

The Work of the People

The Second Sunday of Advent

The coming of the Messiah was a source of hope and anticipation in the life of the people of Israel. Frequently subjugated and often enslaved, they looked to the coming of the Savior of the Jewish people as a horizon of promise. In these weeks of Advent, we hear many stories of the covenant that God has entered into with his chosen people.

On this Second Sunday of Advent we hear once again from the prophet Isaiah. The Word of God addressed to the people has a twofold message: God directs an unknown group of people to bring comfort to his people, and then directs the whole people to prepare "the way of the Lord!" The instruction to make a highway for God indicates that God will come in glory. This adventus (coming) of the Lord is to be proclaimed to all peoples. The Lord will arrive in the image of a shepherd; he will feed his flock and gather the lambs "in his bosom."

Today's second reading is from the second Letter of St. Peter. The author of this reading makes an alarming prediction: the day of the Lord will come like a thief. In rhetorical fashion the author asks "what sort of persons ought you to be" in the meantime? He suggests that a life of holiness and devotion is needed as they await "a new heaven and a new earth." The theme of Advent is clearly underlined in this reading.

Today's Gospel and that for next Sunday present the preaching and mission of John the Baptist. It is clear that the expectation of the people is high as they stream out into the desert to hear John's message. John appears in the guise of the great prophets. Is it possible that John is announcing the advent of the Messiah? They do not want to miss it; they readily repent in anticipation. John's reference to the one who will come after him is further explained in next Sunday's Gospel.

The reflection for this Sunday is from *Homily 11.5* of St. John Chrysostom (347-407) who was one of the early Church Fathers. "Chrysostom" means "golden-mouth" and he was called that because of his eloquent preaching. He is a Doctor of the Church.

John was setting forth the anticipatory and ancillary value of his own baptism, showing that it had no other purpose than to lead to repentance. He did not say he baptized with water of forgiveness, but of repentance. He pointed toward Christ's baptism, full of inexpressible gifts.

John seems to be saying: "On being told that he comes after me, you must not think lightly of him because he comes later. When you understand the power of Christ's gift, you will see that I said nothing lofty or noble when I said 'I am unworthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' When you hear, 'He is mightier than I,' do not imagine that I said this by way of comparison. For I am not worthy to be ranked so much as among Christ's servants, no, not even the lowest of his servants, nor to receive the least honored portion of his ministry."

Therefore John did not simply say, "[I am not worthy to untie] his sandals," he said "the thong of his sandals," the part counted the least of all.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Is. 35:1-10/Lk. 5:17-26

Tuesday: The Immaculate Conception of the

Blessed Virgin Mary

Gn. 3:9-15, 20/Eph. 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk. 1:26-38

Wednesday: Is. 40:25-31/Mt. 11:28-30

Thursday: Is. 41:13-20/Mt. 11:11-15

Friday: Is. 48:17-19/Mt. 11:16-19

Saturday: Zec. 2:14-17 or Rv. 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/

Lk. 1:26-38 or Lk. 1:39-47

Sunday: Is. 61:1-2a, 10-11/1 Thes. 5:16-24/Jn. 1:6-8, 19-28

ADVENT CONFESSIONS

At St. Anthony of Padua
every Saturday - 3:30 pm - 4:15 pm

Monday, December 7 - 4 pm - 4:45 pm

at St. Bernadette Mission

Tuesday, December 8 - 6 pm - 6:45 pm

at St. Anthony of Padua

Friday, December 18 - 3 pm - 4 pm

at St. Bernadette Mission

Sunday, December 20 - 2 pm - 3 pm

at St. Anthony of Padua

Monday, December 21 - 7 pm - 8 pm

at St. Anthony of Padua

"Jesus,
give me the grace to recognize
my sin and repent."

WORSHIP

Monday, December 7
 8:00 am + John Auer
 5:00 pm + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Vigil Mass The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 Richard Baker (Frances Giewont)

Tuesday, December 8 - The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 7:00 pm + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Emily Mott (Mott Family)

Wednesday, December 9
 8:00 am + NO MASS

Thursday, December 10
 8:00 am + Richard T. Miller (Jeanne Miller)

Friday, December 11
 8:00 am + Mary Wronko (Joan Rembielak/Phillis Wronko)

Saturday, December 12
 4:30 pm + Mark Pivanka (Shawn Pflieger)
 6:45 pm +Special Latin Mass

Sunday, December 13
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Living & Deceased Parishioners
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Wanda Pilarczyk
 (Parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua)

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, December 7
 4 pm - 4:45 pm - Confession AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION

Tuesday, December 8
 6 pm - 6:45 pm - Confession AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Saturday, December 12
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession

Sunday, December 14
 Before Mass - Confession - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 After Mass - Confession - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Please note the above Mass listings for the Holy Day of Obligation, The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Vigil Mass on Monday, Dec. 7 at 5:00 pm at St. Bernadette Mission and the 7:00 pm Mass on the Holy Day at St. Anthony of Padua.

ST. BERNADETTE MISSION STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$322.00
Candles	3.00
TOTAL	\$325.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$5,605 Paid: \$5,555

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Another year has passed, and we are again approaching the annual collection for our Retired Religious to be held in parishes on December 12 and 13. This event has significant benefits for the retired Sisters in our diocese, as well as the over 30,000 throughout the country.

The *Retirement Fund for Religious* offers financial support for those Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests who worked for years for small or no stipends. Last year, the people in this diocese contributed \$171,106.90 to help defray the costs of medication, nursing care, medical equipment, transportation, physical and occupational therapy and other necessary needs. Your generous gifts provide vital support for their ongoing health care helping them to age with dignity, safety and comfort. This year of the pandemic has been especially hard on communities of our elderly religious since many have COVID-19 protocols and visiting restrictions so that, along with these additional costs, there is also the emotional toll of loneliness and isolation for our senior religious.

Due to their years of faithful witness to the Gospel, senior religious are our treasure in the Church. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, religious education programs, hospitals, social service agencies and countless other ministries throughout our diocese; many still serve those in need today. Some of you may not presently know consecrated men and women, but they have affected your lives through their ministry to foresightedness and generosity. Ministries started by Sisters have had a tremendous influence in this diocese and they stand as a legacy to those generous women who dedicated their lives in service to the reign of God and continue to find ways to minister to others. I join you in praising God for their faithful and generous service to the Church in the past and in the days and years to come.

I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you only to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for an increase of vocations to the consecrated life and for God's continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Know you remain in their prayers. Please join me in supporting the *Retirement Fund for Religious*.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
 The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
 Bishop of Erie

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$524.00
Maintenance	272.00
Candles	48.00
Oplatki	20.00
Catholic Charities	200.00
Needy	200.00
Immaculate Conception	5.00
Energy	50.00
Altar Flowers	8.00
Campaign Human Dev.	63.00
CSA	110.00
Latin Mass	260.00
TOTAL	\$1,760.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$26,638 Paid: \$25,668

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
