

DECEMBER 8, 2019

Scripture Reflection

Today's First Reading from Isaiah looks forward to the coming of the long-awaited Messiah, who will be filled with the fullness of God's Spirit. He will bring peace to the world, a peace he describes in a vision where "the calf and the young lion shall browse together." The coming of Jesus inaugurates this fulfillment.

The reading from the Letter to the Romans connects back to the hopes of the Old Testament. Jesus' coming fulfills the promises made to the patriarchs and extends them to the Gentiles "so that they might glorify God for his mercy." Jesus' coming brings all people together in their praise and glory of God.

In the Gospel reading, God's Word comes to the people in the desert through the person John the Baptist. The desert is the place where the Israelites had wandered for forty years and where God formed them into a people. The prophets foresaw that God would lead the people back to the desert to form them again into God's people. John the Baptist, who resembles the prophets with his clothing and diet, calls for a change of heart: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! John speaks of one who is to come, one who is far greater than he. While John baptized with water, the one to come, Jesus, will baptize "with the Holy Spirit and with fire." As John the Baptist called on his people to set things right, so we are called this Advent to set things right with God as we await the coming of Jesus at Christmas and welcome his presence into our lives.

- **What does John the Baptist mean when he says that Jesus will "baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire"?**

AT HOME with the WORD 2020, Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, pg. 21

Stewardship Reflections

People who want to live as Christian disciples and Christian stewards face serious obstacles, in the United States and in other nations who have a dominant secular culture. This often contradicts religious convictions about the meaning of life. As Catholics, many of us also have been adversely influenced, but we know what it is to struggle against selfishness and greed.

May we recognize our dependence upon God and become as passionate about living our faith as John the Baptist in today's Gospel. Through Baptism we entered a covenant with God to place "our resources- our very selves- at God's service in and through the Church."

Christmas Flower Memorials

Please remember to have your Christmas Flower Memorial envelope returned to the Parish Office by **Tuesday, 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."

Helpers Needed

We will meet every Wednesday at 9:00 AM, to tidy up the Cathedral for the upcoming Advent and Christmas season. We are so blessed that so many have come forward to help. Please bring buckets and rags and join us.

Christian Mothers Meeting

The next Christian Mothers and Women meeting will be on December 11.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

You are encouraged to participate in one of the following Advent opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sunday, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Altoona; Monday, December 9, 7:00 P.M. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Altoona; Thursday, December 12, 5:30 P.M. Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Altoona; Saturday, December 14, 10:00 A.M. St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, Altoona; Sunday, December 15, 4:00 P.M. St. Mary Parish, Hollidaysburg; Monday, December 16, 7:00 P.M. St. Rose of Lima Parish, Altoona; Wednesday December 18, 6:30 P.M. Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Parish, Altoona; and Thursday, December 19, 5:30 P.M. Sacred Heart Parish, Altoona.

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 -

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 Evening 6:15 PM - 8:15 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
12:00 Noon
Saturday: 8:00 AM
12:00 Noon

Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, J.C.D., Bishop

Reverend Monsignor Stanley Carson, Administrator

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

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

Leslie C. Thayer, MM, CAGO

Music Ministry Office - 944-2044

E-mail: lthayer@dioceseaj.org

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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 8, 2019

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

MASS INTENTIONS

December 9, Monday: Immaculate Conception of BVM

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

6:45 AM + Rose Hart (Rose Marie Fedeli)

12:00 PM Health of Fr. Dennis Kurdziel (Jerry Rose)

December 10, Tuesday: Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM + Maureen Wolf (Kathy)

12:00 PM + Betty Jenkins (M/M Francis Dambeck)

December 11, Wednesday: Saint Damasus I, Pope

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

6:45 AM + Bishop Joseph Adamec (Mark & Pat Waring)

12:00 PM + Deacon John Rys Birth. (Wife & Family)

December 12, Thursday: Our Lady of Guadalupe

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

6:45 AM Eric & Gloria Hockenberry

12:00 PM + Bernard G. Plank, Birth.&Ann. (Family)

December 13, Friday: Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

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

6:45 AM + Helen Anderson (Mary Lysinger)

12:00 PM + Paul R. Rose Birth./Ann. (Rose Family)

December 14 Saturday: St. John of the Cross, Pr. & Dr.

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

8:00 AM + Marian and Tom Swires Anniversary (Kids)

12:00 PM + Carrie Kibler Detwiler Birth. (Mom & Dad)

Vigil: Third Sunday in Advent

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

5:00 PM + James F. Myers Birth. (Subway Stamp Shop)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Catholic Ministry Drive

We are most grateful to those who have so generously responded to the 2019 Catholic Ministries Drive. As of the end of October we have pledges totaling **\$40,308.14**. Our goal for 2019 is **\$50,706.00**. Thank you for your generosity. It is most important that we receive your response as soon as possible. Monies received over our diocesan goal will help us to complete Charity Hall in The Cathedral Parish Center.

Religious Education

December 8th FIRE class 6:15-8:15 PM

December 15th FIRE class 6:15-8:15 PM

Gift Wrapping

Angel shopping for Christmas Families, all gifts and gift cards should be dropped off at the Parish Office by Friday December 13th, as our High School students will be wrapping everything on Sunday December 15th.

Prayer Partner

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, these forms are available at the three doors of the Cathedral. Take time to fill in the needed information and place in the box. 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.

Baptismal Prep Class

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

Ministry to the Elderly, Seriously Ill and Grieving

Thank you for to every one who has donated stamps for this ministry.

Please continue to call the office with the names and addresses of a family member or friend who you know would appreciate a kind word and a prayer through the mail. We would like to be able to reach out to as many people as we can. If you would like to join this ministry call the office 814-944-4603 or Jeanne Thompson at 814-317-2672.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Many Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests served for little or no pay. Today, religious communities often do not have enough savings to meet retirement needs. Your gift helps provide medications, nursing care, and more for tens of thousands of elderly religious. It also helps ensure younger members can continue the good works of their elders. Please be generous. Join in thanking the thousands of religious women and men who worked so tirelessly to educate the young and serve those in need. There is a special envelope in your packet.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION Sunday, December 1, 2019 - \$8,144.00

Young Adult Ministry

The Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament will be starting a "Young Adult Ministry", Age 18 – 30. Our first gathering, for those not yet Confirmed or those young adults feeling the need to learn more about the Catholic Religion, will be on Sundays, after the 10:00 AM Mass in the St. John's Room. Any young adult interested in joining our Young Adult Ministry or being a part of this new endeavor (TEAM) please call Tammy Dattris at 934-2441. There will be younger individuals organizing this group on a monthly basis.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RCIA is a process (a journey) through which people enter the Catholic Church. This includes people who have not been baptized (called catechumens) and people who have baptized in another Christian Church now seeking full Communion with the Catholic Church (referred to as candidates). If you are interested in learning more about RCIA, join us Sunday from 11:00am - Noon in the Seton Suite. Please reach out to Tammy Dattris, Director of RCIA at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. We look forward to you joining us!

Did You Remember?

Did you remember to bring non-perishable food items and paper products for the needy of our community? Bins are located at the three doors of the Cathedral.

ADVENT CANDLES

Anyone interested in carrying the Advent Candles during the Opening Procession before all Mass, please call the Parish Office at 814-944-4603, between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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.



Calendar of Prizes 2020 Are Here!

Calendar of prizes 2020 are being sold at the Cathedral Square Door after all masses starting this weekend. Each calendar costs \$20.00. There is a \$20.00 daily prize; an additional \$1,000.00 in special monthly prizes awarded throughout the year; and a grand prize of \$1,500.00. Due to the states regulations for small games of chance, it is necessary that we all one thousand tickets are sold. Otherwise the parish will lose money on unsold tickets. If you have a favorite tree digit number, call the Parish Office at 814-944-4603 weekdays between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM to check for availability or stop by the Cathedral door after Mass on the weekends. These make great Christmas gifts and stocking stuffers.

Christmas Concert

The Cathedral Choir, guest singers, and members of the Altoona Symphony will present What Sweeter Music, a concert of Advent and Christmas music in the "Lessons and Carols" format, composed and arranged by John Leavitt, on Sunday, December 15, at 3:00 PM in the Cathedral Nave. The audience will be invited to participate in singing familiar carols. Dr. Cathy Herrera, flute professor and friends from Juniata College will add to the festivities. Free-will offering. All are welcome!

2020 Religious Art Calendar

Everyone is invited to take home with you the religious art calendar for 2020. The monthly pictures contained in the annual calendar are again exquisite. Please hang your calendar in a prominent place in your home for all, family and visitors, to appreciate the monthly art and the feasts and memorials of the year. The ushers will have the 2020 calendars for you at the Cathedral doors following Mass. We are grateful to Bob and Jean Jones for their gift. Jones Funeral Home has provided this annual gift for many years. Thank you! If you did not receive your calendar last week, make sure to take one home with you.

Prayer Shawls

Anyone interested in knitting or crocheting Prayer Shawls, please contact Lorraine Beck at 942-7774. Cathedral Parish gives blessed Prayer Shawls to family and friends in need of God's comfort and strength.