PM Carl Fischer, Anniversary (Family)

December 12, Wednesday: Our Lady of Guadalupe

Readings: Zec 2:14-17; Lk 1:26-38

6:45 AM Bob Weaver, Ann. (Jim and Elaine Weaver)  
8:00 AM Bernard G Plank, Birth. / Anniv. (Family)  
12:00 PM Helen Anderson (Mary Lysinger)

December 13, Thursday: Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Readings: Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15

6:45 AM Dec'd. of Richard & Dorothy Irwin Family  
8:00 AM Loretta R. Adamczyk (Patty and Diane)  
12:00 PM Paul R. Rose, Birthday (Rose Family)

December 14, Friday: Saint John of the Cross, Pr. and Dr.

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

6:45 AM M. Virginia Jones (Sally Myers)  
8:00 AM Carrie Kibler Detwiler, Birthday (Mom & Dad)  
12:00 PM Myra Mangicarne (Colleen Sheehan)

December 15, Saturday: Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM Marian and Thomas Swires (Children)  
12:00 PM Anna Marie Jacobs (Lennie Johnson)

Vigil: Third Sunday of Advent

Readings: Zep 3:14-18; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18

5:00 PM Millie Boyle (Jim and Steph Kilcoyne)

### Advent of Christmas Concert

The Cathedral Choir, guest singers, and members of the Altoona Symphony will present Sing the Songs of Bethlehem, a concert of Advent and Christmas music in the "Lessons and Carols" format, composed and arranged by K. Lee Scott, on Sunday, December 16, at 3:00 PM in the Cathedral. The audience will be invited to participate in singing the familiar carols. There will be a free-will offering. **An insert is enclosed in this week's bulletin.**

### Calendars of Prizes 2019 Are Here!

Calendars of Prizes 2019 are being sold at the Cathedral Square door after all Masses. 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. Due to the state regulations for small games of chance, it is necessary that all one thousand tickets be sold. Otherwise, the parish will lose money on unsold tickets. If you have a favorite three digit number, call the Parish Office (944-4603) weekdays between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM to check on availability or stop at the Cathedral Square door after Mass. These make great Christmas gifts that last all year!

### Prayer Partners for Advent and Christmas

Parishioners are encouraged to sign-up to become a Prayer-Partner for someone in the Parish Family during Advent and Christmas. If you have not already filled in the form, Prayer-Partner Forms are available at the three doors of the Cathedral. Take time to fill in the needed information. You will receive the name and address of the person(s) you will be praying for in the mail. Make sure to pray daily. And, perhaps, you could send a Christmas Card or give a telephone call.

### Advent Evening Prayer with Exposition and Benediction

On the Sundays of Advent and Christmas season, 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 Class

Our next Baptismal Prep Class will be on Monday, December 10, in the Seton Suite at 7:00 PM.

### Christmas Flower Memorials

Please remember to have your Christmas Flower Memorial envelope returned to the Parish Office by **December 17** to assure that your memorial will be listed in the Christmas bulletin. If you have misplaced this envelope, just place the name of your loved one on any envelope marked "Christmas Flowers."

### OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, December 2, 2018 - \$8,742.00

### First Reconciliation Schedule

First Reconciliation is scheduled at the Parish Advent Penance Service on Wednesday, December 19, 2018, at 6:30 PM.

### Families Needed

If your family would like to carry the Advent candles on a particular Advent Sunday, please call Chris Laraia at 814-312-7317, or the Parish Office at 944-4603.

### Eucharistic Adoration

Plan ahead! Cathedral will have monthly adoration before the Blessed Sacrament here in the Cathedral on **Wednesday, January 2nd from 12:30 PM to 8:00 PM**. Make time to pray for the Sacrament in exposition, and remember to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

### Thank you

The Parish is grateful to Jim Seiler who created the four Advent candles. And appreciation is expressed to Lorraine Beck who supplied the four colorful ribbons for the candles.

### Holy Trinity Catholic School Toy Drive

Our parochial school is sponsoring a **Toy Drive** to benefit Saint Vincent DePaul Family Kitchen and Hollidaysburg American Rescue Workers. New and unwrapped toys (maximum \$15.00) will be collected from November 28 through December 13 at each of the three campuses at their respected offices.

### Winter Concerts

Holy Trinity Altoona Campus Winter Concert will be on Sunday, December 9 at 2:00 PM. Hollidaysburg Campus, Monday, December 10 at 7:00 PM. Middle School, with all Holy Trinity students participating will be on Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 PM. All concerts are held at the Maria Parish Center. The Bishop Guilfoyle High School Concert (with the Holy Trinity Band Members participating) is Sunday, December 16 at 2:00 PM at Bishop Guilfoyle High School.

### Liturgical Reflection ...

Advent is a time of hopeful anticipation as we prepare to celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's first coming, and, also, recalling his final coming in glory at the end of time. There are many preparations for Christmas that demand our time and attention. Make sure to fill your Advent days with prayerful preparation. Read scripture, pray the rosary with special attention to the Joyful Mysteries, spend time before the Blessed Sacrament. Advent is a time of hope and joy.

2018, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

### Religious Education

**F.I.R.E. make-up class** will be on Wednesday, December 12th, 2018 from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM.

### Confirmation Preparation for December 2018

**All Tenth Grade Candidates** will meet on Sunday, December 9th in the Church at 6:30 PM for Evening Prayer. The *Fall Session* will follow in the Cathedral Hall until 8:00 PM.

### Advent Communal Penance Service

Cathedral Parish will have our Advent Penance Service on Wednesday December 19 at 6:30 PM.

### Advent Giving

Cathedral Parish prepares baskets of food for needy families at the conclusion of Advent for the celebration of the Christmas holidays. Gift Cards: Martin's, Weis, or Giant Eagle will greatly help. Please place them in an envelope and put in the collection or drop of at the Parish Office (9:00AM-5:00PM). Bins are placed at the three doors of the Cathedral to collect non-perishable food items, paper products, cleaning items, and personal care products. Please remember to bring in your donations the Sundays of Advent so we can serve the poor in our community. Paper products, laundry and cleaning products, and personal care items cannot be purchased with food stamps. Also, remember to place winter coats that are in good condition on the clothes rack located near the front doors of the Cathedral. Individuals have already contacted the Parish for heavy coats to wear throughout the upcoming winter weather.

### Christmas For Families

All Cathedral families and individuals are encouraged to help others this Advent. We are sponsoring three families through Catholic Charities. Confirmation classes are shopping for specific items for three girls and four boys ranging in age from newborn to 17. Gift certificates for your favorite stores, markets, gas stations, etc. would be great additions. We will need the items by Monday, December 11th. Call Jean Koury at 934-7316 with any questions. Students will wrap gifts on December 17th.