

December 17, 2017

ADVENT

Third Sunday of Advent



Rejoice

On this *Gaudete* (Rejoice) Sunday the Church aspires to be one with the prophet Isaiah who rejoices *heartily in the Lord* and with John the Baptist who identifies himself as *the voice of one crying out in the desert*. John the Baptist will diminish as Jesus arrives on the scene. This underlies the role of the prophet as a self-effacing witness for the Lord.

On this Sunday we are aware that Christ has already come in the flesh. We are celebrating and rejoicing because we have already been clothed in baptism. We celebrate now and prepare for the coming feasts.



Flowers for the altar this weekend are donated by Brianna & Hank Janecka in memory of Clayton Janecka on the occasion of their wedding.

MASS INTENTIONS



Saturday, December 23

4:30 p.m. Frank Hajek, Jr.

Sunday, December 24

8:00 a.m. Our Parish Family

10:00 p.m. The Benefactors of the Parish

Monday, December 25

8:00 a.m. The Welfare of All Parishioners

Full, Conscious and Active Participation in the Liturgy



Next weekend is *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*. Prepare for the liturgy by reflecting on these passages from your Bible.

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 89

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

2017 DIOCESAN SERVICES APPEAL

2017 Assessment	\$7,670.00
Contributions So Far	\$ 5,055.00
Amount Yet to be Contributed	\$ 2,615.00

We thank all those who have contributed towards our D.S.A. assessment so far. With your generous donations we should be able to pay off the remaining debt to the bishop before year's end. We are counting on all who have not yet contributed to the fund so far to do their part.

St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Matıcka Praha



We thank the following for their recent contributions:

Tracy & Cameron King, Cedar Park, TX - \$25

*Melvin Hutzler, Bulverde, TX - \$200
(pledged payment)*

*In Memory of Helen Migl Stanzel - \$300
Dorothy & Robert Huebel, Sugar Land, TX*

To make a tax deductible donation towards *St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Matıcka Praha* contact Fr. Gabriel at 361-596-4674.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK



Rediscovering the Joy Within

The major theme today is again the mystery of John the Baptist as the prophetic figure whose life and ministry points the way to Jesus. John the Baptist is the one whose person and preaching continues to prepare us for the coming of the Lord. John's role is preparatory; he explains this when the officials question his reasons for baptizing. He states that the one for whom he prepares is already in the midst of the people but they do not recognize him.

Although John does not speak specifically of joy, he was keenly aware that sin and joy do not coexist in the human heart. For that reason, he preached repentance and called sinners to confession of their sins and conversion "make straight the way of the Lord," cried John as he deferred to Christ as the Light, as the Messiah, as the One who is to come. Making straight God's way means making room for God's gift of joy, and with the gift of joy comes the gift of peace. Therefore, rather than squander our lives, our efforts and energy searching in all the wrong places for peace in our lives, let us quiet ourselves and look within to rediscover the joy that God has placed there. That is what Advent is about!

REFLECTION

The God of Joy Comes To Save Us

Midway through Advent, the prophet Isaiah, St. Paul and the Gospel according to John team up to remind us that the news of God's coming among us is glad news. When the priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked John who he was, John said: "No, I am not the messiah, not Elijah, not a prophet. I am but a voice; I am a witness to the Light and the herald of One who is to come." This clarification of John and Jesus' roles served to ease the confusion on the part of those who believed that John the Baptist was the messiah.

During this season of Advent John reminds us of our role in this world; to point away from ourselves, to direct others to Christ. There are ample opportunities for exercising a John-like role by deflecting attention away from ourselves so that the focus of faith and hope might be fully and directly on Jesus. Advent is also the time for praying that God himself by the coming of his Son may help us to reduce the distance that exists between the little that we are and all that God has in store for us. Jesus' coming brings light into every darkened corner of mind and heart. The light represents the very life and love of God.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



December 18 – Mary C. Jasek

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



December 22 – Virginia & Dennis Olsovsky

VOTIVE CANDLE INTENTIONS

The Catholic custom of lighting candles is rooted in Church teaching that Christ is the Light of the World. Candles serve as an outward sign of the light of faith burning in our hearts. They are our silent sentinels lifting up our prayer intentions to the Lord.



Remember to pray for the following intentions:

For Financial Help

For Rene Chagnon

For Frances Martinez

For Cure For Diabetes

For Hilda & Lloyd Boudloche

In Memory of Roger H. Johnson

In Thanksgiving For God's Many Blessings

For Good Health (Spiritual & Mental) of Family

In thanksgiving For New Granddaughter & All

Grandchildren

– Votive Candle Intentions to be continued

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS BULLETIN BOARD



Gaudete! Rejoice!

The Third Sunday of Advent is sometimes called the *Gaudete* Sunday because the first word of the entrance antiphon in Latin is *gaudete*, which means rejoice. The antiphon is taken from Philippians 4:4, Paul's warm and loving letter to the community he founded in Philippi. It doesn't sound very elegant to call this day "Rejoice Sunday" but that's the idea. It is a day of joy. The use of rose vestments and a rose candle on the Advent wreath underlines this day's special character.



Advent / Christmas Schedule

Dec. 18 – Cookies To The Homebound

*Dec. 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent (Morning Mass)
– Christmas Eve (Evening Mass)*

*Dec. 24 & 25 – Annual Christmas Collection For the
Poor & Needy*

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day (Christmas Day Mass)



Christmas Altar Flowers Needed: You are encouraged to make a donation. Extra Christmas Flower envelopes are available in church.

Communion to the Homebound: All homebound parishioners who want to receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day are asked to call Pat Masek.

2018 Religious Calendars have been placed at the church entrance. One calendar per family please.

Christmas Cookies for the Homebound: Pat Masek and Fr. Gabriel will visit the homebound of the Parish tomorrow, December 18.

Annual Christmas Collection for the Poor: A Special Collection for the Poor will be taken up at all the Christmas Masses. You may use the attached envelope for this purpose. Drop the envelope in the collection basket or mail any time during the month of December.

Need a stocking stuffer or Christmas Gift? Praha Cookbooks make wonderful Christmas gifts. If you are in need of a cookbook or 2, please contact Kathleen Svatek after church or call at 214-280-7828.

Congratulations and God's blessing to
Sophie Mae & Quintin Allen Pecena
who were recently united in the sacrament
of Holy Matrimony here at St. Mary's.

