



Padre's Corner

December 3, 2017
First Sunday of Advent

"The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story, and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he vowed to make it." This inspirational quotation on reality checks was penned by Scottish author J.M. Barrie (1860-1937) in "The Little Minister." Groucho Marx (1890-1977) opined these comedic thoughts on seeking reality: "If you find it hard to laugh at yourself, I would be happy to do it for you... I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it." We live in times, like always of course, that require a balance of faith and realistic vision with humor and spiritual detachment. God offers us in the context of human events the opportunity to take His plan for us seriously again. When life is too easygoing or devoid of sufferings, we tend to get soft and blurry-eyed about that plan. We may partake of a heaven-on-earth approach, rather than a daily regiment of prayerfulness and taking the role of God seriously in our decisions and aspirations.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 against America brought many to their knees in church pews and temples plus mosques because of the fears of continued moments of horror. The military metaphor would be "there is no such thing as an atheist in a foxhole." The "Great Depression" commencing in 1929 had those same religious impacts, as the masses begged for help and grace from Almighty God. Sometimes the metamorphosis (transformation) is because of personal setbacks involving relationships, health, finances, or confusion. If someone, as a common example, is diagnosed with a fatal illness earthy attachments lose their hold while thoughts of divinity and the afterlife quickly settle inwards.

The communal dimensions cited above should also have that impact as well. When the hurricane season of late August wrecked havoc in the Caribbean, including Cuba (just a few weeks after visiting that communist country), our news alerts reminded us all that the United States was on that same radar screen. First came Texas, before a major earthquake in Mexico. In North Korea, nuclear bomb tests were shaking planet earth. Any connections? Then much of Florida the second weekend of September was rocked. One particular area hit hard, with waves up to ten feet, was Key West. Back in March when I was there, six months previously, those streets were lined with business activity and cultural engagement. I prayed in a beautiful church that could have passed as either Catholic or Episcopal. One would think the looming storms would shake everybody out of spiritual complacency or lethargy. One young man of 27, in the South Beach area of Miami-Dade County, thought otherwise. He planned to get "wasted" as the hurricane struck. "We have vodka, beer, rum, whiskey, champagne for the ladies. We are going to get completely drunk, five guys and four girls - you never know what will happen." One thing I do know. These individuals need a deep reality check, and were I married with children they would not be the friends I would wish for them.

Another reality we Catholics, trying to be faithful, must accept is the changing dynamics of Catholicism throughout the world and in particular within the Archdiocese of New York. When a group of priests and deacons gathered on September 7 at the Catholic Charities offices in Middletown, I was struck by some raw numbers a few of the other pastors were citing. At one parish, a typical weekly collection was \$1800 average with perhaps a total of 140 combined attending the weekend Masses. At another the numbers were slightly better, with \$3000 collected and 170 attending. Considering declining numbers of priests, attendees, and collections projected over the next decade will these parishes and many others still be around in 2027? In 2022?

When I did a wedding rehearsal on September 8 at a former assignment, Annunciation in the Crestwood section of Yonkers, I took note of their numbers the previous weekend combined with the merged-in Our Lady of Fatima. Attendance at both parishes counted was 1,090 and a collection of \$14,930. Mind you, a very affluent area of Westchester County with many generous parishioners. That same Labor Day weekend for Saint Francis of Assisi/Sacred Heart: combined attendance of 1,049 and a collection of \$13,269. The City of Newburgh is in a very different economic category from the Westchester numbers cited above, bordering on Scarsdale. My point is you are incredibly generous parishioners, helping me and the other priests and staff to provide the sacraments and message of Jesus and His Church to you in a promising future. With the immigrant base surrounding our two parishes, and a belief that we will continue to attract new parishioners, we will serve you in good times as well as bad. God bless Saint Francis of Assisi and Sacred Heart.

Father Bill

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. Dec. 4

7:00am Vocations
Noon Special Intention
By Mary King

Tues. Dec. 5

7:00am St. Francis Parish
Noon Catherine Cory
By Ann Hardy

Wed. Dec. 6

7:00am Bella Menzies
By Daughter Doris Therrien
Noon Rosemary C. Hughes
By Eileen Dietz

Thur. Dec. 7

7:00am Ferdinand Miller
By Helen & Marion Miller
Noon Costello & Hughes Families
By Eileen Dietz
5:30pm Adam & Kathryn Rehrey
By Nick & Helene Stagliano

Fri. Dec. 8

7:00am Christopher J, Massi
By Mom, Dad & Jennifer
Noon Joseph & Gaetana Di Palma
By Paula & John O'Connell
Richard Langle
By Family

Sat. Dec. 9

Noon Robert Vance
(1st Anniv)
By Louse & Tom Gibney
4:30pm Catherine Aiello
100th Birthday
By Rosanna & Carl
Nancy Pullar
By Jim & Donna Pullar

Sun. Dec.10

8:30am Ann Kenny
By Nick & Helene Stagliano
Jennifer Finnegan Jones
By Pat & Joe Grimm
11:00am "Tillie" Elizabeth Talerico
(20th Anniv)
By Daughter Carole & Johnny
John & Shirley Green
By Children & Grandchildren



WEEKLY COLLECTON

Nov 18-19, 2017
1st Collection \$6,153.00
2nd Collection 1,860.00
TOTAL \$ 8,013.00

MASS ATTENDANCE

Nov 18-19, 2017
4:30pm 185
8:30am 186
11:00am 205
1:30pm 86
TOTAL 662

WEEKLY COLLECTON

Nov 25-26, 2017
1st Collection \$ 5,530.00
2nd Collection 1,748.00
TOTAL \$ 7,278.00

MASS ATTENDANCE

Nov 25-26, 2017
4:30pm 235
8:30am 136
11:00am 165
1:30pm 75
TOTAL 611



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Dec 8 - Holy Day of Obligation

MASSES AT ST. FRANCIS

Vigil Thursday, December 7th

5:30pm

Friday, December 8th

7:00am 12noon

MASSES AT SACRED HEART

No Vigil Mass

Friday, December 8th

9:00am 5:30pm

TODAY
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading: Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7

In this straightforward psalm, the people acknowledge their sinful ways, yet plead that their Creator might reveal himself to them. They ask God to remember, not their sins, but that "We are all the work of your hands."

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Paul explains to the Corinthians that they are specially favored by God who has sent his only Son to them. He reminds us all that it was through God's grace that we have been called to kinship with Christ.

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37

Just as a servant watching over the master's house does not know when he will return, we do not know the hour of the Second Coming. Mark reminds us of the warning from Jesus to always be on guard, for we know not the day nor the hour.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday

Is 2:1-5; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday

Is 11:1-10; Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday

Is 25:6-10a; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday

Is 26:1-6; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday

Gn 3:9-15, 20; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

Saturday

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8



PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Vincenza Secor, Aaron Stagliano, Marie Wiejak, Ashley Barco, Agnes Casey, Rose Marie Michalowski, George Vecchio Jr, Carol Brown, Luzia Araujo, Celio Thomaz, Rosalie Nogay, Rose Jurik, Robert & Helen Osborn, Manuel DiNapoli, Rachael Neugebauer, Maureen Kelly, James R. Purpura, Jane Pustola, Frances Dolan, Parker, Jane Holloway, Donna Delconte, Joan Ponesse, Jim Taylor, Marilyn Lennox, Bruno Marchatta, Anne McClellan, Louis Arbia, Dottie Rodriguez, Maureen Sullivan, Frank D'amario, Amanda Keane, Tom (Manay) Conroy, Gertrude Poland, Rita Froehlich, Brian Scott Monahan, Chelsea Dunderdale, Mary Hollenbeck, Donnie Ruckdeschel, Patrick Comyns, John Marullo, Jaddon Johnson, Rina & Richard Bozzone, Rebecca Pacella, Lena Biasini Zullo, Pam Kunert, Janet Coiteux, Vincent Mc Parkland and Family, Jozef Froniewski, Teresa Centeno, Bobbi Hull, Angie Monaco, Emily Cooley, Frank Celeste, Amy Finnegan, Brian Hanrahan, Toni Loparco Shepardson, Donald (Leed) Zubawicz, Louise McHugh, Pat Alexander, Alex Galant, Evelyn Kawula, Taylor Fogel and Jake Tigar



Sister Virginia along with the ladies of "The Women's Craft Project" will hold a pre-Christmas sale of their one of a kind handcrafted necklaces and bracelets after Masses

December 2nd & 3rd – Sacred Heart Church
 December 9th & 10th – St. Francis Church



Food Pantry Hours:
 Friday 9:00am to 12noon
 Saturday 9:00am to 12noon

In your goodness please bring **CANNED FRUIT** to Church next weekend to be distributed to the less fortunate in our area thru our Food Pantry.

If you are involved in a church and/or Newburgh School program and your child needs **volunteer hours**, the Food Pantry will coordinate service hours through **Curt Bourdage** at **845-863-6504**. All students need to pre-register with Curt Bourdage before showing up at the pantry, please.

ST. FRANCIS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec 6th - Senior Christmas Party - 12:30 O'Connor Hall

Dec 8th - Youth Group - 6:30pm O'Connor Hall

Dec 8th - Holy Day of Obligation



An outreach program sponsored by "Mary 's Hope" is having a Christmas party for Newburgh children and needs help wrapping Christmas gifts. If you have a few hours to help this cause and like to wrap gifts please come to St. Mary's Gym on Friday, December 8th between 9:00am and 5:00pm.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

Our Giving Tree is located in the back of the church. Please pick an angel (or angels) and bring your unwrapped gift that corresponds to the information on the angel and place it under the tree. We will be sharing your donations with the clients of the Deacon Jack Seymour Food Pantry at St. Francis on Friday and Saturday, **December 8th & 9th** and **15th & 16th**. The total number of children registered ages 1-12 at the pantry is 813. Our need is great and, as always, we appreciate your generosity.

*"Draw near to God,
 and he will draw near to you"*

James 4:8



CONGRATULATIONS TO.....

Mrs. Joann Howe the November winner of **\$168.00** in our Monthly 50/50 Raffle. Be sure your envelope is in for our next drawing for December.



Sacred Heart and St. Francis are hosting a joint Advent Christmas Concert with their combined choirs n Sunday, December 17th at 3:00pm in Sacred Heart Church. Light refreshments will be served in the chapel following the concert. In lieu of admission we ask that you bring non-perishable food items to be donated to the Deacon Jack Seymour Food Pantry at St. Francis Church.



CALLING ALLCHILDREN WHO WANT TO SING FOR CHRISTMAS

Practice for the Children's Christmas Choir singing at the **4:30 pm Christmas Eve Mass** will begin on Tuesday, December 5th. There will be a total of 3 practices: Dec 5, Dec 12 and Dec 19. Practice times start at 6:00pm and ends around 7:00pm. Please call or text Desiree Abbruscato, our Music Director, at 845-541-0769 or e-mail her at abbruscator@aol.com for more information.



The **St. Francis Senior Group** invites you to join our Christmas celebration at our next meeting on **Wednesday, December 6th**. If you wish to attend, you are asked to bring a food dish that would feed about 6 people as well as an unwrapped gift for a child that will be donated to the Food Pantry. The meeting is held at **12:30pm** after the 12noon Mass. All are welcomed to attend to enjoy some holiday spirit.

WANTED...MARY'S HOPE an outreach program, run by Suzanna Campora, delivers bags of groceries to shut-ins twice a month. They are in need of used **brown paper grocery bags with handles** (like Adams) for their deliveries. If you have any to donate please drop them off at them at the rectory or leave them at the back of the church. Please mark them for *Mary's Hope*.



**Here comes Santa Claus!!!
Here comes Santa Claus!!!
Right to Sacred Heart School!!!
Please join the 8th Grade Class for their
Annual Breakfast with Santa
Sunday, December 10, 2017**

**8:00am - 12:30pm
Sacred Heart School
@ St. Joseph's Campus
148 Windsor Highway, New Windsor, NY
Please come and enjoy great food, holiday raffles,
awesome vendors and pictures with Santa Claus!
\$6 per person or \$30 for a family up to 6, \$2 each
additional person over (in advance). \$8 per person
at the door. For questions please contact Tara at
845-625-3187**

SCANDINAVIA & ST. PETERSBURG CRUISE

On Board the NCL Norwegian Breakaway
September 21- October 3, 2018

Hosted By
Father Bill Damroth



Copenhagen (Denmark), Warnemunde (Germany),
Tallinn (Estonia), St. Petersburg (Russia),
Helsinki (Finland), Stockholm (Sweden)

Starting at \$3,049 per person including airfare.
includes roundtrip air from New York, C0ruise taxes, port
charges and transfers between airport/hotel/pier.

BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR PARISH TODAY

**__YES! I want to register as a member of St. Francis
of Assisi Parish and receive offertory envelopes.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

**Fill out and drop in the Offertory Collection or mail
to St. Francis of Assisi Church, 145 Benkard Avenue
Newburgh, NY 12550.....and Welcome.**