

DECEMBER 29, 2019

Scripture Reflection

Our reading from the Book of Sirach sets the tone for the Feast of the Holy Family by drawing attention to the loving relationships that should permeate every family. The commandment "Honor your father and your mother" is the foundation for this reflection. Love for your parents continues throughout life and brings with it rewards of many blessings.

Paul's letter to the Colossians focuses on family life. Paul reminds us of our identity as "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved." We are called to live out our identity in all relationships especially within the family. Paul uses a better analogy: just as we consciously select our clothes every day, so we should consciously clothe ourselves daily with the virtues inspired by Jesus: "compassion, kindness, humility."

On this first Sunday of Christmas Time, our minds turn to the heart of the message of the Incarnation. The Gospel offers a beautiful narrative that reflects the life of the Holy Family. The Son of God entered the human family as a helpless child, cared for by a loving family. Joseph and Mary immediately exercise their role as protectors of their child amid dire circumstances. They become refugees, escaping the tyranny of King Herod, who had ordered the death of their child. Just as the Joseph in the Old Testament went to Egypt to save his family from starvation, so Joseph in the New Testament takes his family to Egypt under God's inspiration to save them. Once King Herod had died, God brings the Holy Family back from Egypt to safety in Nazareth. Joseph and Mary illustrate the primary role of every parent: to trust in God's guidance as they care for and protect their child.

- **What good news does this Feast of the Holy Family convey to your family?**

Prayer of Blessing - Feast of the Holy Family
O God,
you have created us in love and saved us in mercy,
and through the bond of marriage
you have established the family
and willed that it should become a sign of
Christ's love for his Church.
Shower your blessings on these families
gathered here in your name.
Enable those who are joined by one love
to support one another
by their fervor of spirit and devotion to prayer.
Make them responsive to the needs of others
and witnesses to the faith in all they say and do.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

On January 1st the Local Church will observe a Day of Prayer for worldpeace. Please pray the following prayer for peace:

O God, who have revealed that peacemakers are to be called your children, grant, we pray, that we may work without ceasing to establish that justice which alone ensures true and lasting peace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Shawls

If anyone feels that they need some comfort in their troubled times, please feel free to contact Lorraine Beck at 814-942-7774 for one of our Prayer Shawls. These shawls have been Blessed and may bring you the comfort that you need.

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.

For Sale

Mausoleum Crypt M1275/F, located at Calvary Cemetery/Chapel Crypt. Includes: Pre-Paid, open and close. Crypt Front Lettering, C47 Silver Rose Casket. Cost:8,500.00. Please contact Margaret at 814-935-1717.

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: ALTACATHEDRAL@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

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

December 29, 2019

Readings: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col3:12-21; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

MASS INTENTIONS

December 30, Monday: Sixth Day with the Nativity

Readings: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Lk 2:36-40

6:45 AM + Robert Wojcik (Barbara Fraundorfer)

12:00 PM Annie Bauer (Son Daniel)

December 30, Tuesday: Saint Sylvester I, Pope

Readings: 1 Jn 2:18-21/ Jn 1:1-18

6:45 AM + Elizabeth Smith (Mary Lysinger)

12:00 PM +Irma Scheffer (Mickey & Karen Fields)

January 1, Wednesday: SOLEMNITY OF THE LORD

Tuesday - Readings: Nm 6:22-27/GAI 4: 4-7; Lk 2: 16-21

5:30 PM - Vigil +John and Joy Dennis(Tom & Pat Forr)

8:00 AM All Priests

12:00 PM + Beverly Woodring (Kevin & Jane Byrne)

January 2, Thursday: Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen

Readings: 1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Jn 1:29-34

6:45 AM + Murphy Montler (Jennifer & Cliff Plank)

12:00 PM + Sister Beverly Hmel, IHM (Bart & Eileen Hmel)

January 3, Friday: Holy Name of Jesus

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

6:45 AM + Shanna Carlson

12:00 PM + Patricia Koeck (Stanley Krish Family)

January 4, Saturday: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

Readings: 1 Jn 3:7-10; Jn 1:35-42

8:00 AM + Charles Craig (Tom Forr Family)

12:00 PM + Ida Davis (Swires Family)

Vigil: EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Readings: Is 60: 1-6; Eph 3: 2-3, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

5:00 PM + Marti Stefanon (Butch Winkler)

NO 5:00 PM MASS ON WEDNESDAY, January 1, NEW YEAR'S DAY

Pray For Our Sick - Remember our sisters and brothers who are weakened by illness in your prayers. Prayers are sometimes the best prescribed medicine.

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.

A Note of Thanks

Gratitude is extended to the following people who helped to decorate the Cathedral for Christmas.

Jim Dixon, John Dixon, Tony & Anna Rose Eckenrode, Mary Ann Bell, John Murphy, Aleia Eckenrode, Tyanna Patillo, Jeannine McCloskey, Herbert Tomlinson, Tonald Helfrich, Patrick Hallinan, Jordyn Hallinan, Matt Isenberg, Randy Isenberg, and Butch Winkler.

Christmas Message

Despite the prophetic messages found in Sacred Scripture, the birth of Jesus came very much as an unexpected event. It is probably fair to say that this has been a year of the unexpected for so many people, including our own faith communities of Cathedral and Our Lady of Fatima parishes. When the unexpected happens, the period of transition can be very unsettling; and, so there is a need for patience, grace, and a profound trust in God's providence. We do believe that "God is with us" during all of our life experiences, the expected and the unexpected.

Just as Mary and Joseph accepted the disappointment of a crowded inn, the joy of a child's birth, and the visits of rugged shepherds and mysterious magi, our own lives are filled with events that cause us to ponder and pray.

On behalf of myself and our staff, I want to assure you of a remembrance in my prayer. May you and your families experience more deeply the grace-filled love and the tender-mercy Jesus came to bring. Jesus will always be our reason for hope. Thank you for your kindness to me.



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.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION Sunday, December 15, 2019 - \$5,353.00

Confirmation Prep

Sunday January 5th, 6:15-7:30 PM. 11th Grade Confirmation Prep Session II Candidate/Parent/Sponsor, must be present.

Nocturnal Adoration

Will be held at St. Rose of Lima, 5514- Roselawn Avenue, Altoona, on **Friday January 3rd** from 8:00 PM to 11:00 PM. They are the host church for this event. Please try to visit for an hour. You may attend anytime.

Holy Day of Obligation

This Wednesday, January 1, is a Holy Day of Obligation. It is the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. As the early ecumenical councils of the church defined, Mary is more than just the mother of the human Jesus of Nazareth. She is much more; she is the Mother of God. Mary bore in her womb the Eternal Word of God. Check the time for Mass this Tuesday as the Church celebrates with the Mother of God.

Eucharistic Adoration

There will be adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in exposition on **Wednesday, January 8th** from 12:30PM until 8:00PM. The Monstrance is located in front of the tabernacle in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. All are invited to make time in our schedules to spend quality prayer time before the Blessed Sacrament. Eucharistic Adoration has seemed to enhance vocations to the priesthood and religious life. As you pray before the Sacrament, remember to ask God to bless our Diocese with vocations.

Gluten Sensitivity

There may be parishioners who have found that they have physical disorders related to gluten intolerance. The spectrum of illnesses includes celiac disorder, wheat allergy, bloating, abdominal discomfort, diarrhea, muscular disturbances, and bone or joint pain. The ordinary hosts distributed at Communion contain gluten. If you have found that you are gluten sensitive, special bread is available that possess a very low gluten content. Please tell the priest before Mass, and he will consecrate the low-gluten host for you to receive at that Mass.

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 sell all one thousand tickets, otherwise the parish will lose money on unsold tickets. If you have a favorite three 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.

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 been 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 Datri, Director of RCIA at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. We look forward to you joining us!

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.

Stewardship Reflections

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph are the best examples for good stewards. They give without measure. Good Stewards see the evidence of God in all things, small and large. This leads to fruits of love, trust, accountability, and generosity. May we use our time and talent to foster compassion, forgiveness, patience and love in the spiritual family we know as our parish faith communities, and diocese.