

DECEMBER 15, 2019

Scripture Reflection

As we approach Christmas, today's readings speak about an active, joyful waiting. With this type of waiting, total trust is placed in God while we do everything to accomplish our task. St. James, in the Second Reading, offers an example of patient waiting. Farmers sow seeds in the ground, then let nature take its course.

The Gospel offers the perfect example of waiting in John the Baptist, whose whole life was spent in active waiting for the Messiah who would be a powerful figure who would overthrow the Romans and establish the Kingdom of God.

John sends his disciples to inquire of Jesus: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus quotes from the prophet Isaiah: "The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them." These words challenge John's idea of the Messiah. Jesus says that the true reading of Scripture looks forward to a messiah who would touch the lives of people where they are. He would heal them spiritually and physically and restore them to a relationship with God. Jesus is saying that his actions show who he is.

As Christians, we lead our lives like John the Baptist, waiting patiently while actively striving to prepare a way for Christ into our lives and into the lives of others.

- **How do you prepare daily for Christ's coming into your life?**

Stewardship Reflections

May our spiritual blindness and deafness give way to seeing and hearing Jesus' presence in our lives- especially when we allow him to serve others through us.

The call to stewardship is personal and with a purpose in mind for each individual. The call is never made in isolation, with the community assisting in the discernment process. We are asked to respond to the call, knowing that the cost may not be small. Are you willing to serve Jesus in a big way even if the outcome may not be what you expect?

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.

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.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

You are encouraged to participate in one of the following Advent opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation: 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.

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 -

Charismatic Prayer - Monday 7:00 PM.

Eucharistic Adoration - First Wednesday - 12:30 PM - 8:00 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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 15, 2019

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

MASS INTENTIONS

December 16, Monday: Advent Weekday

Readings: *Nm 24:2-7, 15-17 Mt 21:23-27;*

6:45 AM + Dorothy Berger (Cathy & Joe Koehle)

12:00 PM + Rebecca Hoover (Thomas Scibica)

December 17, Tuesday: Late Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM + Mary Kantoski (Family)

12:00 PM + Sally Colledge (Pete Colledge & Family)

December 18, Wednesday: Late Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM + Deceased Family & Friends (McNelisAll Stars)

12:00 PM + Beverly Woodring (Tom & Patricia Forr)

December 19, Thursday: Late Advent Weekday

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

6:45 AM + Richard Anthony (Jim & Steph Kilcoyne)

12:00 PM + John Adams (Children)

December 20, Friday: Late Advent Weekday

Readings: *Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38*

6:45 AM + Jane Davidson (Mary Lysinger Family)

12:00 PM + Alice Winkler (Family)

December 21, Saturday: St. Peter Canisius, Pr. & Dr.

Readings: *Sg 1:8-14; Lk 1:9, 39-45*

8:00 AM + Ben Delozier Anniversary (Family)

12:00 PM + Father Bill Kiel (Friends)

Vigil: Fourth Sunday in Advent

Readings: *Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24*

5:00 PM + Mildred BradyAnn. (MM Joe Shellenberger)

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 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.

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.

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.

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 - **\$6,731.00**

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!

Friar's Nook Gift Shop

Finish up (or start) your Christmas shopping at the Friar's Nook Gift Shop Christmas Sale! Save 20% off the ENTIRE shop December 14th-23rd (closed 22nd) including nativities, gifts, flags, mats, decor, cards, and much more! The shop is located at 793- Monastery Road, Hollidaysburg. The Shop hours are Monday-Saturday: 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. Please call 814-695-3802 with any questions. Please note: Unfortunately, there will be **not** be a Christmas Cookie Sale this year. Many thanks to you all and enjoy the Advent and Christmas seasons!



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.

Office Closed

The Parish Office will be closed Tuesday, December 24th through Thursday, December 26th. We will be back in Friday December 27th. We hope that everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed Happy New Year!