

Second Sunday of Advent



News You Can Use...from Fr. Steve

Advent Thoughts and Actions

1. Why we are waiting...The Spiritual tone of Advent is "waiting," which explains, perhaps, why Advent never catches on with many of us. Waiting is not a popular pastime among us who inhabit the instant gratification culture. But there are very poignant examples among us of persons who do wait well. Parents wait for their children to reach their maturity and their dreams. Lovers wait in their apartness, anticipating union. Pregnant mothers wait for the time of their blessed deliverance. Farmers and gardeners wait for the harvest and the blooming. Mystics wait for the ecstasy of Christ's coming in their prayerful hearts. In these examples, waiting is crucial because new and more abundant life is being born. New life requires that we wait on God's labor in the quiet and the apparent emptiness. We tend to equate productivity with our efforts, but there is a divine productivity that we cannot force or manipulate, only wait upon. That is why the great saints understood waiting as a spiritual discipline.

Advent calls us to wait in Faith - to express our unwavering trust that God will come to us in love and compassion, knowing that God's timing is often not our own.

Advent calls us to wait in quiet patience - to see challenges and setbacks and adversity as opportunities for special grace. It is only our need to have our way that makes God seem out of synch with our lives. God is never late.

2. Anonymous Donor...I mentioned in the parish bulletin recently about our extremely necessary but unanticipated and unbudgeted expenses. The security fencing in the parking lot and across the alleyway between the Church and the Rectory was approximately \$10,000. The job of scraping, pointing, sealing and waterproofing the Rectory wall with sealing of spaces around windows is costing about \$10,000. The repair of the roof and wall where water is entering the 4th floor front sitting room [Fr. Charlie's] is approximately \$5,000. Happily, someone who is aware of the impact of these expenses on our finances and who is also able to help through his own generosity has offered about half of the cost of these repairs. Praise and thank God. This person wishes to remain anonymous. I mention it to let all of you know the kinds of things that happen around here and the concern and generosity of people "behind the scenes" that allow us to stay afloat in very difficult times.

Merry Christmas St. Agatha-St. James - Hoping...

Please give some thought and prayer to making your annual Christmas offering to your parish. Hopefully, you will see the needs in the parish that call out for your generous support and the need in your own heart that wants to express gratitude to Almighty God by being a generous giver to His Church, your spiritual family. In your desire to be thoughtful and caring especially at this time, please remember St. AJ.

Advent and Weekday Mass

One of the best ways of celebrating Advent and preparing for the birth of the Savior is to attend week day Masses in addition to Sunday. Mass during one or more additional days than Sunday is a fountain of grace for our Advent hearts. The week day Scripture readings are some of the most beautiful and poignant passages in the Old and New Testaments and rich material for mediation and prayer.

This Week at St. AJ

Saturday, December 6

9:00AM Mass Holy Souls in Purgatory
4:00PM Confessions
5:30PM Vigil Mass Friends and Benefactors of St. AJ

Sunday, December 7

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00AM Mass Rose, Joseph Candeloro & Maryann DeMarco
11:30AM Mass People of the Parish
5:00PM Mass Miriam Cwietniewicz
10:00PM Mass Intentions of Students of our area Universities

Monday, December 8 Solemnity of Immaculate Conception

7:30AM Mass (Church) Intentions of the Stone Family
12:05PM Mass (Church) Intentions of the Nguyen Family
1:00PM Mass (Drexel Newman Center)
5:15PM Mass (Church)
7:00PM Mass (Drexel Newman Center)

Tuesday, December 9

1:00PM Mass Holy Souls in Purgatory

Friday, December 12

7:30AM Mass End to Abortion

Saturday, December 13

9:00AM Mass Holy Souls in Purgatory

Looking Ahead

- Monday, Dec. 8 – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception Holy Day of Obligation. No Vigil Mass. Mass schedule: In Church at 7:30 am, 12:05 pm, and 5:15 pm on Dec. 8. At Drexel Newman Center at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm Dec. 8
- Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve Vigil Mass This year, St. Agatha-St. James will celebrate a Vigil Mass of Christmas at 8:00 pm instead of a Midnight Mass.
- On three consecutive Sundays - the 4th Sunday of Advent, Dec. 21, and Sunday, Dec. 28 (Holy Family), and Sunday, January 4 (Epiphany), there will be NO 10 PM MASS.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

The Office of Hispanic Catholics extends an invitation to all to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Thursday December 11 at the Cathedral-Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul at 18th and the Parkway. [The presentation will be in Spanish with some English commentary.]

- 8:00 PM The Story of the Apparitions
8:30 PM The Rosary
9-11 PM Mariachi will play Mananitas.

On Friday, December 12, there will be a procession from Annunciation BVM, 10th & Dickenson to St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 17th & Morris where Mass will begin at 7:30 PM. For more information, call Sr. Lauren Donohue at 267-441-6395.

Today, December 7: Farewell to Fr. Zlock

This Sunday, parishioners and friends can bid a fond farewell to Fr. Charles Zlock as he leaves St. AJ and the Penn Newman Center on December 19 to become a member of the Clergy Office. Cardinal Rigali has appointed him to his new position and we know he will do well ministering to his fellow priests in the various ways that the Clergy Office oversees priestly life and ministry in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Fr. Zlock will be present at all the Masses today to say a few words and meet people after Mass. After the 10 and 11:30 AM Masses, we will have coffee and cake in the Parish Hall. After the 10 PM Mass, there will be a gathering for students in the Penn Newman Center.

2nd Collection Today - Retirement Fund for Religious