

ISSUE NO. 69

16 DECEMBER 2018

3rd Sunday OF ADVENT

Cathedral
WEEKLY

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GAUDETE! | FR. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE
THE GREATEST GIFT | KATIE PRICE
WHY ALPHA? | VICKI COMPTON

Cathedral WEEKLY

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MASS TIMES: SAT 4PM, SUN. 7AM, 10AM, 5PM
WEEKDAY MASSES: MON. thru FRI. 7AM, 5:15PM and SAT. 8AM
RECONCILIATION (CONFESSIONS): MON-FRI 4:15PM- 5PM, SAT. 9AM-10AM, 2:30PM-3:30PM, and SUN. 4PM-4:45PM


Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House
Rector

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE UPCOMING WEEK

Monday 17 December

7 AM - Mamie Unser (Friend)

5:15 PM - Jack Stewart (Lou Ann & Carl Corrigan)

Tuesday 18 December

7 AM - Shirley Logan (Friend)

5:15 PM - Joseph Klein (Andrew & Cheryl Klein)

Wednesday 19 December

7 AM - Barb McGrath (Katherine McGrath)

5:15 PM - Frank Coffey (family)

Thursday 20 December

7 AM - Dr. John Dietrich (Lou Ann & Carl Corrigan)

5:15 PM - Mary Ann Midden (Denise Drennan)

Friday 21 December

7 AM - Mary Kay Butler Harrelson (Bev & Larry Hoffman)

5:15 PM - Paul Lannan (Bill & Wilma Sinnott)

Saturday 22 December

8 AM - Helene O'Shea (Bud O'Shea Family)

4 PM - Margaret Graham (Tom McGee)

Sunday 23 December

7 AM - John & Edith Bakalar (John Busciacco)

5 PM - For the People

10 AM - Thomas Tobin (Mary Sestak)

Like the Cathedral Weekly? Share this copy with a friend!



Gaudete!

As we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent, we encounter a twice-unique liturgical reality: the use of the color rose. Now, you may be saying: "Father, its pink;" well, it may be pink anywhere else in the world but at Mass on the Third Sunday of Advent and on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, it's rose! Liturgically, rose is the color of

subdued joy and its optional use, an option that we make use of at the Cathedral, is meant to highlight that we are over half-way through our Advent journey.

adversity and hardship throughout his life, but he did so with a joyful spirit. Why and how? Because the grace of God was central to his life, because his hope and trust were in God's promises, both for this life and for the life to come.

On this Third Sunday of Advent, we are invited, commanded actually (*Gaudete* is in the imperative form) to be joyful and there are three main reasons for that. First, as previously stated, we are nearing the end of our Advent journey, which will give way to the joy of Christmas. Second, we can be confident in our Lord's promise to return in glory. His return will be the total establishment of his kingdom and the final destruction of the reign of sin and death. Third, the Lord is already present. There is an old Latin saying that says *vocatus atque non vocatus Deus*



The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called "*Gaudete* Sunday," literally "Be Joyful Sunday." What do we mean by joy? There is an important distinction to make between joy and happiness. Happiness is a mood and moods, like Mid-West weather, can change from one moment to the next. Joy is not a mood but rather it is a state of being and states of being and moods can both exist together. Of course joy and happiness go together, but joy can also exist in grief and sorrow, in the face of adversity, and with any other mood or circumstance.

I am currently reading a biography about Pope St. John Paul II called *Witness to Hope*, written by George Weigel just before the year 2000. The life of our late Holy Father is a prime example of a life lived in joy. As a citizen, priest, and bishop of Poland, and then as the Bishop of Rome, Pope St. John Paul II faced great

aderit, meaning "called or not called God is present." The Lord is always in our midst. Sinners though we are, the Lord is never far, he never forsakes us, and that is reason enough to be joyful today and everyday.

We are a people in progress. God is not finished with us. We face challenges and adversity and life does not always go the way we want it to, but we have the love of God and the Lord reminds us that his grace is sufficient and that the fullness of his glory has yet to be revealed. So be joyful, always!

Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.

STEWARDSHIP



Stewardship Activity

Stewardship of Time

Despite being busy this time of year, try to make every effort to pray and eat dinner together as a family. Have your kids lead the prayer.

Stewardship of Talent

This season is a great time to volunteer. Contact the Parish Offices for more information!

Stewardship of Treasure- December 8th & 9th

Envelopes: \$5,996.40

Loose: \$3,516.62

Maintenance: \$175.00

Total: \$9,688.02

November EFT (\$17, 504.45)

Sacraments

Are you looking for sacramental information? Please contact the Parish Offices at 522-3342.

Scripture Questions

First Reading: ZEP 3:14-18A

The prophet Zephaniah was active during the reign of King Josiah (640-609 B.C.), just prior to fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. He was in many ways a prophet of doom, yet today's prophesies are filled with hope for a new beginning. As a person of faith, how do you find hope in difficult situations?

Second Reading: PHIL 4:4-7

St. Paul's letter to the Philippians is often called a "letter of joy." Today's reading offers a prime example of Paul's spiritual happiness. Who are the people in your faith community that model spiritual joy?

Gospel Reading: LK 3:10-18

John the Baptist challenges the crowds, tax collectors, and soldiers to live a righteous and honorable life as a way to prepare for the coming of the Lord. In what way is this message a challenging spiritual exercise today?



The Greatest Gift

"It's the pink week! It's the pink week!" I exclaimed jumping up and down. I don't think my parents ever witnessed me being so excited to go to Mass. At my home parish in Peoria, we had children process forward with the candles before Mass, and the "pink week" was when I always volunteered. I remember as a child being very excited about this week. Not

only was pink my favorite color, but I figured once we got to the pink week, it was only a short week until Christmas. And, what kid wouldn't be excited about that? Little did I know at the time, this week marks great joy and excitement which transcends the presents under the tree.

Now I know the color is rose, not pink. I would have concerned looks made at me from colleagues by referring to the color as pink, now that I am an adult. However, I still have that child-like joy and anticipation about this week. Something so big, so profound, so moving is about to enter into our lives. Not a gift under the tree, but a gift in our hearts. A gift that can transform us; a gift that can move us. If we unwrap the gift, accept it, acknowledge the goodness and joy it brings, this gift will move mountains. Any hurdle we encounter, any challenge that seems too big, this gift will help lift us and carry us through every-time. This gift is unlimited and inexhaustible. This gift is Jesus. The gift of Him entering into our lives and transforming us is the greatest gift we can anticipate. In Bishop Barron's homily of this Gospel he says, *"He will affect something in those who he invades, raising them to a level that no philosopher, moral reformer or prophet ever dreamed of. Jesus is not simply one more prophet but the incarnate Son of God. A bearer of the divine life, this life that cannot even in principle be earned, achieved, or merited, it can only be received as a gift."* Focus on this phrase with me, it

can only be received as a gift. Jesus freely gives himself, all of Him, to those who receive Him. We need to be open, eagerly anticipating how He can *invade* us and transform us into disciples.

I feel like we are witnessing a crisis of faith in our church at this moment. I follow many Catholic news agencies, bloggers, and influencers on social media that seem to offer the doom and gloom of our times. Articles regarding low Mass attendance, suffering parish finances, the rise of the "nones," low sacramental participation, weddings on the beach, the list goes on and on. If we were ever to find a time to anticipate this great gift, my goodness, we need to eagerly anticipate it now. Each of us is called to receive this gift and allow Him to invade our lives. Like all invasions, they spread. This is exactly what we need. An invasion. An invasion of Jesus transforming ourselves into disciples who are brave, bold and holy. We need an invasion to transform us into strong witnesses of the Gospel; stewards not just in believing but through our actions. Stewards who are inviting, welcoming, and hospitable. Stewards who are willing to challenge and be challenged. We have to have an invasion into our hearts and the hearts of others.

The time is now. If you have a family member who has been away from the church, invite them next week. If you have not received Confession in awhile, receive it. If you have been questioning your faith, meet with us. If you are fulfilled in your faith, pass it on.

As I watch my two twins grow too quickly before my eyes, I hope and pray that they encounter this gift. It is a gift that I cannot purchase for them, but one in which I share with them. Let us each pray that we can open our hearts to being transformed by His grace and be bold in sharing this gift with others.

Katie Price is the Coordinator for Stewardship at the Cathedral. She can be reached at kprice@cathedral.dio.org.



Why Alpha?

Those of us who have been hanging around the Church for a few decades have noticed a disturbing trend: fewer people are in the pews. Fewer couples are getting married in the Church and fewer parents are baptizing their children. How has this happened and what are we going to do about it? There are

many reasons for the decline in faith and participation in parish life, but I think much of it boils down to the fact that many people have not had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, despite devout parents who took them to Mass and sent them to Catholic schools or religious ed.

Too many of us have thought a relationship with the Church was the same as a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Statistics show that most Catholics do not believe a personal relationship with God or Jesus Christ is even possible, and few Catholics ever speak about their relationship with Christ to another person! But the Church is not the same as Jesus Christ. And a Christian cannot be a disciple without a relationship with Jesus.

Our recent scandalous history has made it easy for some to walk away from the Church. But those of us who have felt the loving presence of an attentive God or who have encountered Christ in the Sacraments cannot easily walk away. Those of us who remain have the responsibility for reversing the trend. We must speak of Jesus to others!

We must tell our great stories of answered prayer and redemption from sin in a way that invites others to their own experiences of Christ in His Church. We must find ways to introduce people to Jesus Christ, and Alpha is one way for us to do this.

I converted to Catholicism in 2011 and Alpha interested me because

I thought it might challenge my belief system, and it sounded fun. The course did help me rethink some topics, but mostly I developed a stronger social

network. Before Alpha, I went to mass and knew very few people. Now when attending, I have more people that I am acquainted with and have made a few new friends. I have experience with facilitation, and since Alpha was such a fun time, I decided that I would offer to volunteer at a table as a group helper.

~Leza Ulrich



Alpha is a series of sessions that explore the basics of Christianity in a way that makes faith relevant to modern life. Each session starts with a meal, because food has a way of bringing people together and creating community. After the meal

is a video talk on an aspect of Christianity like "Who is Jesus?" or "How Can I Have Faith?". Finally, after the video, participants have a chance to share their thoughts and ideas on the topic through discussion in an honest, friendly and open environment.

For a people unused to evangelization, Alpha is a tool we can employ to help others begin a relationship with Christ in the context of the Catholic Church.

explore

life
faith
meaning

Alpha

Looking for more information?

Please contact
Vicki Compton at vcompton@cathedral.dio.org or at
 522-3342.

spicathedral.org/alpha/

DISCIPLESHIP



Alpha is highly relational and deeply dependent on the Holy Spirit to guide both the hosts and guests to an experience of God. At the end of the Alpha series, guests are invited to continue to explore and deepen their relationship with Christ by being involved in RCIA or other faith formation opportunities at the Cathedral.

So, Why Alpha? Because we need to do something different, something evangelizing, something that can help us grow disciples! Evangelization is the task of every Christian disciple, and we need volunteers to plan and cook meals, serve as table hosts, and do the clean up. We need you to help launch the next Alpha in January. To volunteer contact Vicki Compton at vcompton@cathedral.dio.org or at 522-3342.



I've been attending mass at Cathedral off and on for 20 years and this year became a registered parishioner. Alpha was my first opportunity to get to know people from the church at a deeper level. Over 12 weeks I grew closer to my

table members by sharing knowledge, insights, laughter, tears, gifts, food, and plans for friendship in the future. I didn't want Alpha to end, so am happy it will be offered twice a year at Cathedral. Watching the inspiring videos and discussing them helped me understand myself as a spiritual being and articulate my relationship with God. This program is for everyone regardless of where they're at in life. It gave me a new meaning of church as an inclusive, rather than exclusive, place. I'm grateful to serve and be served in this ongoing program.

~Mary Frances

"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ."

Pope Francis

Alpha epitomizes this very quote from the Pope. In a safe, hospitable environment, you can find Jesus. No matter where you are in your life, this 12 week course will take you as far or farther in your journey to have that personal relationship. At each session, through video and discussion we are led toward a deeper understanding of just who this Jesus is and how He can become a part of our lives. During this past summer, I was part of the hospitality crew; we greeted everyone who came making each one feel welcome and prepared food that we shared.

There is no better way to get to know someone than thru food and conversation. I meet people I would have never met and shared my own concerns and desires about how to be more open to Jesus. I felt safe and secure sitting around a table that I would be heard and understood. I ask that you consider coming and seeing for yourself-over 50 people took a chance at our first Cathedral Alpha and came. It may well be the beginning of that encounter that the Pope encourages us to have.

~Bev Smith



Sharing the Gospel

How can you show you love God? Instead of keeping all of your clothes and food, share some with people who don't have any. Be happy and thankful for all God has given you. When you love God more than money, you'll be happy to share.

LK 3:10-18

Let Us Pray

Dear God,

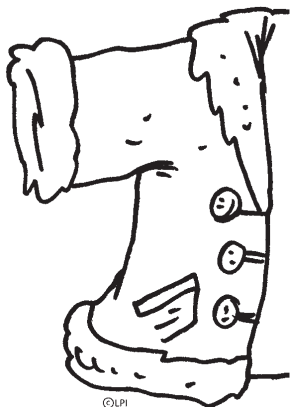
Help me to share happily with others. Help me to realize that when I help others, I am pleasing to you and answering my call to be your disciple.

Amen.



Puzzle

Complete the picture.



©LPI



Mission for the Week

The next time you go grocery shopping with your parents, ask if you can pick out some foods to share with the poor. As a family, talk about how thankful you are for the many ways God takes care of you.

PUZZLE GRAPHIC: C009Adv3_gg8.tif / MISSION HEADING: ggmission.tif



Growing with the GOSPEL

My Church,
My Family and Me

Luke 3:10-18 ■ 3rd Sunday of Advent

CYCLE C



Read the Gospel and Color



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TEXT: C009Adv3_gg2nd3rd.txt

COLORING GRAPHIC: C009Adv3_gg5.tif

Name _____