

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOVEMBER 28, 2021



Today's Advent Prayer

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

God, the potter, mold us and make us your people.
When we become impatient, help us remember that
these seasons of waiting are also shaping us.
Give us the grace to breathe deeply into the wait,
to anticipate the beauty you are working while we wait.
Amen.

Saint Stanislaus Catholic Church

516 East 13th Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503
814.452.6606

www.ststanserie.org
email: ststaner@outlook.com

Fr. Jason Glover, S.T.L., Pastor
Msgr. Daniel Magraw, Senior Associate
Debbie Oldenski, Secretary
Thaddeus Fryczynski, Director of Music

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30AM - 3:00 PM
(Closed 12:00PM - 1:00PM, Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays)

Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:
Saturday at 4:00PM; Sunday at 9:00AM
*** Daily Eucharist: Call the Parish Office**

Holy Trinity Catholic Church

2220 Reed Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503
814.456.0671

www.holytrinityrc.org
email: parishoffice@holylrinityrc.org

Fr. Jason Glover, S.T.L., Pastor
Msgr. Daniel Magraw, Senior Associate
Mary Ann Merski, Secretary
Jeannie McGinley, Director of Music

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00AM - 4:00PM
(Closed 12:00PM - 1:00PM, Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays)

Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:
Saturday at 5:15PM; Sunday at 10:30AM
*** Daily Eucharist: Call the Parish Office**



Saint Stanislaus & Holy Trinity

Partners in Faith & Mission



November 28, 2021
1st Sunday of Advent

Staying awake can often be a challenge, especially when we are exhausted. Life's demands have a way of zapping every last bit of energy out of us. All of our senses are dulled and diminished. We can overlook details, become disinterested, lethargic and apathetic, and detached. Getting sufficient physical rest only helps so much. We need to be rejuvenated, refreshed, and reenergized in other ways. Unfortunately, exhaustion is seldom limited to just one part of who we are. When we lack energy and zeal it is usually the case that everything suffers. We not only are affected physically, but psychologically and spiritually as well.

And yet, our Lord's directive is clear, "Be vigilant at all times." Even Jesus knew what "the anxieties of daily life" can do to us. Any one of us can take a moment and reflect on how many wonderful, creative opportunities we miss because there is always so much "stuff" to do and so little time to do it. Sleepwalking through life, we check the boxes next to our list of "must and have to dos" and justify it all by convincing ourselves that tomorrow is another day and there'll be more time. It may surprise us, but tomorrow is here, and time is running out. While we may like to believe that we have an "eternity" of time to do all those things that require the focus, energy, and desire we do not currently have, we don't. We're on a limited ride and time is short.

Jesus is also clear on another point. "That day [will] catch you by surprise like a trap." If we are going to be judged on love and so easily justify not having all that much time to do so, then it seems we must shift focus a bit. St. Teresa of Calcutta tells us, "We desire to be able to welcome Jesus at Christmas-time, not in a cold manger of our heart, but in a heart full of love and humility, a heart so pure, so immaculate, so warm with love for one another." Getting to this place doesn't "just happen." It requires vigilance and discipline both with a knowledge of what is really of importance and what really needs to be the focus of our energy and time. Pray, starting now and not tomorrow, that we can stay alert, be strengthened in our faith, and prepared for whatever will come. Don't miss another opportunity to love.

Readings for the week of November 28, 2021

Sunday: Jer 33:14-16/1 Thes 3:12-4:2/Ps 25:4-10, 14]/Lk 21:25-28, 34-36 [1 Advent]
Monday: Is 2:1-5/Ps 122:1-9/Mt 8:5-11
Tuesday: Rom 10:9-18/Ps 19:8-11/Mt 4:18-22 [St. Andrew]
Wednesday: Is 25:6-10/Ps 23:1-6/Mt 15:29-37
Thursday: Is 26:1-6/Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27/Mt 7:21, 24-27
Friday: Is 29:17-24/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/Mt 9:27-31 [St. Francis Xavier]
Saturday: Is 30:19-26/Ps 147:1-6/Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8
Next Sunday: Bar 5:1-9/Ps 126:1-6/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6 [2 Advent]

Sacrament of Baptism: Sacramental preparation is required of the parents who desire to share the Catholic faith with their children and are held monthly throughout the City of Erie. Call the parish office to register to schedule your preparation. Godparents must be Confirmed and practicing Catholics with a letter of recommendation from their pastor to serve as a sacramental sponsor.

Religious Education, First Holy Communion, and First Reconciliation programs are hosted at Saint Luke's Church for all eastside Erie parishes. Contact their parish office for more information and to register your child (814.825.7105).

Confirmation preparation for all eastside Erie parishes is hosted at Saint Luke's Church. Contact their parish office for more information and to register your child (814.825.6920).

Sacrament of Holy Orders: God calls all people to holiness. Some men are called to fulfill this vocation as priests. If you are interested in the priesthood, or have questions about it, please contact a parish priest or our Diocesan Vocation Director, Scott Jabo, at 1.814.824.1181.

Sacrament of Matrimony: Before a date can be scheduled, a priest must be contacted at least six months in advance to complete the required documents.

Sacrament of the Sick: Communal celebrations of Anointing the Sick are scheduled periodically. The sacrament can also be requested by any parishioner who is seriously ill or in danger of death. *Please note:* Federal law no longer permits hospitals or nursing homes to contact churches when a parishioner is admitted. It is important that family members notify the parish office if a loved one needs a visit, desires to receive Holy Communion, or needs to be Anointed.

Leave A Legacy: Consider Saint Stanislaus and Holy Trinity as you meet with your attorney or financial planner regarding your estate planning. Remember the needs of your parish family and leave a legacy of faith for future generations with your generous remembrance.

Bulletin Information Deadline: Please submit information to be included in the weekend bulletin by noon the Monday prior. Holiday bulletin announcements must be received by the parish office two weeks in advance.

Saint Stanislaus & Holy Trinity

Partners in Faith & Mission

"PRAYER, CARE, AND CONCERN" MINISTRY

Those who participate in this ministry express the care and concern of our entire parish community to those who are ill, hospitalized, homebound, or in nursing facilities, through birthday and holiday cards, visits, and prayers. To request prayers, or to participate in this ministry, contact Saint Stanislaus Office (814-452-6606).

"PRAYERLINE" MINISTRY

These ministers devote themselves to prayer for any needs made known to them and any special intentions. To participate in this ministry, or to request prayers for a particular need, contact Saint Stanislaus Office (814-452-6606 or Holy Trinity Office (814-456-0671).

PCEP (Parish Catholic Education Program)

Parishioners of Holy Trinity can receive a parish grant to assist with the cost of tuition for families who wish their primary or secondary school age children to have a Catholic education. To be eligible, families must participate in the program, attend Mass regularly, and be involved in the parish community. For more information, contact the parish office.

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

Parishioners interested in serving our worshipping community as an altar server, lector, Eucharistic minister, or music minister, please let one of your priests know.

"PRAYER SHAWL" MINISTRY

The enjoyment of knitting, crocheting, and sewing are uniquely combined with prayer to offer a deeply personal and meaningful spiritual ministry. Shawls are prayerfully made and freely given away to those suffering bereavement, those recovering from illness, the elderly, homebound, and those in nursing facilities. To join us in this ministry, please contact Saint Stanislaus Office (814-452-6606).

THE "ZABAWA COMMITTEE"

Held on the parish grounds of Holy Trinity, Zabawa is the largest Polish heritage celebration in the region, drawing tens of thousands of people to our neighborhood. The Zabawa Committee organizes the festival through food preparation, donation solicitation, food and beverage service, and so on. The committee always welcomes any help they receive. If you would like to offer your time, and experience hands-on learning about these rich cultural traditions, contact Holy Trinity Office (814-456-0671).

PROLIFE COMMUNITY

This ministry advocates through for the protection of all human life from conception until natural death through prayer, education, and action.

"PRAYER CANDLE" MAKING MINISTRY

This ministry makes prayer candles from the church's left over bee's wax. They meet on Wednesdays, from 10AM - Noon in St. Stanislaus Parish Hall. No experience necessary.

ST. STANISLAUS / HOLY TRINITY INITIAL PARISHIONER REGISTRATION FORM

(please circle which parish)

Family Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Please Check: ☐ New Registration ☐ Change of Address ☐ Change of Telephone Number

☐ Change of E-mail ☐ Moving out of Parish ☐ Want Envelopes

*Place in offertory basket or mail to Parish Office. We will contact you to complete our Census Form.
Welcome to our Parish Family!*

A Community of Faith Built on Tradition, Where Everyone is Welcome

Saint Stanislaus Parish Community

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon., Nov. 29th - Private Intention
Tues., Nov. 30th - Barbara Leofsky (Richard Markiewicz)
Wed., Dec. 1st - Special Intention (Doug & Eleanore Anderson)
Thurs., Dec. 2nd - Joseph Wiczorek (Family)
Fri., Dec. 3rd - Mary Macie (Jim)
Sat., Dec. 4th, 4:00PM - For the People of St. Stanislaus (*Pro Populo*)
Sun., Dec. 5th, 9:00AM - Stephanie Budney Konopka (Family)

"HOLIDAY CASH RAFFLE"

The Women's Society is, once again, selling raffle tickets for a chance to win either \$1,000 in cash, or \$1,000 worth of scratch-off lottery tickets. Tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased from any member of the Society, the Parish Office, or by calling Nancy (814-454-4046). All proceeds benefit Saint Stanislaus Parish.



Our sanctuary candle burns in for **FLORENCE & STANLEY KOMOREK**, as gifted by the Family.

SSJ SOUP KITCHEN

The Sisters of Saint Joseph will NOT need baked good for the month of December, but are ever grateful for your generosity and charity.

WOMEN'S SOCIETY CHRISTMAS PARTY

... will be held on Sunday, December 12th, at the 3rd Street Falcon's Club from Noon until 3:00PM. Dinner will be served at 12:30PM and will consist of either 1/2 baked chicken or breaded pork chop. The cost is \$15 per person; guests are welcome to attend. To make a reservation, please call Sharon at 814-790-1226 or Diane at 814-825-5748. Reservations must be made by December 8th.

JANUARY LOTTERY RAFFLE

The Holy Name Society is, once again, selling raffle tickets based off the evening lottery drawing during the month of January. See any member of the Society for tickets for your chance to win. Tickets can also be purchased in the Sacristy or in the Parish Office. They make great Christmas gifts! Thanks for your support. Proceeds of the raffle have benefited our parish in many ways.

ADVENT MEDITATION BOOKS

Advent reflection books, "Awaken to New Light," are available next to the bulletin bins for a nominal cost of \$1.25. Please use the envelope provided and place it in the collection basket. Many blessings for a graced Advent season.

WEEKLY OFFERING (NOVEMBER 21, 2021)

Temporarily
Unavailable



PREPARING THE MANGER

Where do you fall in the "Christmas-songs-in-November" debate — do you like them, tolerate them, or outright hate them? There's no theological problem with Christmas songs in November outside of worship, even if it's not everyone's cup of tea. But there is a problem with getting so caught up in the baggage of the season — the trimmings, the gifts, the celebrations, all of which are marvelous in their own way — that you forget to prepare the manger. Every good Catholic knows that Lent is a penitential season. It's hard to miss that point — Lent doesn't even have any fun songs you can groove to on the radio. We are pretty good at recognizing that Lent calls us to examine ourselves. To deny ourselves. To give of ourselves. And most of all, Lent calls us to prepare, as a good steward does, for the return of our master. It's harder for us to remember that with Advent, but Advent is just as much of an opportunity for penance, preparation, and reconciliation to God — and just as much reason, too. The very name of the season — "advent" — encourages us to focus on what is coming, not what is already here. Be on guard, the readings tell us today, "so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and (the coming of the Lord) catch you unexpectedly, like a trap." So let us not forget — our master's advent is upon us. And let us ask ourselves: how can we prepare the manger?

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

Advent Prayer

For the desert places in which
we walk, the streets we roam,
the paths we cross: Guide our feet.
Take us to places where you would go,
Give us words that you would use,
that in this Advent season
of promise and preparation
we might point the way
with John the Baptist
to the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world!
Amen.



Holy Trinity Parish Community



The sanctuary candle burns this week in memory of **ALL SOULS**.



12/3 - Roman Luniewski
Mary Ann Merski

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon., Nov. 29th - Kulig, Laczewski, & Habas Families
Tues., Nov. 30th - All Souls
Wed., Dec. 1st - Living & Deceased Mothers
Thurs., Dec. 2nd - Msgr. John Daniszewski (Estate)
Fri., Dec. 3rd - In Honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Sat., Dec. 4th, 5:15PM - John Raclawski, Anniversary (Friends)
Sun., Dec. 5th, 10:30AM - For the People of Holy Trinity (Pro Populo)

OFFICE CLOSED

Holy Trinity Parish Office will be **closed Thursday, December 2nd and Friday, December 3rd** as our secretary enjoys a few days off to celebrate her birthday with her family.

CHRISTMAS CRECHE

We are delighted to announce that we have recently had our Christmas nativity figures restored by Dr. Michael DeSanctis (retired professor of art at Gannon University), thanks to many generous donations in memory of Kathylene Benes. Given her proclivity in decorating the Church, especially for Christmas, it seemed an appropriate use of donations given to her memory. We are excited for you to see the restored figurines this Christmas season!

ADVENT MEDITATION BOOKS

Advent reflection books, "Awaken to New Light" are available next to the bulletin bins for a nominal cost of \$1.25. Please use the envelope provided and place it in the collection basket. Many blessings for a graced Advent season.

MARRIAGE MOMENT 11-28-2021

"On earth nations will be perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves..." (Luke 21: 25). Bad weather can be frightening. Agree on one step to take to befriend planet earth this week.

WEEKLY OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER 21, 2021

Temporarily
Unavailable

Welcome to Advent, the season to prepare with awe and wonder for the Feast of the Incarnation of Jesus — born to us as Savior and Brother. It is a season to prepare for His return at the end of time. It is also a moment to remind ourselves that our individual judgment day is coming, too. In other words, Our readings for the first week of Advent waste no time in calling our urgent attention to these themes of reflection and preparation. They seem to shout, "Wake up! Get ready!" and offer us some practical advice as we enter into this season. How easy it is to lose focus on our Lord either by too much indulgence in our lives or by too much worry about our lives. During Advent, we Christian stewards must ask ourselves some hard questions. Am I staying faithful to my prayer life? Am I using my energy and skills to serve others? Am I overly concerned about material gain? Am I relying on my "stuff" or my investments as my source of comfort or security? Am I living for the moment or for the coming of the Lord? Get ready Christian stewards! He's coming! Let us prepare with awe and wonder.

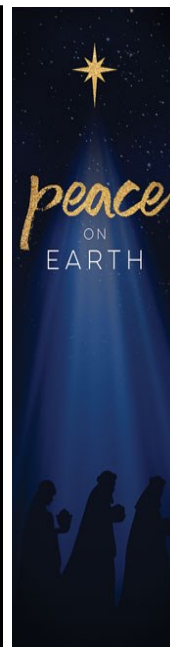
Jesus Calls for Workers

"As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'" Matthew 10:7 (NIV)
Based on Matthew 9:35 - 10:8 (NIV)



T B L G O O D Q X S V J O S E
N O X K E I N C S Y D W S R I
G G W M C E S E T O L R S C C
L B G N V I L L A G E S Y O X
S T M A S P L I T K Z R N M L
I H E A L I N G R B H H A P N
C H M E W L S O D G J S G A E
K C H F T D W S I Q A H O S W
N J U L W R Z H S K Z E G S S
E Y K O A R V E E U C P U I J
S Z R E A Q B E A Y E H E O K
S C N M Y N H P S I F E S N S
E K I N G D O M E O B R P I W
X T E A C H I N G G I D H T K
J E S U S V P R E A C H I N G

CROWDS	KINGDOM	DISEASE	TEACHING	SYNAGOGUES
HEALING	TOWNS	GOOD	NEWS	HELPLESS
VILLAGES	HEAVEN	SICKNESS	NEAR	SHEEP
WORKERS	JESUS	COMPASSION	SHEPHERD	PREACHING



"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy."

- Luke 21:34

News for Our Partnership

WHAT IS A SYNOD?

"Synod" comes from ancient Greek. It can be translated as "journeying together." 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. 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.

#GIVECATHOLIC

Both of our parishes will, once again, be participating in the #GIVECATHOLIC fundraising campaign. The goal of #iGiveCatholic is to rally our Catholic community in support of our parishes and ministries. Secure, tax-deductible donations to eligible Catholic organizations located in participating dioceses are given at www.iGiveCatholic.org during a 24-hour period on #GivingTuesday, November 30, and during the Advanced Giving Day phase beginning at 12:00 AM on Monday, November 15 through 11:59 PM on Monday, November 29. Offline gifts of cash and checks are encouraged and given directly to our parishes during this same period.

SURVEY REMINDER

Just a kind reminder to please return the surveys that were included in last week's bulleting by placing them in the collection baskets by next weekend. Additional surveys are available next to the bulletin bins. We are asking each person on each household to complete a survey. Thank you, in advance, for your participation.

Holy Trinity Annual Christmas Market

Friday, December 17th 4:00 – 7:00PM
Saturday, December 18th 9:00AM – 12:00 Noon
Holy Trinity Social Center, 23rd & Reed Street

**Orders being taken -
November 6th until December 6th**

PAYMENT IS DUE WITH ALL ORDERS

****credit cards accepted****

***Order in advance. Supplies
will be limited during the
market***

Cookies*Pierogi***Nut
Roll***Sweet Bread***Oplatki and more...**

**Order forms available at
www.holytrinityrc.org**

To place an order call Edith, 456-5300

LITURGICAL CHANGES

Bishop Persico recently decreed some changes in the way liturgy is celebrated in the Diocese of Erie. "Bishop Persico has determined now is an appropriate time for all of us to return to the practice that most dioceses in the United States employ. After the Lamb of God, the people will kneel. Once the people return after receiving Holy Communion, they may kneel or be seated. This restored practice is intended to help to unify posture throughout the Diocese of Erie, place us in greater harmony with the Church throughout the United States, lessen confusion, and assist those parishioners who are unable to stand for long periods of time. In situations where the people are unable to kneel, they may sit instead." This change is to be implemented this weekend, the First Sunday of Advent.

USHERS

We will resume the ministry of our ushers on the First Sunday of Advent, which is November 28th. Many thanks to our ushers in their patience as we continue to "re-open" in this Covid world.

HAPPY ADVENT!

THE 31 CLUB - PRAYING FOR VOCATIONS

11/29) Msgr. Bernie Urbaniak & Janis Leretsis; 11/30) Edie Luniewski; 12/1) Kathy Smith, Debbie Majewski & Mary Speice; 12/2) Patty Czulewicz; 12/3) Judy Tucceri & Jackie Vargo; 12/4) Ed Czulewicz, Evelyn & Ed Selleny; 12/5) Mary Ann Merski & Michelle Inter

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

11/29) Fr. Tom Aleksa; 11/30) Fr. Jim Kenneley; 12/1) Fr. Joe Kalinowski; 12/2) Fr. Ed Lohse; 12/3) Fr. Chris Barnes; 12/4) Fr. John Beal; 12/5) Bishop Persico

Sunday, Nov 28, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Light up the night

Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:12—4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36
"Be vigilant at all times... to stand before the Son of Man."

In an unusual conjoining of celebrations, we begin the season of Advent today as our Jewish friends begin Chanukah tonight. Advent too is an extended celebration of moving from the darkness of history into the light of Christ's coming. Light remains a symbol of spiritual illumination, abandoning the gloom of ignorance for knowledge and the shadow of foolishness for wisdom. As we string holiday lights and decorate with sparkling ornaments, let's consciously choose against error's dark deceptions and ally ourselves with the light of truth.

Monday, Nov 29, 2021

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Have yourself an evergreen Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 8:5-11

"Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed."

The origins of the Advent wreath are unclear. Like many of today's Christmas traditions, Advent wreaths were popularized by Germans, who brought them to the United States. No matter where they came from or how they differ, Advent wreaths are rich in symbolism. The candles are lit as a sign of hope to dispel the darkness. The evergreen, wrapped in a circle, signifies continuous life. The prickly leaves of holly are like the crown of thorns. Pinecones symbolize resurrection. If you don't already have one, consider making one as a craft project this Advent, and add elements that have symbolic meaning for you.

Tuesday, Nov 30, 2021

FEAST OF ANDREW, APOSTLE

Can you follow directions?

Romans 10:9-18; Matthew 4:18-22

"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Sometimes what we appreciate about saints comes from other saints. Such is the case with Saint Andrew and his brother, Simon Peter, of whom Saint Gregory the Great said: "At a single command" from Jesus, they "leaving their nets followed the Redeemer. Up to that time, they had not seen him perform any miracles. They had heard nothing from him concerning a reward of eternal joy." All Jesus had to do was ask them to follow. This Advent, listen for what Jesus may be asking of you; pray for the trust that Andrew had, to simply follow.

Wednesday, Dec 01, 2021

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Guess who is on the way?

Isaiah 25:6-10a; Matthew 15:29-37

"I do not want to send them away hungry."

On this Wednesday of the First Week of Advent, we look forward to the second coming of Christ. Advent comes from the Latin word for arriving. We have all experienced brokenness and hopelessness in our lives. You may know and cross paths with someone yearning for Jesus' healing power and awareness of his presence in their life. Has your mind, heart, body, and spirit been hungry for spiritual nourishment? Have you been healed by Jesus? Do you want to share that same healing experience with others? Consider simple ways that you can share with a hurting friend the Good News that Jesus is on the way!

Thursday, Dec 02, 2021

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Seek to unite, not divide

Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven."

It's human nature to see the good in our own habits, ways, and traditions, but at the same time, Pope Francis has encouraged Christians to acknowledge the validity of other spiritual paths to God. The Holy Father's focus on what unites humanity spiritually is an important lesson for a world community that depends more than ever on cooperation. As you begin Advent, look for ways that you are united spiritually with people who are part of your life, no matter what their faith tradition is.

Friday, Dec 03, 2021

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Creation celebrates diversity

Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31

"And their eyes were opened."

"If you embrace diversity, but ignore disability, you're doing it wrong." This popular phrase on social media reflects the venerable tradition of Catholic social teaching. On this Day of Persons with Disabilities, remember that in following Jesus, we are committed to promoting and protecting the dignity of all humans. At times, we as church have led the way in this, and other times we have fallen short. Nevertheless, it is fundamental to our faith. Why? Because we believe that each person is made in the image of God. Imagine that: In you—with all your strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and unique traits—we see an image of God. What does that do within you?

Saturday, Dec 04, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JOHN DAMASCENE, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

The embodiment of faith

Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

"Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give."

John Damascene, priest, monk, and poet, was an early defender of the use of religious icons—images of the sacred—at a time in the early Middle Ages when a movement to strip religious life and worship of all images—called iconoclasm—had a following. Thanks to John's vision—perhaps rooted in his sense of the power of the poetic to move people—religious icons are cherished, especially in the Eastern church but also throughout the Catholic world. Our faith is an embodied faith, an incarnated faith. Wear it proudly!

Prayer for the First Sunday of Advent

Unexpected God, your advent alarms us. Wake us from drowsy worship, from the sleep that neglects love, and the sedative of misdirected frenzy. Awaken us now to your coming, and bend our angers into your peace. Amen.