

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 3RD, 2017

May he not come suddenly and find you asleep.

We begin Advent, the beginning of the Church Year, with the same message that we heard recently near the end of the liturgical cycle. **Be watchful. Be alert.**

If we perceive Jesus as a judge who holds every fault against us, somewhat like a compiler of a “naughty or nice” list, we can be filled with anxiety and fear about his Return in Glory. If, however, we see Jesus as the Divine Physician who longs to heal us so much that he died on the cross, we can be filled with humility, contrition and gratitude for his healing. We can be ready for His glorious return.

Isaiah uses the image of God as a craftsman, a potter. **We are the clay, and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.** God gently fashions us and molds us with his own hands. He smooths away the rough edges and carefully shapes us into his image and likeness. We each have rough edges. We can pretend that it is better to hide them from God and escape his wrath. But, of course, we cannot hide anything from God. When we freely confess our failures, we invite the hand of God to touch us and fashion us and heal us.

As we begin Advent, we have a choice. We can wait for the Lord sitting in a courtroom anticipating judgment and sentencing, or we can wait in the doctor’s office seeking treatment and healing. Both of these options require one to be alert and to watch. During this season may we be honest enough to recognize our need to visit the divine doctor’s office, may we stop pretending that there is nothing wrong, or that we can take care of our sins ourselves. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the means of confronting and knowing ourselves. Everyone of us needs the healing touch of Jesus. It is the best way to be prepared for this Christmas and for the final one.

FATHER RICARDO

FATHER RICARDO’S DESK:

THE NEW PASSOVER

Behold the Lamb of God immerses us in the history of the Jewish people. From the Exodus on, animal sacrifice symbolized the concept of atonement. The Passover Lamb freed the Jews from the slavery of Egypt. The blood of the lamb on Jewish doorposts preserved them from God’s dramatic retribution. In the Mass, Jesus becomes the sacrificial victim for all the sins of the world. As we join in the Eucharistic sacrifice of Christ, our lives, our sufferings, our prayers and works are united with Christ and with His total offering.

In this prayer, we echo John the Baptist, who on seeing Jesus coming toward him, welcomed the true Lamb of God into the course of his life. We now prepare to do the same in Holy Communion.

ADVENT

The Season of Advent lasts four weeks. This year the First Sunday of Advent is December 3rd. Advent emphasizes the “double waiting” all Christians endure. We are waiting for Christmas, the Incarnation, and we are watching for Jesus to return in the Second Coming at the end of the world. To wait indicates that something is missing. Advent is a sober time of hopeful anticipation. The church suppresses certain festive elements. We don’t pray the “Gloria”, the music is less joyful, and the priest’s vestments are purple. Something is missing. That something is Christ’s presence. When the Lord is present in the midst of His people, the Church will arrive at her full feast, signified by the solemnity of the Feast of Christmas. This week emphasizes the theme: *Watch and be prepared, you do not know when the time will come.*

Each liturgical season has a symbol. The Advent Wreath reminds us of what was missing during the time between Adam and Eve’s sin and the Incarnation. This first week, we light the candle of repentance. We concentrate on penance and conversion. Repentance is the first glimmer of light in the darkness.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Advent is here, and it is a good opportunity for us to begin to plan to examine our faith life. The Sacrament of Penance enables us to make a new start and to celebrate the Christmas Season and the New Year with hearts uplifted. Beginning December 4th, **MONDAYS DURING ADVENT SEASON FROM 7-8pm.**

ANNUAL APPEAL *In Giving, We Receive*

The Bishop’s Annual Appeal supports four causes: Catholic Charities agencies; seminarian education; retired priests; and inner-city schools. Every single gift changes lives. Every gift counts!.

SAVE THE DATE

PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES AND SHRINES IN SPAIN

MAY 21-29, 2018. Ms. Anne Breslin of “Great Experiences” a Travel Agency that is used solely by the Diocese, will be here on Sunday, December 3rd after the 11 am Mass to go over the complete itinerary and any questions you may have about this pilgrimage. Anyone interested, please join us to hear about this wonderful journey.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Friday, December 8th is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a holy day of obligation. Mary was redeemed from the moment of her conception because she was “full of grace.” In the splendor of her unique holiness, she was chosen from the foundation of the world to be free from Original Sin and personal sin during her whole life. Masses will be celebrated at 8:45am and 7:30pm.

POINSETTIA SALE

A Poinsettia Sale to benefit Harvest House will be held 12/4-12/10/17. The beautiful, high quality plants as in recent years will be sold for the same prices. \$10 for 1 stem, \$15 for 2 stems. Please call Peg Behnke (973) 764-4576. Available in the church hall for pick-up 12/5 through 12/11/17.

GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree is in the church hall, As in previous years, the tree will contain symbols with the age and sizes of children in need of Christmas gifts. We will be helping ten families and fifteen children. All gifts are to be left **unwrapped under the tree by Friday, December 17th**. The gifts will be sorted and distributed on Tuesday, December 19th.

ST. PAUL'S ABBEY

St. Paul's Abbey has thousands of Christmas Trees ready to choose "n" cut, 7 days a week until December 23rd, 9am to 4pm.

THE SANCTUARY LAMPS ARE IN LOVING MEMORY OF ROSE PACIFICO REQ. BY JOHN PACIFICO and THE OFFERTORY GIFTS ARE IN LOVING MEMORY OF ANNA SANCHEZ REQ. BY THE CAWLEY FAMILY

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY DECEMBER 3
8:00am + Les Caggiano req. by His Family
9:30am + Marie and Edward McFarlane, req. by Kathy Muchka
11:00am + Anna Sanchez req. by Cawley Family
1:00pm Polish Mass

MONDAY DECEMBER 4
8:45am Intentions of Terry Grey req. by Roger & Jean Grey

TUESDAY DECEMBER 5
8:45am +Rose Pacifico 5th Anniv. req. by John Pacifico

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6
8:45am +Jennifer Young 8th Anniv. req. by Her Family

THURSDAY DECEMBER 7
8:45am + Nicholas Chiciuk 1st Anniv. req. by His Family

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8 – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION
8:45am +Andrew Van Dyke req. by Richard & Ruth Van Hoff
7:30pm For the intentions of John and Elaine Miranda

SATURDAY DECEMBER 9
8:45am +Joseph & Elizabeth McFarlane and Elizabeth Copeland req. by Kathy Muchka
5:00pm Intentions of Father Ricardo Ortega, Jr. req. by Karen Murphy

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10
8:00am + Margaret & Richard Murphy, Cathy Dignan Req. by Family
9:30am + Tom Merrill req. by Brian & Paula Kloza
11:00am + Wladyslaw Matyaszek 7th Anniv. req. by His Wife And Flig Family
1:00pm Spanish Mass

PLEASE REMEMBER AND PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH WHO REQUEST OUR PRAYERS

This Week's Events:

Coffee Sunday after all Masses

Sun 11:00am - Presentation of the 6th Grade "Gather the Children"
6-8pm Confirmation I - Hall

Mon. 7:00pm - CCD – Grade 8 - Hall

Tues. 7:00pm - CCD - Grade 7 – Hall
6:30pm - Rosary
7-8 pm - Holy Hour

Wed. 7:30pm – Choir Practice

Thur. 10:00am - Legion of Mary - Hall
6:30pm - Legion of Mary - Chapel
6:30pm - Youth Group
7:30pm - Teen Antioch

Sat. 8:45am -11:15 - CCD CLASSES – Gr. 1-6

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR PARISH. GOD BLESS YOU!

Thanksgiving Mass:	Collection	\$ 1062.00
November 26 th 2017 - 1 ST	Collection	\$ 3190.50
November 26 th 2017 2 ST	Maintenance	791.00

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

CONFESSIONS:

Saturdays 4:00 - 4:45 pm
All Mondays during Advent from 7-8 pm
By Appointment: 973-764-4457

MASSES:

Saturday Dec. 23rd (Sunday Vespers) Mass 5.00pm (as usual)

Sunday Dec. 24th (Christmas Eve)

Masses 8 am, 9.30 am, 11 am (as usual)
5:00 pm Children's Christmas Pageant.
7:30 pm Mass
Choir Prelude at 10:30 pm followed by 11:00 Mass

Christmas Day: Monday Dec. 25th
9:30 am, 11:00 am

Saturday Dec. 30th
5:00 pm Mass (as usual)

New Year's Eve – Sunday
8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am

New Year's Day - Monday
8:45 am (as usual)