

December 2, 2018
First Sunday of Advent

From the Desk of Fr. Anthony C. Ekanem, MSP:

This first Sunday of Advent reminds us that Christmas is just around the corner. Advent is the beginning of a new liturgical Church Year, and the beginning of another cycle of Scriptural reading (C) primarily from St Luke Gospel. We are wearing purple vestment this period and also prayerfully preparing to celebrate the coming of Christ among us two millennia ago.

Remember, the early Christians believed that the Second coming was near, and would be preceded by cosmic change. But today, Jesus in the Gospel urged the disciples to await the Lord's coming with confidence, vigilance and prayer. By that He meant, prayerfully examine your conduct like Saint Paul is reminding Thessalonians in our second reading, "Conduct yourselves to please God." Explore your deepest longings and allow them surface and be purified. The purpose of Advent season is to help us fix what is broken within us with the grace and mercy of God. Today's first reading points to the first coming of Christ, while the Gospel deals with the second Coming of Christ.

There is an old tradition that speaks about the three coming of Christ:

- In history as infant coming in humility – (Christmas)
- In mystery as the Son of Man coming into our heart (Sacrament)
- In His Second Coming as Lord and Savior in majesty (Parousia)

The first 3 weeks of Advent focuses on the second coming and the last week liturgically focuses on the immediate preparation for Christmas by prayer and fasting to receive the Holy Eucharist and also examine our hearts in preparation to receive God's mercy.

The Gospel of St Luke puts it very beautifully, "Be Vigilant at all time and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man." There is a great need to wait in patient and joyful expectation when He says, "stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand."

Next Saturday, December 8 is a holy day of obligation, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of the United States and also our Parish feast day with an Installation Ceremony at 6:00 pm. Though this solemnity falls on Saturday, it still remains a holy day of obligation. For us here, we shall have 12:05 pm or 6:00 pm Mass to fulfill that obligation. In essence, the Church is asking us to attend Mass two times this weekend including our regular Sunday Mass. Come and us join celebrate the 170 years of the existence of our Church here in Yonkers.

Pope Francis: "Let us ask the Lord for the grace of being generous, so that our hearts may be opened and we may become kinder"

Collection : Last Sunday, November 25, 2018 our weekly collection was \$3,336.

2nd Collection: Last Sunday November 25th our 2nd collection for the upkeep of our Organ was \$1,250. The 2nd collection this Sunday is our Christmas Flower Collection. Next Sunday the 2nd collection is the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Christmas Flowers: The Christmas Flower Collection helps to defray the cost of decorating our altars for Christmas and the names on the back of your envelopes will be placed on a Christmas plaque in the rear of the church in memory of your loved ones.

- Large Poinsettia Plants: \$50.00
- Medium Poinsettia Plants: \$25.00
- Small Poinsettia Plants: \$20.00

Food Collection: This Sunday is our monthly food collection for the needy in our community. As always thank you for your generosity.

Parish Notice: Please be aware that on Saturday, December 8, 2018 at 6:00 pm we at St. Mary's will have the Mass of Installation for Fr. Anthony C. Ekanem, MSP as the new Pastor of St. Mary's. There will only be one Mass that Saturday and it will be co-celebrated by Fr. Anthony, Fr. Felino and Fr. Fares. All are welcome to attend the Mass of Installation and a small reception following the Mass at the Parish Hall.

Parish Membership: Every family or single adult to be considered active members of St. Mary's must be properly registered in the parish, receiving and regularly using the weekly donation envelopes. Only in this way can the parish issue documents attesting to parish membership and Catholic practice, e.g. a letter to be a Godparent or Sponsor. Also if you have moved and still want to continue as a parishioner of St. Mary's please stop by the office with your new address so that we may make the appropriate changes. Thank You

December 2018:

8th: Religious Education Classes 9:20 to 11:00 am

15th: Religious Education Classes 9:20 to 11:00 am

22nd: NO Religious Education Classes Christmas Recess

29th: NO Religious Education Classes Christmas Recess

Mass Schedule for the week of
December 2, 2018 to December 9, 2018

Mass are daily at 8:15 and 12:05 in English and in Spanish on Thursdays at 7:00pm

Below are the Special Intentions for this week

Sunday, December 2, 2018:

7:30 am- For the Parishioners

9:00 am- German Tareo
Lilia Talero

11:00 am- Celio Rodrigues
Eduardo & Alejandra Rodrigues

Thursday, December 6, 2018:

7:00 pm- Gaudelio Galindo & Diburcio Tovar
Torivio Tovar

Friday, December 7, 2018:

7:00 pm— Sacred Heart of Jesus

Saturday, December 8, 2018:

6:00 pm — Mass of Installation for Fr. Anthony

Sunday, December 9, 2018:

7:30 am- For the Parishioners

9:00 am- Joaquim Neto
Rita Lopez

11:00 am- John Marques
Michael Rodrigues

Marriages: In order to provide sufficient time for the Marriage Preparation Course, please call the parish office and ask to speak with the pastor at least six months in advance of the wedding.