

The Work of the People
The Third Sunday of Advent

Last Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent, we were introduced to John the Baptist and to his prophetic message: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." This Sunday we hear of what others, especially Jesus, thought of John and his message.

Today is also called *Gaudete* (Rejoice) Sunday. The Third Sunday of Advent (like the Fourth Sunday of Lent) is a day of joy in the midst of a season of penitential preparation. The Entrance Antiphon (Rejoice in the Lord always) captures the mood of the entire liturgy as we move into the second part of Advent. There is a sense of joyful expectation, and an awareness that the fulfillment of God's great plan for us is near.

The reading from the prophet Isaiah speaks once again of the restoration of the Davidic kingdom. There is much joy and anticipation as we await rare desert flowers and miraculous cures. God restores all that has become barren to former beauty, and those who have been taken captive in Babylon will be freed and will enter Zion (Jerusalem) singing. What encouragement for the feeble and the frightened, to hear that they will be made whole once again.

In the Letter of St. James we hear that patience is a difficult virtue to learn and act upon. None of us wants to hear "in God's time." We want what we want now. Yet, in his wisdom, James counsels that we must wait patiently and joyously, and never give up. Temptation and rash judgments are things which can get us into trouble when we do not think things through and spontaneously act upon our desires.

Unlike the message in the Letter of James, John the Baptist becomes impatient, wondering "are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" He seems disappointed that there is not a big, fiery finish. Jesus rebukes him and, paraphrasing Isaiah, says that the prophecies have now been fulfilled.

This Sunday's reflection is from *Mixed Blessings* by Barbara Brown Taylor who is a best-selling author, professor, and Episcopal priest.

"And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me," [Jesus] concludes, in one of the most ignored passages of all time. The Greek word for offense is *skandalon*, which makes the literal translation something more like, "And blessed is anyone who is not scandalized by me." But to the ancient Greeks the word meant a stumbling block,

so that the best translation is, "And blessed is anyone who does not get tripped up on me." What is Jesus saying? That the Messiah has not come to be the center of attention? That he has not come to ascend a throne, to fulfill all the expectations of his people? It sounds that way. It sounds as if he has come not to wield power but to give it away, to be himself, to glorify God, and finally to disappear into the crowd of those who have found his love contagious.

What is Jesus saying? It sounds as if he is saying, "Go tell John that everyone who is expected has already arrived. Go tell him what you hear and see. Things may not be working out the way he wanted them to, but every now and then, in surprising places, marvelous things are happening. People who were blind to the love loose in the world have received their sight; people who were paralyzed with fear are limber with hope; people who were deaf from want of good news are singing hymns. And best and most miraculous of all, tell John that this is not the work of one lonely Messiah but the work of God, carried out by all who believe, and there is no end in sight. Tell him I am the one, if you must, but tell him also that yes, he should look for another, and another, and another. Tell him to search every face for the face of God and not get tripped up on me, because what is happening here is bigger than any of us. What is coming to pass is as big as the Kingdom of God."

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Zec. 2:14-17 or Rv. 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/
Lk. 1:26-38 or Lk. 1:39-47
Tuesday: Zep. 3:1-2, 9-13/Mt. 21:28-32
Wednesday: Is. 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25
Thursday: Is. 54:1-10, Lk. 7:24-30
Friday: Is. 56: 1-3a, 6-8/Jn. 5:33-36
Saturday: Gn. 49:2, 8-10/Mt. 1:1-17
Sunday: Is. 7:10-14/Rom. 1:1-7/Mt. 1:18-24

ADVENT CONFESSION SCHEDULE

AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION

Friday, December 16—4pm - 5pm

Tuesday, December 20—4 pm - 5 pm

AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Monday, December 12—4 pm - 5 pm

Friday, December 23—4 pm - 5 pm

Also, please check the Parish Event block for weekly confession schedule.

WORSHIP

Monday, December 12
 8:00 am + Dec. of Newell/Sekel Families
 (Catherine Newell)
 Tuesday, December 13
 8:00 am + Charles Metzler (Chris & Dan Krel)
 Wednesday, December 14
 8:00 am + NO MASS
 Thursday, December 15
 8:00 am + Helen Blank (Joan Rembielak)
 Friday, December 16
 8:00 am + Gary Parkin (Susan Parkin)
 Saturday, December 17
 4:30 pm + Sunday, December 18
 Living & Deceased Parishioners
 Sunday, December 18
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Carolyn & Rebecca Brown (Pauline Baker)
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Jim Rasavage (Carol & Family)

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday, December 11
 6:00 pm - AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Community Christmas Program
 Monday, December 12 - AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 4pm - 5pm - Confession
 Tuesday, December 13
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena
 Wednesday, December 14
 12:00 Noon - Advent prayer service and luncheon
 At First Baptist Church
 Friday, December 16 - AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 4pm - 5pm - Confession
 Saturday, December 17
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession
 Sunday, December 18
 AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Before Mass - Confession
 AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 After Mass - Confession
 10:30 am - Religious Education Classes
 Monday, December 19
 5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO

SETON CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Until the end of the year, Seton School is working with Funds2Orgs to collect used shoes. At this time Seton School has collected 42 bags (that's 1050 pairs of shoes) but it is only halfway to their goal. If you have unwanted sneakers, loafers, flip flops any type of boots, high heels, athletic cleats, golf shoes, rubber boots, hard-sole slippers toddler & baby shoes, or cowboy boots you might be able to donate please drop them in the box labeled for shoes in the gathering space. Please do not donate shoes with holes, tears or stains.
 Thank you in advance for your donations!

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS
Help Aging Religious

Senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have devoted their lives to prayer, service, and works of mercy. Most ministered for little or no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your gift to today's Retirement Fund for Religious collection helps to furnish medications, nursing care, and other necessities. Please give generously.

FOOD DRIVE

Cambridge Springs Ministerium emergency food program is conducting a food drive. Non-perishable items can be put in the box in the gathering space. Thank you for your generosity.

ST. BERNADETTE DECORATING

On Sunday, December 18 immediately following the 8 am Mass, St. Bernadette parish will be decorating the church for Christmas. Volunteers are needed. Anyone who can help please stay for decorating and coffee, donuts.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
ALTAR SERVERS
 Saturday, December 17 - 4:30 pm
 Payton Leandro
 Sunday, December 18 - 9:30 am
 Max Marteeny

ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$482.00
Maintenance	50.00
Flowers	175.00
Immaculate Conception	35.00
Retirement	30.00
Solemnity of Mary	30.00
Christmas	30.00
Candles	41.00
TOTAL	\$873.00

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$768.00
Maintenance	383.00
Lottery	160.00
Immaculate Conception	30.00
Candles	37.00
Missionary Co-Op	25.00
CSA	315.00
Flowers	248.00
Religious Retirement	25.00
Christmas	170.00
Energy	21.00
Campaign for Human Dev.	10.00
TOTAL	\$2,192.00
Catholic Services Appeal	
Pledged: \$34,979	Paid: \$33,939

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
