



December 10, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*“Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.*

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.’”

Mark 1:2-3



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IPRF NEWS

Inter-Parish Religious Formation

Classes: Wednesday, Dec. 13, 4:30 & 6:30 PM, K-11
Classes at St. Joseph, St. Mary & CELC

Students - if you haven't already, please bring in your canned goods, personal hygiene products or blankets to class on December 13 for our Advent Service Project. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Matthew 25 News

In the name of St. Mary Parish, Matthew 25 was able to make a donation to two agencies this month.

Samaritan Counseling Center, where kids with suicide risk factors are connected with the mental health care they need.
Center for Grieving Children, which supports a child or youth after the death of a family member or friend.

Both of these agencies provided matching funds at the time we made our gift. Thank you for your contributions to the Matthew 25 outreach committee—your generosity made these donations possible.

Help decorate the church for Christmas!

Sunday, Dec. 17, 1 PM

Monday, Dec. 18, 9 AM

(big trees)



High school students: earn service hours!

Christmas Flower & Worship Fund

Our church is especially beautiful during the Christmas season. If you would like to contribute to our Christmas flower & worship environment fund, you can use the special envelope provided with your monthly envelopes, or cut out this form and return to the parish office with your contribution.

Please return by **next Sunday, December 17**, so we can include names in the insert of our Christmas bulletin.

Please print!

In memory of:

Amount: _____ Cash: _____ OR Check #: _____

Donated by:



**Baptized in water,
this precious child has been clothed in Jesus.**

Kaylee Jean, daughter of Rick & Allison Cavaiani

IT'S ALMOST TIME

The "Midwinter Makeover" project in church will begin after Christmas. Don't worry—thanks to many wonderful & dedicated volunteers, our church will be as beautifully decorated as it always is for all Christmas Masses! Starting on December 27, all Masses will take place in the Community Room while we restore paint, pews, and Stations of the Cross and improve lighting and flooring in the church. These exciting improvements to our church will maintain its history and character and prepare us for many more years to come.

Ready for Christmas?

Let the Xavier Scrip Office help you with your shopping!

Before we know it, Christmas will be here. If you have any gift card needs that we can fill, please consider purchasing scrip cards to help support your Appleton Parish. Stop by the Xavier Scrip Office at 101 E. Northland Ave. (attached to Xavier Middle School). The hours are M-F, 7:30 AM – noon. Additionally, they are open on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30-4 PM. You can also call (920) 702-5510 to place an order and they'll have it ready for you to pick up.

(The Scrip Office will be closed from Dec. 25 until Jan. 3, when we reopen at 7:30 AM).

2017 IRS Contribution Laws

We are very thankful for your financial stewardship gifts. As we approach the end of the year, please know that we are bound by IRS laws.

The IRS requires donations to be received ON or BEFORE Dec. 31, 2017 to qualify for your 2017 deductions.

Please note:

- ⇒ The parish office closes at noon on Friday, Dec. 29, 2017
- ⇒ Donations - cash or checks placed in the weekend collection (Dec. 30 & 31) will be posted to 2017
- ⇒ Checks intended for 2018 must be dated 1-1-2018 or after

In Joy & Sorrow – Pondering Together the Treasures of our Faith

Since I have heard people in conversation referring to the "four weeks of Advent," I must point out to you that this year the "fourth week of Advent" is less than twelve hours long.



The Fourth Sunday of Advent coincides with Christmas Eve, and in keeping with the Church's hope that we celebrate at Mass on both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas, you will have to do some thinking about when you will attend church. I am guessing that your family will choose not to be in Church twice

on Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve - once in the morning and once in the afternoon. There is the Saturday evening Mass on December 23, which is an anticipation Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, and only one Mass on Christmas Eve morning at 8 AM, which is an Advent Mass as well. Of course, the Masses in the afternoon and evening on Sunday are Christmas Eve Masses (4, 6:30 & 10 PM) as well as on Christmas Day morning (8:30 & 10:30 AM). Give all of this some thought and prayer!

The bottom line is that Advent will speed by really quick this year! Do take the time and make some space in your life for silence and stillness. I would offer this outline which may help you to include Scripture reading on these Advent days.

- **Enter** into the presence of the Lord. "Be still and know that I am God." Lord, your words lead me to the calmness and greatness of your presence.
- **Embrace** the precious gift of freedom. When I look at the word "freedom", it seems to create in me a feeling of awe. Yes, I am free! Thank you, Lord.
- **Pray** for a greater consciousness. At this moment, Lord, I turn my thoughts to you. I will leave aside my chores and preoccupations. I will take refreshment in your presence, Lord.

• **Turn to Sacred Scripture.** The Scriptures are a fundamental element in the spiritual life of every believer. During this Advent season, I would invite you to look to the great Prophet Isaiah, who is a messenger of hope still today. Here are some beautiful passages that you might look up and use in your prayer: Isaiah 11:1-10 (*The wolf shall be the guest of the lamb...*), Isaiah 29:17-24 (*And out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind will see...*), Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26 (*The Lord will be gracious to you when you cry out...*), Isaiah 35:1-10 (*The desert and the parched land will exult...*), Isaiah 40:1-11 (*Comfort, give comfort to my people...*), Isaiah 40:25-31 (*They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength...*), and Isaiah 45:6-8, 18, 21-25 (*Turn to me and be safe...*) Read the passage twice, even out loud if you are comfortable with that.

• **Begin to talk to Jesus** about the passage you have just read. What part of it strikes a chord in you? Perhaps the words of a friend - or some story you heard recently - will slowly rise to the surface of your consciousness. If so, does the story throw light on what the Scripture passage may be trying to say to you? At this point in your prayer, you have read, reflected and responded (to the Lord) using a passage from Scripture. One step remains, simply set aside all thoughts and prayers, and rest in the Lord. Soak up his presence in the silence and stillness!

The above process of praying with your Bible* is called *lectio divina* or divine reading. Remember these four words which begin with the letter "r" for an easy guide to *lectio divina*: READ, REFLECT, RESPOND and REST.

*Some of these suggestions have been taken from Liturgical Year from Loyola Press.com.

Thanks for taking the time to read this *In Joy and Hope*.
Father Bill +



Annual Parish Advent Project

Week 3: JOY Service opportunity

Decorate cookies in the Community Room after all Masses on Sunday, December 17. Finished cookies will be delivered to local group homes to spread joy!

Coming up next . . . Week 4: FAITH

Get a Jesse Tree ornament kit in the Marian Way and make it for your tree at home



Don't forget to add your good deeds to our Jesse Tree throughout the season of Advent!

Thanks to all who helped us spread LOVE during the second week of Advent by helping tie fleece blankets for Harbor House! Your love will warm the hearts of those who receive them.



Note: Sunday, December 24 is the Fourth Sunday of Advent as well as Christmas Eve.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

4:30 PM (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

8:00 AM (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

Christmas Eve Masses

4:00 PM, 6:30 PM, 10:00 PM

Lessons & Carols Sacred Concert 9 PM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25 (Christmas Day)

8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

Job Opening at St. Francis Convent

Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross have an opening for a part-time housekeeper (up to 20 hours/week, Fridays required). See the full job posting at

www.gbfranciscans.org. For more information, contact Jenny Majkowski at jmajkowski@gbfranciscans.org or 884-2720.

PRAYER NEEDS

Contact Luanne Witthuhn (dlaawi@gmail.com) or Anne Walkowski (830-1534) if you have a prayer need. Please remember the needs in our prayer baskets.

Contributions

Office Envelopes— \$8,135.00 EFT—\$10,634.56
Weekend— \$17,686.37
Children's Collection—\$25.50

St. Mary Weekly Calendar

December 11 (Mon)

6:30 PM Handbell Choir Practice/Choir Loft
6:30 PM Women's CRHP Meeting/L7
8:00 PM Al-Anon Meeting/L6

December 12 (Tue)

8:30 AM Mass/Chapel
11:35 AM Children's Choir Practice/McDonald St. Campus
2:00 PM Rosary & Perpetual Help Devotions/Chapel
6:00 PM Facilities Committee Meeting/Community Room
7:00 PM Finance Council Meeting/Community Room
7:00 PM Baptism Prep/L2

December 13 (Wed)

11:45 AM Children's Choir Practice/Marquette St. Campus
12:05 PM Mass
4:30 & 6:30 PM IPRF Classes
5:45 PM IPRF Children's & Youth Choir Practice/St. Anne
6:30 PM Adult Choir Practice/St. Anne Room
6:30 PM CHRPF Continuation Committee/Large Conference Room

December 14 (Thurs)

11:25 AM Youth Choir Practice (1) / Xavier Middle School
11:45 AM Youth Choir Practice (2) / Xavier Middle School
12:05 PM Mass

December 15 (Fri)

8:30 AM Mass/Chapel

December 16 (Sat)

10:00 AM Advent Inter-parish Communal Reconciliation Service
4:30 PM Mass

December 17 (Sun)

8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 AM Masses
9:15 AM RCIA/L1-3
9:30 AM Catechesis of the Good Shepherd/L4
1:00 PM Begin decorating church for Christmas
Coffee & Donuts after 8 & 9:30 AM Masses
Babysitting available during 9:30 AM Mass

PARISH ADVENT PROJECT WEEK 3: JOY

Decorate cookies after all Masses on Sunday, December 17

Weekly Mass Schedule

Mon., Dec. 11	12:05 PM	Mass at St. Joseph
Tue., Dec. 12	8:30 AM	Carol Rowland & Jeff Rowland
Wed., Dec. 13	12:05 PM	Brian McMahon
Thurs., Dec. 14	12:05 PM	Joan Brunner
Fri., Dec. 15	8:30 AM	Marvin Voissem
Sat., Dec. 16	4:30 PM	Orvil Mueller
Sun., Dec. 17	8:00 AM	Parishioners of St. Mary
	9:30 AM	Wallace & Leo Vetter
	11:00 AM	Mary Virginia Spencer

In Loving Memory

In the spirit of Christian charity, please pray for those who have lost a loved one. May fond memories comfort you during this time. If you have lost a loved one and would like to have him or her remembered in the bulletin, please call us at 739-5119.

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