

DECEMBER 31, 2017

Scripture Reflection

Family is a wonderful thing. But many of us also know the pain and suffering of family life. Today's Scripture readings invite us to reflect on biblical families, in particular the Holy Family, so that we can see what holds them together through times of trouble---faith in God who is always faithful.

"He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him" (Jn 1:11). It is easy to miss the grace that comes from family. The old adage "Familiarity breeds contempt" is to no one more applicable than to the people with whom we live. Years of proximity to them can lull us into forgetting that in every person God is still at work.

We must never forget that God works through created things to communicate divine love. This was certainly the case for Abraham and Sarah, who saw their son Isaac as the culmination of their own faith in God's promise. In the Gospel, we hear about Mary and Joseph traveling with the infant Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. Luke portrays them as people of deep faith since Jewish Law did not require them to come to Jerusalem to perform this sacrifice. Because of their poverty, instead of the year-old lamb prescribed in the Law, they brought a poor woman's offering---two pigeons.

Today's feast reminds us to seek God's love anew through our loved ones. It may be hard to spot. Familiarity dulls our attention. Humility or embarrassment may cause those closest to us to hide evidence of God at work in their lives. We can catch sight of God in others only when we, like Abraham and Sarah, first recognize God at work in our own lives. The trust others had in God's promises led Jesus' parents through their amazement to a deeper faith. Just so today, the work of grace in our families can strengthen our own trust in God's love for us.

- **Amid the challenges of family life, can you name at least one aspect of holiness which each family member possesses?**

AT HOME with the WORD 2018, Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, pg. 31. AMERICA MAGAZINE, "Catching Sight of Grace" Michael R. Simone, S.J., December 31, 2017.

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL STREAM Program

Through the STREAM program, students are designing their own innovative solution to a current real-life problem and engaging with their community. They are also designing, building and programming autonomous robots that perform a series of missions. Students are going to present their learning discoveries at a regional tournament in Johnstown on February 24th.

Closing and Delay Information

It is the policy of Holy Trinity Catholic School to close or delay school whenever the Altoona Area Schools are closed due to severe weather conditions. When it is necessary to close school, the announcement will be made by phone through PowerSchool Messenger, along with notification on the ACCESS channel and local TV stations. This procedure is also followed in case of delayed school openings or early dismissals due to road conditions.

First Friday Communion Calls This Week

Our priests will be visiting our homebound parishioners on Friday, **January 5**. Please call the Parish Office at 944-4603 to arrange a visit for yourself or a loved one.

Baptism Congratulations!

On Saturday, December 23, Marilyn Elizabeth Hughes was baptized and welcomed into our Cathedral Parish Family. Congratulations to parents, Brent and Christine. May the graces of the Sacrament of Baptism strengthen Marilyn and the adults who care for her.

January 1 - Mary, Mother of God

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, is NOT a holy day of obligation this year because the date falls on a Monday. The local church observes a Day of Prayer for world peace on the first day of the new year.

Please join in praying:

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.

Marriage Preparation

Cathedral Parish will offer marriage preparation sessions beginning this Saturday, January 6, from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM in the Cathedral Hall.

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.

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 - 8:30 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

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 31, 2017

Readings: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40

MASS INTENTIONS

January 1, Monday: Mary, Holy Mother of God

Readings: Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

6:45 AM Poor Souls

8:00 AM Jim Davidson (Mary Lysinger)

12:00 PM Bea Mannion (Gloria Eberhart Family)

January 2, Tuesday:

Readings: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28

6:45 AM David Conrad (Tom & Patricia Forr)

8:00 AM Steve Sharbaugh (Dave & Chris Behe)

12:00 PM Dwight Dittsworth (Family)

January 3, Wednesday: Most Holy Name of Jesus

Readings: 1 Jn 2:29-36; Jn 1:29-34

6:45 AM Catherine Nagle (Cathedral Parish)

8:00 AM Kimberly Kokolis Moran, Anniv. (Mom & Dad)

12:00 PM M. Virginia Jones (Frank & Debbie Bagnato)

January 4, Thursday: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

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

6:45 AM Alice Ann Martynuska (Family)

8:00 AM Health of Dave Seidel (Bernard & Suzi Behe)

12:00 PM Mike Chisko (Jim & Barbara Kyle)

January 5, First Friday: Saint John Neumann, Bishop

Readings: 1 Jn 3:11-21; Jn 1:43-51

6:45 AM Alberta Weaver, Anniversary (Jim & Elaine)

8:00 AM Chester Kowalski (Jeff Brown)

12:00 PM Betty McCabe (Phyllis Woodring)

January 6, Saturday: Saint André Bessette, Religious

Readings: 1 Jn 5:5-13; Mk 1:7-11

8:00 AM Herb Kutruff (Sam & Judy Kokolis)

12:00 PM Joe Tomlinson (Frank & Betty Seymour)

Vigil: The Epiphany of the Lord

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

5:00 PM Millie Boyle (Rose Family)

Additional Christmas Flower Memorials

Mike & Tootsie Febbo,

Alice & Julius Mangiacarne

Ashley Thompson

Benjamin & Christen Jones

McGough & Hallinan Families

Mark Spinazzola

Connie Tippery

Benjamin Tomchick

Christmas Evening Prayer with Exposition and Benediction

On the Sundays of 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 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 evening, Feast of the Holy Family, at 6:30 PM.

Monthly Eucharistic Adoration

Cathedral Parish will offer our monthly adoration before the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday, January 3, from 12:30 PM until 8:00 PM. Plan ahead to make time for quiet prayer before the Sacrament of Life. Please pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life from among the members of the diocesan family. Adoration is a rich opportunity for deepening our spiritual life and our relationship with the Lord.

Sign Up at Cross Aisle

A sign-up card is available on the cross aisle table for January 3. The Church asks that a minimum of two people always be present before the Sacrament in exposition. Please sign up for your hour or half-hour before the Sacrament.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Classes Resume January 7th for Pre-K - Grade 8

Reminder that dismissal is from the alley side door throughout the winter season.

F.I.R.E. Classes for January, 2018

January 7, 2018 and January 28, 2018.

Class will be held in the Church Hall at 6:15 PM.

Christian Initiation - Inquiry Sessions

Are you interested in the Catholic Church? Do you know someone who might be interested in seeking information about our Catholic faith? Today the Cathedral Christian Initiation Team will meet in the Seton Suite at 11:00 AM with all those seeking information on the Catholic Church.

Rite of Welcoming and Acceptance

Those seeking the Easter Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist will be formally welcomed and received here at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday, February 14 at the 10:00 AM Mass.

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION Sunday, December 24, 2017 - \$7,476.00

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.

Show 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.

Christmas Season concludes with the Baptism of the Lord on Monday, January 8th. The Christmas totals of the Christmas Collection will be provided in the January 14th bulletin as the Cathedral continues to receive your generous gifts.

Weekend Retreat

The Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus invite girls in grades 7-12 to a weekend retreat, Stepping Stones to Prayer, from January 12-14, 2018. The retreat will be held at Saint Joseph Convent, 1872 Munster Road, Portage. The weekend begins Friday at 6:00 PM and ends on Sunday at 1:00 PM. Register by Wednesday, January 10 by contacting Sister Jacinta at 814-886-4459. Meals provided. Suggested donation \$35.00.

Rest in Peace

Please remember in prayer, Myra Mangiacarne who died and was buried this past week. May she rest in the peace and the love of the risen Christ; may her family be comforted in the faith.



Liturgical Reflection ...

We gaze at the Holy Family this Christmas time. We gather with our families these days of Christmas. Our attention is focused on the infant who is surrounded by love. We pray that our families be grounded in the love of the newborn Child. When faced with challenges and crises, turn to the Holy Family and seek guidance and protection. When the challenges of life seem overbearing, turn to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and find comfort. Pray for right judgement and the faith to live in harmony.

2017, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Liturgy Office, 925 South Logan Boulevard, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania 16648.

Calendars of Prizes 2018

Calendars of Prizes 2018 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 gifts that last all year! There are now less than 200 remaining Calendars to be sold. If anyone has Calendar of Prize tickets that need to be turned in, please do so. They need entered into the computer.

Volunteering at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Parish

Would you like to volunteer your time and talent to the Cathedral Parish but do not know how to obtain the mandatory state and diocesan clearances? Every employee and volunteer must fulfill all clearances needed from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown to participate in parish activities. Every parish and church-associated activity are required to meet these standards as we uphold our commitment to protecting God's children and youth. Cathedral Parish is offering assistance to fulfill all clearances at the Altoona Public Library on Saturday, January 13 from 9:00 AM through 1:00 PM. Free help to fill in the forms and to view the training films will be provided. The Parish will cover any costs needed for these required clearances. For more information, please call the Cathedral Parish Office at 944-4603 or Chris Laraia at 312-7317.