

ISSUE NO. 67

2 DECEMBER 2018

1st Sunday OF ADVENT



Cathedral
WEEKLY

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Cathedral WEEKLY

THE MOST REVEREND THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI
NINTH BISHOP
OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

THE VERY REVEREND CHRISTOPHER A. HOUSE, V.J.
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PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND MICHAEL FRIEDEL
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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!

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE UPCOMING WEEK



Very Reverend Christopher A. House
Rector

Monday 3 December

7 AM - Mary Ann Midden (William Midden)

5:15 PM - Special Intention for Biacna (Doris Drago)

Tuesday 4 December

7 AM - Shirley Logan (Carl & Lou Ann Corrigan)

5:15 PM - Puring Garde (Family)

Wednesday 5 December

7 AM - Martha Havey (Carl & Lou Ann Corrigan)

5:15 PM - Andrew McGee (Tom McGee)

Thursday 6 December

7 AM - Barb McGrath (Friends)

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

Friday 7 December

7 AM - Peter Harris (John Harris)

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

Saturday 8 December

8 AM - Patria & Rufino Gotanco (Joe & Hati Uy)

4 PM - Dunham-Call Families (Helen & Katie Call)

Sunday 9 December

7 AM - For the People

5 PM - Mr. & Mrs. Gene Barish, Sr. (Family)

10 AM - Charles & Mercedes Nesbitt (Kathy Frank)

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Watch and Pray

This weekend the church year begins anew as we begin the holy season of Advent, a name derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “the coming.” This holy season looks to the two comings of Christ; first, we look forward to our Lord’s return in glory at the end of time, and second, beginning December 17th, we look

back remembering that our Lord came to us in time to be one with us in all things but sin. While it may not have the same depth of austerity as Lent, Advent is a penitential season where the words of the prophets echo to us from ages past to prepare a way for the Lord in our hearts and lives.



Even though the readings of Advent follow a three-year cycle, with Luke being this year’s primary Gospel, each of the four Sundays has its own consistent theme with its readings. The first Sunday gives us the theme of “Watch and Pray.” We may be tempted to focus on the dark imagery that is given us in Luke’s Gospel for this Sunday that speaks of Jesus’s return at the end of time, but once again we have to ask is it necessary to fear the justice of God? If we want to make life all about us and not care about our responsibilities to both God and neighbor then yes,

fear the justice of God, but for those who strive to live a life pleasing to God, sinners though we are, the justice of God will result in salvation for those who earnestly seek the Lord.

I know that this time of year is a busy time for many of us, but I encourage you to not get swept away in the commotion. Advent is a beautiful season and even though it is penitential (thus the use of the color violet), it also possesses a subdued joy and peace. I encourage you to make use of this season and set aside some time for yourself with the Lord. May every nation, home, and heart make room for Christ, the Prince of Peace.

This coming Saturday, December 8th, is the Solemnity of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, patroness of our nation, diocese, and cathedral. This is a holy day of obligation. Normally holy days that fall on a Saturday have their obligation to attend Mass lifted but this is not the case for the Immaculate Conception due to her patronage of our nation. Because it is a weekend, we will



maintain our normal Mass schedule but not have a noon Mass on Saturday. The obligation to attend Mass for both the holy day and the First Sunday of Advent can be done by attending two Masses in one of the following ways: Friday evening/Saturday evening, Friday evening/any time on Sunday, Saturday morning/Saturday evening, or Saturday morning/any time Sunday; however, one cannot go to Mass on Saturday morning or Saturday evening and have it count for both. You can also attend Mass Saturday evening and any time on Sunday since the Mass of Saturday evening is still on December 8th, even though the prayers and the readings will be for the First Sunday of Advent.

I know that this makes some wrinkle their brow and it is an anomaly in liturgical and canon law, like when Christmas fell on Monday last year and the question of Sunday obligation and the Christmas obligation. In short, being asked to attend Mass twice in a span of a few days will not harm anyone ☺. Blessings to you and yours for joyous and peace-filled Advent!

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

Have young ones in your family? Add an Advent/faith based book to your bedtime stories!

Stewardship of Talent

Do you have any special family traditions during Advent? Think about sharing your voice by caroling or visiting the homebound or sick.

Stewardship of Treasure- November 24th & 25th

Envelopes: \$5,305.75

Loose: \$2,871.43

Maintenance: \$270.00

Total: \$8,447.18

October EFT (\$17,501.20)

Sacraments

Please help us celebrate the blessed union of Mr. & Mrs. Clayton Slayback and the baptism of Willow Marie DeSena into the Catholic faith. Looking for sacramental information? Please contact the Parish Offices at 522-3342.

Scripture Questions

First Reading: JER 33:14-16

Around the year 600 B.C., the prophet Jeremiah offered a message of hope to the people of Israel as they were facing deportation and exile into Babylon. Jeremiah speaks of God's fidelity to His people. In what ways do you experience God's commitment to your life and well-being?

Second Reading: 1 THES 3:12—4:2

St. Paul stressed to the Christians in Thessalonica the importance of having one's perspective and behavior focused on the return of Christ. How does the Second Coming of Christ impact your behavior as a believing Christian?

Gospel Reading: LK 21:25-28, 34-36

Jesus warns his disciples to be attentive about events that will be associated with the end times. How would you evaluate your own readiness for the return of the Son of Man?



Everyday Stewardship

Waiting is not always so easy. If you lack patience, like me, you probably want whatever is going to happen to just happen already. I remember

waiting on the births of my children. There was the time I sat with my dying father in the hospital. One year, we waited to see if our oldest child got into the college of his choice, or any college at all, which was nerve-wracking.

So, to make the time pass more easily, and because it is prudent and wise, we make preparations. We put together nurseries, go over last will and testaments, and look through endless college mailings. Then, when the event finally happens or our fate is unveiled, the preparation ends. Either you have prepared well or you didn't.

Unlike events in our lives that only happen once, we have been through Advent many times before. Even though this is the case, when Christmas arrives many of us will think we missed it again, and next year will be the year we really get into Advent. Of

course, there is no promise of next year. What if you knew this was your last Advent ever?

I once read a book about how to live your life as if you only had one year to live. The author said that doing this provides incentive for a real commitment to living life to its fullest. You notice things for the first time. You make plans that you always put off. You tell people what you always wanted to say.

I hope all who read this have many wonderful years ahead of them. However, let's approach this Advent like it is our last. I bet Christmas will seem that much sweeter. And who knows, we may find a new and improved way to live all year long.



Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS is the Director of Parish Community and Engagement for LPI, Inc. He has a BA in theology from DeSales University and a MTS from Duke Divinity School.



Christians Can't Just Love Their Neighbor

Recently, the Pew Research Center came out with a study saying that the majority of Americans believe that *it is not necessary to believe in God* to be moral and have good values. A 2011 study on the question reflected that 49 percent believed that it was not necessary, while in 2017—only six years later—that number shifted to nearly 56 percent. I found it most interesting that these numbers were not only influenced by the increase of those who are atheist and irreligious; the numbers had also risen amongst believers—Protestant and Catholic.

The outcome of this study begs the questions: What is morality really all about? Is it just arbitrary and made up by society? Is morality just about being a good person? Or is it about something deeper? If there is no God, then who defines what is a “good person” or the characteristics of “good moral values”?

Those who would subscribe to the irrelevance of God for the moral life may also hold—not necessarily, but probably—a generally less demanding personal moral responsibility. Some of the same people may say something along the lines of, “Well I haven’t killed anyone... so I am a pretty good person.” While it is certainly good that murder is considered a moral evil, it is hardly the only requirement.

What would our answer be to the question of God’s relevance to the moral life?

As a Christian people who come together every Sunday, our presence together says that acknowledging the existence of God and having a relationship with him is important. Our coming together to worship—even though we often fail to be the best we can be and even though we don’t find deep fulfillment in our world—says that we have come together to encounter the God that can change everything. Our communal prayer as a Christian people helps to show that it is not only loving others that is necessary, because in first loving God, we come to not only *love others but love them as fully as possible*.

In Mark 12:28B-34, we hear of a story that speaks to the question of the relationship between morality and the belief in God. In the story, a man approaches Jesus and asks him about the moral life: “What is the first of the commandments?” Essentially, “How should I act and how should I be as a person?” Jesus answers, “*The first is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself*” (emphasis added).

In other words, morality flows from our love of God! While one is not more important than the other—loving God or others is not mutually exclusive—there is a right order in which they should

develop. Morality is not just about arbitrary laws, but about the relationships of love that we have with both God and others. Morality is about the law of the heart, the law of love. Since God is love, God and our moral lives are thus at the heart of who we are and who we are called to be. Yet, as shown in the Pew study, oftentimes we want to reverse the teaching of Jesus. We want to love our neighbor...and then show our love for God if it will end up proving beneficial.

Certainly, there are people in our lives whom we may personally know to live morally upright lives even though they do not believe in God. That, however, does not mean that those values didn’t come from the truths that religion reveals and proclaims. Many who say that belief in God is not necessary for morality take for granted that the whole of Western civilization was founded on the principles of Christianity.

One of these fundamental teachings that is taken for granted is Christianity’s deep and intrinsic understanding of human dignity: that each human life is sacred. Our God did not just create us as blobs of flesh, blood, and brain. He created us uniquely in his own image and likeness. We are called to a radical love of others because of this inherent dignity.

Even if someone may not intellectually believe in God, I think their moral uprightness of selflessness and charity nonetheless point to his existence. Without God, the divine source of reality, from where would come this intrinsic, sacred dignity? We act as moral persons because deep down we know that each person is created by God, that each person is another Christ before us. *We cannot love God fully without loving our neighbor, and we cannot love our neighbor fully without loving God.*

As Christians, are we adding or subtracting to the conclusion of the Pew study? Our witness can either greatly help or hurt society’s understanding of the intimate relationship that exists between the love of God and love of our neighbor. Do we show that our first love of God directly impacts love of our neighbor in the Church parking lot after Mass; in the grandstands of our sporting events; in our internet browsing; or in the hallways of our schools? Our relationship and love of God can never be separated or follow after love of others.

Lastly, I think the Church’s Feast of All Saints completely contradicts the outcome of the Pew study. Each one of us is called not just to be a “good person” or to live a mediocre moral life, but to love radically—to be a saint. And who were the saints? The saints were men and women who knew God and loved others radically because of it. Their love of others was never separated from their love of God.

As I was thinking and praying about this study I thought about St. Mother Teresa. One story from her life that I came across beautifully illuminates her supreme love of God.

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One day, Mother Teresa took in a woman off the streets of Calcutta. Her body was a mess of open sores infested with bugs. Mother Teresa patiently bathed her, cleaning and dressing her wounds.

The woman never stopped shrieking insults and threats at her. Mother Teresa only smiled.

Finally, the woman snarled, "Sister, why are you doing this? Not everyone behaves like you. Who taught you?"

She replied simply, "My God taught me." When the woman asked who this god was, Mother Teresa kissed her on the forehead and said: "You know my God. My God is called love."

Deacon David Stavarz is a transitional deacon for the Diocese of Cleveland. He is a graduate of Borromeo College Seminary and is currently finishing his formation at St. Mary Graduate Seminary, in Cleveland, Ohio.



25 Tips for a More Spiritual Advent

There's something very special about the first Sunday of Advent — singing the familiar Advent hymns and lighting the first Advent candle. I always feel a thrill of anticipation that Christmas is just around the corner.

This year, I'll be celebrating Christmas in The Gambia, a small west African country, where I'm spending the winter helping my husband run his tourist lodge. So, my prep had to start a little earlier than in previous years, and I actually found it hard to get into the Christmas spirit.

In the end, this extra time gave me the opportunity to concentrate on the true meaning of Advent, a time of waiting and preparation and a time to consider more deeply the miracle of the Incarnation.

So, this year, I'm going to focus on celebrating this season of preparation with patience and attention. I hope these ideas will help you experience Advent to its fullest.

Read to feed your soul

I'm being very intentional about what I'm reading this Advent and taking a break from my usual fare of novels and biographies to concentrate on books that feed my soul. A book of Advent meditations like Paula Gooder's "The Meaning Is in the Waiting" opens my mind to new and broader ideas about Advent. There are plenty of other options to choose from: "The Advent of Christ: Scripture Reflections to Prepare for Christmas" or "Sacred Reading for Advent and Christmas 2017-2018," by the Apostleship of Prayer, the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.

And instead of following your favorite source for news and entertainment, turn to more spiritual inspiration online like Busted Halo, Creighton University's Praying Advent website, or this blog post from the Rev. Dr. James A. Kowalski of the Church of St. John the Divine in New York City.

Meditate on being patient

This year, I want to focus more on the spiritual meaning of Advent, on the significance of waiting actively in anticipation of Christ's birth. I've found it's easy to get caught up with the endless preparations for Christmas, so I want to slow down, devote time to meditation, and deepen my understanding of the mystery of Christ's Incarnation.

Each morning, I'll be spending time with a series of Advent meditations. There are many Advent meditation books available, including "Waiting for Christmas" by Fr. Richard Rohr or "Watch for the Light" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and others. You could also use a YouTube meditation like this one from Pope Francis. Follow a mini-study course like Stephen Cottrell's "Do Nothing Christmas Is Coming" or use Busted Halo's Advent Surprise Calendar with daily inspiration and challenges for a more spiritual Advent season.

Pray daily

I know I need God's help to slow down and wait with patience — I'm not naturally a patient person! Using the thoughts and ideas I've read as a basis for my prayers, I can ask for God's help to see how he is breaking into my life, and pray for others who need his help and healing at this time of year. I also like to use this "Prayer for Embracing the Wait and Patience of Advent" to help express my thoughts.

Reach out to others

While Advent is a time for inner reflection, focusing solely on ourselves tempts us to neglect our call to be good neighbors. St. James spoke very directly about how our faith must ultimately result in action: "Faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Turning our inward Advent reflections into outward actions shows that God is truly working in our lives.

This Advent, I'm planning to show God's love to others in a practical way by donating to Send a Cow, a charity that provides farm animals and tools to families in Africa and Lend With Care, another that offers microloans to people in developing countries. Other ways to reach out include sending gifts to those serving overseas, volunteering at a homeless shelter, or inviting a student who's away from home to share Christmas with you.

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Plan with intention

Sometimes, the endless tasks on our to-do list can end up consuming our time and attention, making it all but impossible to focus on our spiritual life. With a little intention, we can learn to focus on God as we do these necessary tasks by praying for the recipients of each gift we wrap, mulling over something we've read as we stir the cookie batter, or making a mental list of the things we're grateful for while standing in a long line.

I'm hoping that by cultivating a spirit of patience while anticipating the celebration of Christ's coming, I'll rediscover the true meaning of Advent this year.

Elizabeth Manneh is a freelance writer, sharing her time between the UK and The Gambia, West Africa. This article is used with permission from Busted Halo and can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2zhfZ4I>

Sharing the Gospel

One day Jesus will come back to take us home to live with him in heaven. So when scary things happen around us, we do not need to be afraid. We can stand up tall, because we

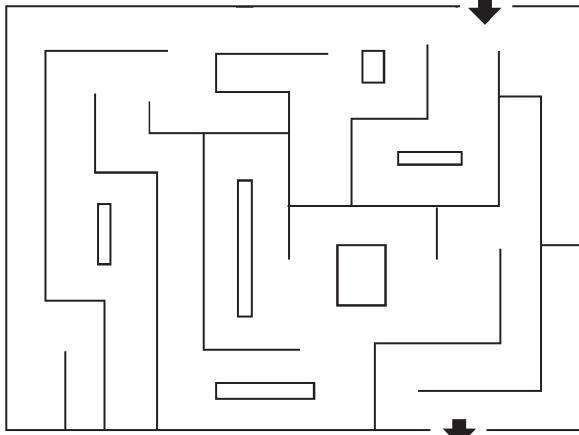
Let Us Pray

Dear God,
When I am afraid, help me to be brave and trust in you. I know heaven will be wonderful.
Amen



Puzzle

Help this child find the path to God.



Mission for the Week

Write down one thing that scares you. Tell God about it, and ask him to help you to be brave.

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Growing with the
GOSPEL

My Church,
My Family and Me

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36 ■ 1st Sunday of Advent

CYCLE C



Read the Gospel and Color



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