

From Your Pastor

Welcome to a New Church Year! It Is Advent. Come, Lord Jesus!

In addition to the Sundays that make up Advent and the Christmas Season – and Lent and Eastertide, there are thirty-four Sundays of the Church year. Two weekends ago, we celebrated the last of those Sundays. Interestingly, rather than having the name “the Thirty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time,” the last Sunday of the Church Year is celebrated as the **Solemnity of Christ the King**. This Solemnity is a beautiful reminder that Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, is by the will of the Father the Lord and King of all creation. In the Book of Revelation Jesus identifies himself as the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the beginning and the end of all things. Saint Paul says of Jesus in his Letter to the Colossians, “All things were created through him and for him” (Col 1:16).

Today the Church celebrates the third of the **Sundays of Advent**, which has traditionally been known as *Gaudete* or “Rejoice” Sunday. One of the great joys of Catholicism lies in the multiple opportunities we have to make a new beginning in our relationship with the Lord Jesus. Every time we come to the Eucharist, we meet Christ anew, in his Word and in his Body and Blood, and we are given the grace we need to live more fully as his disciples. When I sin in my relationship with the Lord or with my neighbor, the Sacrament of Penance is always available to me – both for the forgiveness of my sins and for the grace I need to avoid sin in the future. For this we rejoice!

Advent is the season in which we prepare to celebrate Christmas, the first coming of Jesus Christ among us in Bethlehem as our Lord and Savior. It is also the season in which we are called to heighten our anticipation that the Lord will come again. The words we pray at every Eucharist take on special meaning in Advent: “We wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.” As we anticipate the Lord’s two comings, Advent is a wonderful opportunity for each of us to look as well at the

quality of our relationship with the Lord and with one another.

There is no question that while being one of the holiest times of the year for us Catholics, Advent is also one of the busiest. It is very easy to get so caught up in the activity of the season that we miss one of the great opportunities we have during the year to ask the Lord’s help in our lives. That would be a shame, because Advent is a great time for us to stop and to ask the Lord’s forgiveness for our sins, to welcome him again into our lives, and to live with the grace and peace that God wishes for us.

Confession in the Sacrament of Penance is an essential part of our life in Christ. The Sacrament of Penance is the principal way by which our sins are forgiven and we are reconciled with God and with one another. Every Saturday from 3:00–4:00 pm in the lower church, the opportunity is there for us to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance by individual confession. This Monday, December 14, at 7:00 PM, there will be a special opportunity for individual confession during our annual Advent Penance Service in the upper church. If confession in the Sacrament of Penance is something that you have not celebrated in a while, the Advent Season is the perfect opportunity for you to let it become a part again of your life in Christ. The Fathers of the Assumptionist Community across the street will be joining those of us whom you see regularly at Sunday Mass and throughout the week. Come to the Lord in the Sacrament of Penance and experience the grace of reconciliation that the Lord wants to show you as we approach Christmas. Let this Advent be a time for us to welcome that grace fully into our lives.

May our prayer this Advent be wholeheartedly that of the earliest Christian communities:

Maran atha! Come, Lord Jesus!



God bless each of you.

Mrs. Fay

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Prayers Are Requested for those who are ill, for vocations to the Priesthood and to the Consecrated Life; for married couples and for families; for the safe return home of the men and women in our military services; and for the repose of the souls of Maurice Flynn and the deceased members of our parish, our families and our benefactors.

Parish Council Voting – As announced last weekend, we will take a few minutes for the confirmation process of new members of our Parish Pastoral Council following Holy Communion at all the Masses this weekend.

Christmas Collection for Priests – The upcoming Christmas Collection supports the retirement, healthcare and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. We encourage you to please give generously to assist our priests who have devoted their lives to faithfully serving God and the faithful of the Archdiocese of Boston. On behalf of all of our priests, thank you in advance for your generosity.

Handicap Accessibility to the Church – We are happy to announce that the door to the lower church on Arlington Street, which is nearest the Market Street intersection, has now been equipped to open with the push of a button in order to provide greater assistance to our brothers and sisters with handicaps.

Our Beautiful Lady – If you have noticed that the Statue of Our Lady of the Presentation in front of the church is looking a little brighter, take a moment to express your thanks to Ann LaRosee, Dick Marques and Dick's son, Dan, for the great cleaning work they did. Thank you very much, Ann, Dick and Dan!

Treasures from the Holy Land – As has been their custom for the past few years, Fuad Mukarker and his assistants will be here at the Masses this weekend with beautiful items from the Holy Land for sale. Many of the items are from Bethlehem and the proceeds from their sale very much assists our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land.

St. Columbkille School Cantata will be held on Tuesday, December 22 at 7:00 pm in the upper church. All are welcome. The children have been working very hard to present this wonderful Christmas program. Please come and show your support for them.

Envelopes For Christmas Flowers are available at the doors of the church. The flowers and wreaths used to decorate the church for Christmas are a big expense so anything you could give will be appreciated. Please print the names of those to be remembered on the envelopes.

The Giving Tree is underway. The tags on the tree are requests for Christmas gifts for children in our parish and for teenage mothers and their babies at the Bridge Eliot Shelter. Please take a tag, purchase the gift requested and return the gift unwrapped to the tree with the tag attached by Sunday, December 20. Thank you for your generosity and concern for those who could use a little help this Christmas Season.

Advent Penance Service – There will be an Advent Penance Service this Monday evening, December 14, at 7:00 PM in the upper church. The Service will last only an hour. If you have not yet celebrated the Sacrament of Penance during Advent in preparation for Christmas, this is a wonderful opportunity. As always, there will be a number of priests from outside the Parish who will be available for individual Confessions. Consider bringing a friend who might have been away from the Church for a while. God's forgiveness and grace is both necessary and amazing.

PARISH GIVING

Parish Offertory (Dec. 5 – Dec. 6): \$3,979

Grand Annual (to date): \$43,140

Christmas Flowers (to date): \$805

St. Vincent de Paul (Dec. 5 – Dec. 6): \$121.15

Thank You for Your Generosity

DECEMBER 13, 2009

**A Sermon on John the Baptist
by St. Augustine (d. 430)**

John is the voice, but the Lord is *the Word* who was *in the beginning*. John is the voice that lasts for a time; from the beginning Christ is the Word who lives forever.

Take away the word, the meaning, and what is the voice? Where there is no understanding, there is only a meaningless sound. The voice without the word strikes the ear but does not build up the heart.

However, let us observe what happens when we first seek to build up our hearts. When I think about what I am going to say, the word or message is already in my heart. When I want to speak to you, I look for a way to share with your heart what is already in mine...

When the word has been conveyed to you, does not the sound seem to say: The word *ought to grow, and I should diminish?* The sound of the voice has made itself heard in the service of the word, and has gone away, as though it were saying: *My joy is complete.* Let us hold on to the word; we must not lose the word conceived inwardly in our hearts.

Do you need proof that the voice passes away but the divine Word remains? Where is John's baptism today? It served its purpose, and it went away. Now it is Christ's baptism that we celebrate. It is in Christ that we all believe; we hope for salvation in him. This is the message the voice cried out...

What does *prepare the way* mean, if not "pray well"? What does *prepare the way* mean, if not "be humble in your thoughts"? We should take our lesson from John the Baptist. He is thought to be the Christ; he declares he is not what they think. He does not take advantage of their mistake to further his own glory.

If he had said, "I am the Christ," you can imagine how readily he would have been believed, since they believed he was the Christ even before he spoke. But he did not say it; he acknowledged what he was. He pointed out clearly who he was; he humbled himself.

He saw where his salvation lay. He understood that he was a lamp, and his fear was that it might be blown out by the wind of pride.

DECEMBER 13, 2009

A PRAYER FOR OUR PRIESTS

We thank you, God our Father,
for those who have responded
to your call to priestly ministry.
Accept this prayer we offer on their behalf:

Fill your priests
with the sure knowledge of your love.
Open their hearts to the power
and consolation of the Holy Spirit.
Lead them to new depths of union with your Son.
Increase in them profound faith
in the Sacraments they celebrate
as they nourish, strengthen and heal us.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant that these, your priests,
may inspire us to strive for holiness
by the power of their example,
as men of prayer who ponder your word
and follow your will.

O Mary, Mother of Christ and our mother,
guard with your maternal care these chosen ones,
so dear to the Heart of your Son.
Intercede for our priests that,
offering the Sacrifice of your Son,
they may be conformed more each day
to the image of your Son,
our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Celebrant: *St. John Vianney, universal patron of priests.*

R.: *Pray for us and our priests.*

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ORACIÓN POR NUESTROS SACERDOTES

Te damos gracias, Dios nuestro Padre,
por aquellos que han respondido
a tu llamado para el ministerio sacerdotal.
Acepta esta oración que ofrecemos en su nombre.

Llena a tus sacerdotes
con la seguridad de conocer tu amor.
Abre sus corazones al poder
y consuelo del Espíritu Santo,
condúcelos a nuevas profundidades
de unión con tu Hijo.

Llénalos de profunda fe
en los sacramentos que ellos celebran,
que nos alientan, nos fortalecen y nos sanan.

Señor Jesucristo, haz que estos tus sacerdotes,
puedan inspirarnos a luchar por la santidad
con el poder de su ejemplo,
como hombres de oración que escuchan tu palabra
y siguen tu voluntad.

O María, Madre de Cristo y madre nuestra,
protege con tu cuidado maternal a estos llamados
tan queridos al Corazón de tu Hijo.

Intercede para que nuestros sacerdotes,
que al ofrecer el sacrificio de tu Hijo,
puedan parecerse cada día más a tu Hijo,
nuestro Señor y Salvador Jesucristo. Amén

Celebr.: *San Juan Vianney, patrón universal de los sacerdotes.*

R.: *Ora por nosotros y por nuestros sacerdotes*

Masses for the Week

Sunday, Dec. 13 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

(Sat.) 4:00 pm Joseph Zambello, 5th Ann.
7:30 am Lucia Gomez, Mem.
9:30 am Carmela & Amelia Antonucci, Mem.
11:15 am Joseph & Mary Connell, Mem.
12:45 pm Our Lady of Guadalupe
5:00 pm *Missa pro Populo*

Mon. 7:00 am Alan Temple, Mem.

Tue. 7:00 am Johanna Cecilia Murphy, Mem.

Wed. 7:00 am Bernadette Canney, Mem.

Thu. 7:00 am Special Intention

Fri. 7:00 am Jack Ashcraft, Mem.

Sat. 7:00 am Catherine & David Murphy, Mem.

Sunday, Dec. 20 – 4th Sunday of Advent

(Sat.) 4:00 pm Helen & Arthur Lang, Mem.
7:30 am *Missa pro Populo*
9:30 am Julia & Timothy O'Leary &
Thomas Moynihan, Mem.
11:15 am Ruth Dineen, 14th Ann.
12:45 pm Agustin Buñuel & Canovas Family, Mem
5:00 pm Joseph Mullen, 4th Ann.

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FILENAME: **03-0479.03b09**

PHONE NUMBER: **617-782-5774**

FAX NUMBER: **617-782-7283**

EDITOR/ CONTACT: **Patricia**

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Comments:
