

The Work of the People  
*The First Sunday of Advent*

Today we celebrate First Sunday of Advent as we begin a new Liturgical Year. "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus". These powerful and uplifting words open the first apostolic exhortation issued by Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*. Written for the Roman Catholic faithful to inspire us to action, this six-chapter letter is filled with faith, hope, and love, but also challenge – its thoughts and themes have set the stage for Pope Francis' papacy and stand to influence the Church for years to come.

For the Holy Father, the most compelling way to draw people into relationship with Jesus Christ is to vividly express the joy of knowing him. No amount of personal promotion of the faith can match the attraction of seeing a disciple's life animated and empowered by the joy that comes from knowing Jesus. Our faith is a relationship with someone, nothing less than the Anointed One of God.

What better season to immerse ourselves in the joy of meeting Jesus, our Messiah, than Advent? In this holy season, we stop and reflect upon, anticipate and prepare for the miraculous moment when God became human, entering into the history of the world in a way that brought transformation and new life. Our liturgical practices – reverent and hopeful, reflective and anticipatory – help our communities recognize the wonder of God coming among us as a vulnerable, cherished baby, a member, like each of us, of the human family.

In the First Reading Jeremiah offers sure hope in the midst of hardship saying, "The days are coming... I will fulfill the promise." His focus is on a future when current woes will cease, promises will be fulfilled, and transformation will be achieved so completely that all who look upon Judah will recognize the saving hand of God. By longing for the fulfillment of God's promises – in faith that turns to action – we can help bring it about.

Paul and his Thessalonian converts expected the great and terrible day of Christ's return to be imminent. But his advice is to do more of the same: continue turning their lives over to Christ, keep on loving one another as Paul instructed, remain pure and blameless in God's sight; not panic, but peace; not frantic activity but calm. Anxiety and fear are for those who don't know their future. Paul assured the Thessalonians of theirs, and confidence fosters love.

In this new liturgical year, we move into the Gospel of Luke. We begin with imagery of distress on the earth and in the sky. Luke is not trying to incite panic, but surely this text is meant to discomfort us and to keep us awake and aware of what we are doing and what is going on in the world around us. Luke's words are not without hope, however, because implicit in

what he says is the possibility that we can be among those who "raise their heads" without fear in anticipation of the drawing near our "redemption."

The reflection for this Sunday is from Michelle Francl-Donnay who is a wife and a mother, a professor of chemistry, and an adjunct scholar at the Vatican Observatory.

Once, in the midst of a raging storm, I stood on a promontory overlooking the strait through which Lake Huron pours into Georgian Bay. The water below me heaved like a living thing—a gray, writhing serpent, hissing and spitting foam. The rain poured down; the wind ripped my voice away. I was stunned at the power that swirled around me, that in an instant could have swept me away. Terrified, I bolted back to safety.

Today's Gospel, with its description of roaring seas and shifting stars, makes me wonder if I have courage enough to pray for the Kingdom to come. Morning and night the words rise blithely enough to my lips - "thy Kingdom come" - but am I willing to face the terrifying signs in the heavens and howling waves that will herald its coming?

Yet here I stand at the edge of Advent, praying for the resolve to run forth into the wind and raging waves. Praying for the grace to seek out Christ not as a babe wrapped swaddling clothes and laid in a manger; but as the Son of Man, coming cloaked in power and glory in the midst of chaos and confusion. It is a reckless prayer, one that insists I lift my eyes from my own cares and anxieties. It is a prayer that demands I wade into the roiling seas of the present day, to stand as a beacon of justice for those battered by oppression, to reach out with mercy to those struggling to keep their heads above troubled waters. It's a call not to safety, but to shake the world until that day when God's Kingdom comes in glory.

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Is. 2:1-5/Mt. 8:5-11  
 Tuesday: Rom. 10:9-18/Mt. 4:18-22  
 Wednesday: Is. 25:6-10a/Mt. 15:29-37  
 Thursday: Is. 26:1-6/Mt. 7:21, 24-27  
 Friday: Is. 29:17-24/Mt. 9:27-31  
 Saturday: Is. 30:19-21, 23-26/Mt. 9:35; 10:1, 5a, 6-8  
 Sunday: Bar. 5:1-9/Phil. 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk. 3:1-6

### THINKING ABOUT PRIESTHOOD?

#### Come to St. Andrew Dinner

Monday, December 6, 2021  
 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
 St. Brigid Church Social Hall  
 967 Chancery Lane  
 Meadville, PA 16335

Any mature young man striving to follow Jesus' call in their lives and open to the possibility of the seminary and priesthood. Cost is free. Casual but respectable attire.

RSVP to the Epiphany of the Lord Parish 814 336-1112  
 For more information Contact Fr. Scott Jabo -SWJabo@eriercd.org  
 814 824-1200/Erie Vocations.org

## WORSHIP

Monday, November 29  
Tom Osiecki (Josie Osiecki)  
Tuesday, November 30  
8:00 am + John E. Auer  
Wednesday, December 1  
8:00 am + NO MASS  
Thursday, December 2  
8:00 am + Liv. & Dec. Members PNA Lodge 1540  
Friday, December 3  
8:00 am + Jim Rasavage (Josie Osiecki)  
Saturday, December 4  
4:30 pm + Living & Deceased Parishioners  
Sunday, December 5  
8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
Dec. Members of Genung/Hutch/Proudfoot Fam.  
(Pat & Richard)  
9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA  
Richard Miller (Jeanne Miller)

## PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, November 29  
5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO  
Tuesday, November 30  
After Mass - St. Anthony Novena  
Wednesday, December 1  
12:00 Noon - Ministerium Advent Service at  
C.S. Presbyterian Church  
Saturday, December 4  
3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession (or by appointment)  
Sunday, December 5  
10:30 am - Faith Formation Classes  
AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
Before Mass - Confession

**MARRIAGE MOMENTS:** "...on earth nations will be perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves..." (Luke 21:25) Whether you interpret this biblically or connect it with what scientists are saying about climate change, bad weather can be frightening. Agree on one step to take to befriend planet earth this week.

ST. BERNADETTE MISSION STEWARDSHIP	
Offertory	\$380.00
Human Development	100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$480.00</b>
Catholic Services Appeal	
Pledged: \$7,100    Paid: \$7,090	

### WHAT IS A SYNOD?

"Synod" comes from ancient Greek. It can be translated as "journeying together." Its literal meaning reminds us of Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6) and of Christians as followers of the Way (Acts 9:2). In Christianity it became the proper term for an assembly specifically called to discern, in accordance with the Holy Spirit, answers to important questions for the Church. One of the earliest examples is the Council of Jerusalem, described in Acts 15. Synods have been used at all levels of the Church, from local diocesan synods all the way up to the Synod of Bishops for the universal Church. They generally deal with how we can best live out our faith in practice.

A synod can be thought of as a type of family meeting. By this analogy, the bishops are like the head of a household, with responsibility for the Church and authority to make decisions for her. In order to make the best possible decisions, they check in with the rest of the family and ask for our experiences and input. Then, taking everything into consideration, they make the decision. Bishop Persico, for example, is using this method for Pastoral Planning in our diocese. A synod is not democratic, and it is not majority rule. It is a means of discussing and discerning God's will, the God who is drawn always to the poor and little ones.

### MINISTERIUM EMERGENCY FOOD BANK

The Ministerium Emergency Food Bank is low on EVERYTHING (except pasta and cereal). With the upcoming holidays they want to be sure to be able to minister to our community. You can drop off donations in the Gathering Space. Thank You.

### MARCH FOR LIFE

Annual Bus Trip leaves Erie Thursday evening, January 20 at 11:00 pm. March in Washington, DC on Friday, January 21 and return Saturday morning, January 22 about 1:30 am. Limited number of buses so make your reservations early. Cost is \$60/seat with Early Bird \$5 discount until December 20. Call or email to learn more at People for Life 814 882-1333 or 814 459-1333 or office@peopleforlife.org

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA STEWARDSHIP	
Offertory	\$1,073.00
Maintenance	268.00
Energy	60.00
All Saints	10.00
Christmas Offering	20.00
Candles	37.00
Human Development	358.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,826.00</b>
Catholic Services Appeal	
Pledged: \$28,565    Paid: \$27,009	

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

**CHURCH NO.:**

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

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