

## The Work of the People

### *The First Sunday of Advent*

Each new Liturgical Year begins with the First Sunday of Advent. Every Advent, we celebrate Jesus coming as an infant long ago, his ongoing presence with us now, and his return in glory in the future. Advent is also a season of repentance; John the Baptist calls us to "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". We know, as Christian disciples in the twenty-first century, during each Advent God calls us anew to figure out how to live in relation to a world that frequently wants little or nothing to do with getting ready to celebrate the Incarnation, without giving into an "us versus them" paradigm. We are in the world, but not of it. Ours is the mission to prepare the Lord's way.

The prophet Isaiah speaks the first words we hear this Advent. Mountains are sacred, mysterious places, where God is often found. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest mountain. All nations shall stream toward it." Here, we see the initial move toward Jerusalem, a theme we just saw in Luke's Gospel account.

In his holy *Rule*, Benedict tells his monks to "Keep death daily, before your eyes". That is what Paul is telling us in the letter to the Church in Rome. Sometimes, it is easy to fall asleep, to become complacent in our faith. The Romans were returning to some of their earlier ways, and Paul tried to shake them awake with this reminder to leave earthly things behind.

In this new Liturgical Year, we move to Matthew's Gospel. It is rather brusque today, but Matthew takes up right where Paul left off, telling us to "Stay awake!" It is not a question, or a suggestion; it is in order. We must do this. It also means we must be in it for the long haul. Our faith is not an hour on Sunday – a switch we turn on and off. Our lives must reflect the Gospel. The best way to be ready for God's coming is to live in every moment.

The reflection this Sunday is from Edward Hahnenberg, PhD who is author of *Theology for Ministry: An Introduction for Ly Ministers*.

Jesus' warning to "Stay awake!" terrified me as a kid. The idea that death would come like a thief in the night sounded like a threat. God was watching. God was waiting for me to doze off, like the disciples in Gethsemane, in order to catch me and send me into the hell of his disappointment. Be good. Don't sin. Stay sharp. Because you never know when the end will come.

What if you did know? What if you knew the hour of your death? What if the Son of Man told you that he was coming tonight? Would it make any difference in how you spent today?

One of my most important teachers died of cancer just a few days before the end of the school year. Over the course of that final semester, my classmates and I watched her prepare for death.

It looked just like life.

I remember thinking that she could be anywhere, doing anything. Yet each day she came to class with a kind of serenity that said, "I am exactly where I ought to be, doing exactly what I ought to do."

Would that I could do the same: to live each day in such a way that I wouldn't change anything about it, even if I knew it would be the last.

Advent is our time of anticipation. Let's not start off with worry about what is to come. Tomorrow will take care of itself. All any of us ever have is today.

### **READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 1**

Monday: Is. 4:2-6/Ps. 122: 1-9/Mt. 8:5-11  
 Tuesday: Is. 11:1-10/Ps. 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17/Lk. 10:21-24  
 Wednesday: Is. 25:6-10a/Ps. 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6/Mt. 15:29-37  
 Thursday: Is. 26:1-6/Ps. 118:1 & 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a/Mt. 7:21, 24-27  
 Friday: Is. 29:17-24/Ps. 27:1, 4, 13-14/Mt. 9:27-31  
 Saturday: Is. 30: 19-21, 23-26/Ps. 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Mt. 9:35;  
 10:1, 5a, 6-8  
 Sunday: Is. 11:1-10/Ps. 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17?Rom 15:4-9/Mt. 3:1-12

### **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 7th & 8th. This event has significant benefits for retired Sisters. Here in the Diocese of Erie, there are 175 religious women over the age of 70. That includes 65 from ages 70 to 79, 83 from ages 80 to 89 and 27 sisters over 90. There are 30,000-retired religious 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 little or no money. Your generous gift provides vital support for their health care. Last year the collection in this diocese netted nearly \$166,000 which when returned to the religious of this area helped defray costs of medication, nursing care, medical equipment, transportation, physical and occupational therapy and other necessary needs of our elderly Sisters.

Senior Religious are a 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, many of which still serve our Church today. This year we are celebrating 25 years of service by the Mercy Center for Women and Erie Dawn, which help with housing and other needs for women, as well as the St. Benedict Child Development Center. These ministries and many others are examples of the tremendous influence that women religious have had in this diocese. I join you in praising God for their faithful and generous service to the Church in the past and continuing in the present.

Please join me in supporting the Retirement Fund for Religious. I understand that 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.

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

### **ST. ANTHONY CASH GIVEAWAY AND GAME NIGHT**

Cash Giveaway and Game Night tickets are being distributed after weekend masses. Game Night will be on Jan. 25, 2020. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Ticket monies need to be returned no later than Jan. 11 and can be placed in the collection baskets. Your assistance will make this annual fundraiser successful, so please pick up your tickets as soon as possible.

### **CHRISTMAS ROLLS**

Sign-up sheets for Christmas Nut, Poppyseed, Apricot and Raspberry rolls are on the bulletin boards at both entrances. Please sign-up early as the last days to sign-up are Dec. 7 & 8. Pick up will be the following weekend, Dec. 14 & 15, in the gathering space. Rolls are \$10/each.

# WORSHIP

Monday, December 2  
8:00 am + Daniel Baker (Gerald & Martha Adamczyk)  
Tuesday, December 3  
8:00 am + Mike & Vicki Graczyk (daughter, Jeanne)  
Wednesday, December 4  
8:00 am + NO MASS  
Thursday, December 5  
8:00 am + Richard T. Miller (wife, Jeanne)  
Friday, December 6 - FIRST FRIDAY  
8:00am + Harold W. Schmidt (friends)  
Saturday, December 7  
4:30 pm + Living & Deceased  
Sunday, December 8  
8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE  
Heather A. Dunnigan (Jim & Fran Peters)  
9:30 am + Emily Mott (Family)

# PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday - Wednesday - Friday AT ST. BERNADETTE  
(Except Holy Days)  
7:00 am - Communion Service  
Monday, December 2  
5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO  
Tuesday, December 3  
After Mass - St. Anthony's Novena  
Wednesday, December 4  
12:00 Noon - Advent Service & Lunch at First Church of God  
Saturday, December 7  
3:45 - 4:15 pm - Confessions  
Sunday, December 8  
Before Mass - Confessions AT ST. BERNADETTE  
After Mass - Confessions AT ST. ANTHONY  
10:30 pm - Religious Ed. Classes for St. Anthony & St. Bernadette  
**NOTE: Latin Mass will be the last Sunday of every month at 12:30 pm**

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 - 4:30 PM**

Eucharistic Ministers: Tom Hobson/Shawn Pfleger/Judy Kingston  
Lector: Kathleen Lipkovich  
Altar Servers: Payton Leandro/Sydney Zilhaver

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 - 9:30 AM**

Eucharistic Ministers: Ginger Beck/Theresa Douglas/  
Larry Douglas/Barbara Milligan  
Lector: Vicki Eckstein  
Altar Servers: Robert Moats/Andrea Walker

**ST. BERNADETTE**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 - 8:00 AM**

Eucharistic Ministers: C. Sada/G. Beisler/D. Nowak  
Lector: D. Capell/Mrs. Greco (if needed)  
Ushers: S. Sada, Jr.  
Altar Servers: Greco/Levis

**STEWARDSHIP**

**11/24/19**

Offertory	\$695.00
Votives	23.00
Human Dev.	<u>66.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$784.00</b>

CSA:  
Pledged - \$9275  
Paid - \$8595

**#iGiveCatholic.org**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019**

This year #iGiveCatholic is on #GivingTuesday, December 3, 2019 from 12:01AM to 11:59PM (midnight to midnight) CST. Please be a part of this global day of giving. It's as easy as 1,2,3! Simply visit the website, search for our parish (St. Anthony of Padua) and donate \$25 or more. If you are unable to donate in this manner, please know you can drop a check or cash, in an envelope noting the reason for this donation, and be assured it is going toward the St. Anthony of Padua roof repair. Thank you in advance.

**ADVENCE PENANCE SERVICES**

Monday, Dec. 16 - 7:00 pm - Our Lady of the Lake, Edinboro  
Wednesday, Dec. 18 - 7:00 pm - All Saints, Waterford  
Thursday, Dec. 19 - 7:00 pm - St. Lawrence, Albion  
Sunday, Dec. 22 - 3:00 pm - St. Anthony of Padua

**THEME BASKETS**

The Events Committee needs your help in providing "Theme Baskets" for St. Anthony Cash Giveaway and Game Night on January 25, 2020. Creating a basket is simple: 1. choose a theme (gardening, pets, cooking, etc.), 2. find items that fit your theme, and 3. place them in the basket. If you have questions please call Kathleen at 814 282-6700. Theme baskets are to be returned to the gathering space BEFORE January 11, 2020.

**MINISTERIUM CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

Mark your calendar for December 8 at 7:00 pm for the Cambridge Ministerium Christmas Program at First Baptist Church. All are welcome!

**BINGO - The next scheduled BINGO at St. Anthony's will be Monday, December 2. Early Bird BINGO starts at 6:00 pm and the regular BINGO starts at 6:30 pm. Doors and kitchen open at 5:00 pm. Salisbury Steak Dinner will be available at a cost of \$5.00.**

**ST. BERNADETTE CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Members of St. Bernadette are invited to the annual Christmas party on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 6:00 pm. Please bring a tureen to share as well as a \$10 exchange gift.

**UPCOMING EVENTS AT ST. BERNADETTE'S**

Mon. Dec. 2 - 6:00 pm - Holy Name Society Mtg.  
Sun. Dec. 8 - 10:30 am - Religious Ed. Classes at St. Anthony

**STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$1,534.00
Maintenance	293.00
Reimbursement	2,864.35
Energy Needs	15.00
All Saints	5.00
Camp. Human Dev.	409.67
Candles	14.00
Thanksgiving Rolls	931.50
CSA	<u>150.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,216.52</b>

CSA: Pledged—\$23,967    Paid—\$22,792

**CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA**

**CHURCH NO.:**

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

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