



Second Sunday of Advent —December 10, 2017

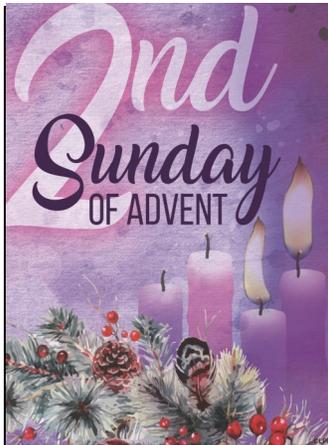
SAINT MARY'S & SAINT ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC CHURCHES

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VICTOR DVORAK –DEACON



“John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin.”

While working on his famous painting, *“The Last Supper”*, Leonardo da Vinci had an argument with a certain man. He lashed out against the fellow with bitter words and threatening gestures. When the argument was over, da Vinci went back to his canvas, where he was working on the face of Jesus. He could not make one stroke. At last he realized what the trouble was. He put down his brush, found the man he had offended, and asked for his forgiveness. He returned to his studio and calmly continued painting the face of Jesus.

This lesson from the life of Leonardo da Vinci challenges each of us during the Advent season. Who do I need to forgive? Repentance preached by John the Baptist covers many sins, including sins of anger, bitterness, and a non-forgiving spirit. As we prepare to welcome the Prince of Peace at Christmas, could we welcome His gift of peace into our hearts? Could we do it today?

Why Return to Confession?

Next Sunday, December 17th, from 3:00-4:00 pm at Saint Mary's Church, you are invited to an Advent Penance Service, where two confessors (Fr. Stephen Folorunso and myself) will be present to offer Jesus' mercy in the Sacrament of Penance.

The question many Catholics ask is, “Why should I go to Confession?” There are many important reasons to have recourse to this great sacrament of God's mercy and charity. Consider some of the following: 1) The presence of sin can easily lead to depression and anxiety.

- 2) Cleansing your soul makes you more like Christ and people see that in you and they want to be around you.
- 3) Mortal sin, unconfessed, “causes exclusion from Christ's Kingdom and the eternal death of hell. For our freedom has the power to make choices forever, with no turning back” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1861).
- 4) As they leave the confessional, people smile a smile of freedom.
- 5) Because love means having to say sorry to the Lord, whom we love dearly.
- 6) You will grow in humility, sincerity, and self-knowledge.
- 7) Saint Mother of Theresa of Calcutta and Pope Saint John Paul II went often. If they needed this sacrament, what about us?
- 8) Hoping to convert on your deathbed? That's not very likely. Most likely, you will die as you lived.
- 9) It is itself a serious sin to receive Holy Communion if you have serious sin on your soul and have not asked for forgiveness in Confession.
- 10) Don't be scared to death of Confession. Instead, be scared of death without Confession.
- 11) Be strong. Face your sins, deal with them, and move on.
- 12) Make sure there are no unpleasant surprises at your particular judgement or at the Final Judgment.
- 13) The priest will listen to your sins and will never tell a soul, on pain of losing his soul. Priests even learn to forget what they hear.

MASS & ADORATION SCHEDULE

Monday, December 11

7:30 AM SM—Communion Service

Tuesday, December 12

7:30 AM SM —+Laura Grundhauser by Cely & Robert Stagl

6:00 PM SE—Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

7:00 PM SE—+Vi Martin by Brad & Lena Greff

Wednesday, December 13

5:00 PM SM— Rosary & Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions

5:00 PM SM— Mason Urlacher by Dan & Betty Frank

Thursday, December 14

7:30AM SM— Eugenia Stagl & Richard Stagl by Friends

Friday, December 15

7:30AM SM— +Bridget Urlacher by Cely & Robert Stagl

12PM-3PM SM— Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday, December 16

8:30 AM SM—+Andrew Dosch by Larry Tinjum

5:00 PM SM - +Dorlyn Held by Rob & Amy Rayhorn

Sunday, December 17

8:30AM SE +Vi Martin by Pat & Kathy Mangan

10:30AM SM-Pro Populo

Please Keep in Your Prayers:

Harvey Herberholz, Patty Frank, Andy Prokop, Henley Johnson, Duane Grundhauser, Pete Schaefer, Alice Candrian, Jeff Hewson, Marilyn Jacobs, Leo Heck, Ross Thomas, Keith Herold, Arlene Rohr, Brenda Barton, Elven Kaufman, Suzette Printz, Jackie Deplanche, Cely Stagl, Linda Reisenauer, Rose Krebs (SE), Russ Lefor, Lori Lefor, Herbert Emmil, Reggie Gentz, Cindy Martin, Tim Theil, Howard Schiwal, Theresa Decker, Alyssa Binstock, Yvonne Fettig, Dale Reindel, Kim Kuhn, Don Miller, Shari Obritsch, Charlotte Krebs, Eugenia Stagl, Bart Rohan, Katherine Splichal, Bonnie (Krebs) Dick, Dorothy Kohl, Colleen Churchill, Thresiamma (Fr. Biju's mom)

Assisted Living and Nursing Home Residents: Archie Jalbert,

Benny Benz, Joan Binstock, Joe Wandler, Sylvia Koppinger, Mike Urlacher, Leona Gordon, Ardelle Kovar, Joan Madler, Cecelia Jung, Donnella Koppinger, Marilyn Jeske, Willie Emmil, Frances Heick, Dale Schroeder

Our Deceased Loved Ones +Carla Rohan+Alvin Rotering +Jeanne Kovar +Bridget Urlacher, +Laura Grundhauser, +Florian Urlacher +Paul Schiwal, + LeRoy Jacobs +Victor Roller +John Herold, + Viola Martin + Viola Neprash +Maggie Schoch, +Rose Lefor, + Mary Ficek + June Stockert +Adeline Bogner +Vern Honeymann, +Kasper Heidt, +Caroline Pechtl, +Jacob Frank,

A Point to Ponder

Sometimes the only means of transportation is a leap of faith.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ **Scheffield St. Pius Club** Card Party Dec. 10 at 2pm, meeting following.
- ◆ **SE church cleaning & crib setup** will be Tuesday December 12th after 7:00pm Mass. Everyone is welcome to help.
- ◆ **Help wish Josie Heidt a Happy 95th Birthday** Saturday December 16 at the New England Senior Center 1-4pm. Come for the cake & coffee, stay for the snacks & socializing! Please no gifts, however, 4 ply light colored acrylic yarn, will gladly be accepted with a warm heart & grateful hugs.
- ◆ **Marriage Encounter Jan. 5-7** in Mandan register at applications@ndwwme.org

St. Mary's Liturgical Assignments December 16 & 17

MINISTRY	Saturday 5 PM	Sunday 10:30AM
Lector	Lori Fitterer	Susan Schmitt
Mass Servers	Maddie R./Molly R.	Mark F./John W.
Eucharistic Ministers	Mary F./Leonard G.	Betty H./Larry H.
Gifts	Jim Krebs	Marc & Ann Wolf
Rosary Leader	Kathy Gartner	Ann Wandler
Greeters	Connie Jalbert	Victor & Lynn Dvorak
Homebound Minister	David & Vivian H.	David & Vivian H.

Collection Report St. Mary's December 2 & 3

Adult		Youth
\$ 1137.00	Envelopes	\$29.83
\$ 48.00	Loose Plate	\$
\$ 1185.00	Total	\$
\$ 1185.00	Month	\$ 29.83

St. Elizabeth's Liturgical Assignments December 17

Lector	Dustin K.
Mass Servers	Elizabeth
Eucharistic Ministers	Darrell & Dorita
Gifts	Bea & Nita
Greeters	Michele & Curt
Ushers	Darrell & Dustin Kuhn

Collection Report St. Elizabeth's November 19 & 26

Adult		Youth
\$ 785.00	Envelopes	\$ 24.00
\$ 361.16	Loose Plate	\$
\$ 1170.16	Total	\$
\$ 1170.16	Month	\$ 24.00

Death and Dying, A Christian Perspective

What are the stages of the grieving process?

When a loved one faces a terminal illness, we are mindful of the stages of dying and we patiently stand beside them and support them as they struggle through these stages. On the other hand, when someone is grieving the death of a loved one, we assume that within a short period of time, they will overcome their grief and quickly get back to a “normal life”. Such an understanding is misguided, because it does not consider the stages of grief which the bereaved must face.

With the death of a loved one, their family and friends must first grieve the primary loss of their loved one. This grief is centered upon the numbing reality that a loved one has indeed died: the pronouncement of death from a medical official; planning the funeral liturgy; choosing a burial plot in the cemetery; closing the casket before the funeral liturgy (the last viewing); celebrating the funeral liturgy; and the placement of the casket into the ground at the cemetery. Primary loss is coming to terms with the reality that my loved one has ceased to exist as a living person on earth. Grief is acute with primary loss, for we know that the body of the loved one, once the recipient of hugs, kisses, and other signs of affection, is now resting in the elements of the earth . . . awaiting resurrection.

Perhaps more difficult in the grieving process is the secondary loss of death, which is longer in duration as well. This grief comes from the aspects of life which were familiar and welcome when the deceased were alive, but now have come to an end. For example, waking up in the morning and reaching over to your spouse in bed . . . only to find that space empty; setting the table for your family, but setting one less place; wanting to call a parent with good news, but then remembering that there is no one to receive the call; or knowing that your wedding anniversary approaches, but once again remembering that you will be alone on that day. Secondary loss is grieved for some time, because often with death, we slowly come to the realization of the many ways the deceased brought joy and meaning into our lives, in the numerous things they said or did on behalf of others. Their roles in family life are especially grieved, which is compounded by the difficulty of trying to assume some of these roles. They are often a hard act to follow.

As our loved ones face these stages of grief, we must stand beside them and let them grieve at their own pace. In wanting them to “get back to normal”, we should recognize that we may in fact be denying our own grief. We want the bereaved to part of our own lives as they once were and so we try to rush them through the grieving process. We are hurting by their temporary departure from the familiar routines of our life, so we try to arrest their grieving. Be mindful of this hidden selfish motive and instead walk with the bereaved on their journey of grief. It is really a lifetime process of healing a wound . . . a wound which in fact never really heals, but is made bearable because of the prayers and support of people who care.

Preparing God’s House for Christmas

As you know, Christmas this year follows right on the heels of the last Sunday of Advent. In fact, it is the same day! That means we don’t have much time to decorate for Christmas, as we have to respect the season of Advent and can’t complete the decorating for Christmas until we complete the season of Advent.

Perhaps there is a *via media* . . . a middle way. One way is to have our church decorators put up the Christmas trees on the Feast of Saint Lucy (December 13th) or shortly afterwards. The Church actually permits this, as there is a blessing for Christmas trees on the Feast of Saint Lucy in the Book of Blessings. We can also, ahead of Christmas, set up the Creche, withholding the figures of the Holy Family and the Angel until Christmas. With these two elements completed, then after Mass on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we just have to set up poinsettias, candles, and cloth. We ask that you please stay after Mass to assist with this effort. Many hands make light work.

For Saint Mary’s parishioners, we ask that you come to a deep cleaning of the church on Saturday, December 16th, from 12:30pm-3:30 pm. A lot will be involved in this effort, so please be generous in the gift of your time. Unless you have something really important going on that day, like Christmas baking for the pastor, we ask that you please be present.

God bless you as we make our churches beautiful for the celebration of our Savior’s birth. He was once reduced to being born in a crude stable; let’s give him the glorious welcome that He truly deserves.

A Great Day for our Parish

Thank you to everyone who made the Saint Elizabeth’s Church Dinner such a great success this past Sunday. The meals were wonderful; the raffle was a great success; there were awesome live auction items; and the set-up and clean-up crews had lots of helpers. May God bless all who were involved in this effort and those who came and enjoyed the day. It was a great day for fellowship, food, and fun. There was, sadly, one downside to the day . . . Fr. Gary only won once at BINGO. It was heartbreaking for him, but his spirits could always be uplifted with homemade fruitcake, using copious amounts of rum or brandy (hint, hint).

On the Lighter Side

How many televangelists does it take to change a lightbulb? Answer: Only one, but for the light to continue burning, you need to send in your cheque today.