

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 29, 2020



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)

Daily Eucharistic Liturgy: Tuesday - Friday at 8:00AM
Temporary Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:
Saturday at 4:00PM; Sunday at 9:00AM

*** Daily Eucharistic Liturgy remains temporarily Non-Public**

Holy Trinity Catholic Church

2220 Reed Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503
814.456.0671

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

Daily Eucharistic Liturgy: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 8:00AM
Temporary Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:
Saturday at 5:15PM; Sunday at 10:30AM

*** Daily Eucharistic Liturgy remains temporarily Non-Public**



Saint Stanislaus & Holy Trinity

Partners in Faith & Mission



November 29, 2020
1st Sunday of Advent

You are at the eye doctor and it's time for the peripheral vision test. It's where you put your head up to a contraption and have to click a switch every time you see a squiggly line. If you don't concentrate and maintain optimal focus, you will miss them and skew the outcome of the test. You can easily find yourself with a diagnosis that really isn't accurate! Concentration and focus are key to succeeding with this evaluation. They are also key to developing a healthy, vibrant spiritual life. If we do not bring our full consciousness to the task, concentrate with all our might, be watchful and vigilant, we are not going to see God's loving presence flashing before our eyes!

That's why we need Advent. Let's face it. We can easily get distracted, focus on nonessential and superficial things and lose touch with what really matters. Our attentions wander. We daydream and even become a bit overwhelmed and tired. All of the stresses and demands of life consume us and we find ourselves constantly trying to play catch up rather than relishing the moment of the now. "Now" moments are so fleeting. They flash before us like those squiggly lines on a screen. Present moments go as quickly as they come but it is important to discover them and rest in them as often as we can. Though gone in a flash, these now moments of encounter with God teach powerful lessons and offer a grounding in truth that can be found nowhere else. It's the grace of Advent to become watchful and attentive because we are never sure when God will surprise us.

God loves surprises and love thrives on them! God's now moments of surprises come as tender instants of intimate connection where I find profound peace, experience joy, and rest in love. These are Advent times reflective of the now moments when Christ first was born, when God surprises us during every time we care to watch and when the great surprise of Christ's second coming dawns upon us all. But, to discover the grandeur and experience the awe of these now times, we have to be ready. We have to want to be there. We have to believe. And, we have to have the desire to soak in as much as we can in the time we have before us.

WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Is 63:16-19; 64:2-7/Ps 80:2-3, 15-19/1 Cor 1:3-9/Mk 13:33-37 [1 Advent]
Monday: Rom 10:9-18/Ps 19:8-11/Mt 4:18-22 [St. Andrew]
Tuesday: Is 11:1-10/ Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17/Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday: Is 25:6-10/Ps 23:1-3a, 3-6/Mt 15:29-37
Thursday: Is 26:1-6/Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27/Mt 7:21, 24-27 [St. Francis Xavier]
Friday: Is 29:17-24/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/Mt 9:27-31 [St. John Damascene]
Saturday: Is 30:19-26/Ps 147:1-6/Mt 9:35-10:8
Next Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-14/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8 [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 John's Church. Contact their parish office for more information and to register your child (814.454.2873).

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, Fr. Michael Polenik, at 1.800.374.3723.

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 Rose Marie at 814.923.4438.

"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 Kay (825-7328) or Shirley (452-3395) from Saint Stanislaus, or Kathy Benes (898-1091) or Kathy Smith (392-8974) from Holy Trinity.

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 Linda at 814.864.8476.

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 Ray Luniewski at 882-1032.

PROLIFE COMMUNITY

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

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. 30th - Joseph & Anne Markiewicz Family
Tues., Dec. 1st - Doris Inter (Family)
Wed., Dec. 2nd - Mary Ann Hallman (her Cousins)
Thurs., Dec. 3rd - Patricia Jenks (Vash Ishman)
Fri., Dec. 4th - Geroge & Josephine Mielnik (Richard & Patricia Mielnik)
Sat., Dec. 5th, 4:00PM - For the People of St. Stanislaus (Pro Populo)
Sun., Dec. 6th, 9:00AM - Special Intention (Doug & Eleanor)



Our sanctuary candle burns for **A SPECIAL INTENTION** as gifted by Janet & Jim Piotrowski.

This is not the year
to get everything you
want. This is the year
to appreciate everything
you have.

MIRACLES ABOUND

Our annual Advent reflection booklets, "Miracles Abound," are available in the vestibule for a meager donation of \$1.25. Feel free to take one and leave behind your donation in the envelope provided. Happy Advent!

CHRISTMAS PIEROGI AND CZARNINA SALE

Stock up on your Polish favorites in time for your Christmas celebrations! Czarnina with noodles is \$10 per quart. Pierogi are \$10 for a half dozen; \$20 for a dozen. Pre-order only. **Order deadline is December 5th.** Phone-In Pre-Orders:



Alice: 814-825-0724
John: 814-572-0755
Jackie: 814-881-9862
Becky: 814-823-4506

Orders can be picked up in the Social Hall the weekend of **December 19th-20th.**

OPLATKI...

... will be available for a monetary donation in the vestibule following Masses beginning November 28-29. They can also be picked up in the Parish Office M-F, 9AM-3PM.

MONTHLY SCRIP ORDER SCHEDULE

Christmas is fast approaching. Consider the gift of Scrip cards! They work just like gift cards, except that the parish receives a "kick back" for each one purchased. Order forms are available in the Parish Office or in the back of the church. The following is the order/pick up schedule:

ORDER ON	AVAILABLE BY
November 28-29.....	December 5-6
December 12-13	December 19-20
December 26-27	January 2-3

NOT AVAILABLE...

Again, due to an earlier deadline because of the holiday, our financial information could not be prepared prior to the publication of the bulletin. An update will be provided next weekend.

COMING SOON...

A private burial service was held for **DAVID DeLUCA** on Tuesday, November 17th. A private burial service was held on Friday, November 20th for **ELLA MAE NOWOCZYNSKI**. Please remember them and their families in your prayers. Also remember FR. JAMES O'HARA and MSGR. GERALD ORBANEK, both of whom passed away recently. "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord..."

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Keeping in mind the uncertain nature of the pandemic, we intend to observe our traditional Christmas Mass schedule:

CHRISTMAS EVE: 4:00PM
CHRISTMAS DAY: 9:30AM
NEW YEAR'S EVE: 4:00PM
NEW YEAR'S DAY: 9:30AM

THE ADVENT WREATH

Each season in the liturgical calendar comes with its own local and regional rituals. During the Advent season, wreathes adorn church sanctuaries and family dining room tables. You may have said Advent wreath prayers in childhood or taken a turn lighting the candles. The Advent wreath is full of symbolism about Christ and his coming at Christmas. The wreath is made of evergreen boughs, reminding us that the life of grace doesn't falter with the changing seasons. It always remains fresh and new. Similarly, a circular wreath reminds us of the eternal, never-ending nature of God's love.

Candles remind us that Christ is the light of the world, the One who "shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." We use four candles to represent each week of Advent. Traditionally they come in the liturgical colors of the season. Purple has historically represented penance and sacrifice. We see the same color for the season of Lent. On the third Sunday of Advent, however, we light a rose color. The priest will wear rose vestments at Mass. Gaudete Sunday means "rejoice" in Latin. On the third Sunday of Advent, we're roughly halfway through the season. The Church chooses the midpoint to remind us to celebrate in the midst of our anticipation! Whatever the color and whatever the day, the Advent wreath is a beautiful practice to focus our attention on Christ's coming at Christmas.

Holy Trinity Parish Community

Holy Trinity Annual Christmas Market

Orders are being taken until December 7th for Holy Trinity's Christmas Market sponsored by our PCEP families. Credit cards are accepted and payment is due at the time of ordering. Stock up for the holidays! Cookies, pierogi, nut rolls, sweet breads, oplatki, and more! Orders can be picked up in the Social Hall on December 18th from 4-7PM, and December 19th from 9AM-Noon. Order forms are available at www.holytrinityrc.org, at the Parish Office, or by calling Edith at 814.456.5300.

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon., Nov. 30th - For Living & Deceased Mothers of Holy Trinity
Tues., Dec. 1st - Kulig, Laszczewski, & Habas Families (Estate)
Wed., Dec. 2nd - The Souls in Purgatory
Thurs., Dec. 3rd - Members of St. Catherine Society-PNA #469
Fri., Dec. 4th - Shultz & Philips Family (Shirley & Nancy Schultz)
Sat., Dec. 5th, 5:15PM - For the People of Holy Trinity (Pro Populo)
Sun., Dec. 6th, 10:30AM - Bonnie Fallon (Judy Tuccheri)



Sanctuary Candle burns this week in memory of **FRANCIS MATUSIAK** as gifted by Deacon Tom Matusiak.



2 – Timothy Herbstritt
3 – Roman Luniewski & Mary Ann Merski
5 – E.J. Nitkiewicz & Eric Kempisty

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Keeping in mind the uncertain nature of the pandemic, we intend to observe our traditional Christmas Mass schedule:

Christmas Eve: 4:30PM

Christmas Day: 10:00AM

NEW YEAR'S EVE: 5:00PM

NEW YEAR'S DAY: 10:00AM

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS

We are accepting monetary donations for decorations and flowers for our Church during the Christmas Season. The donation can be placed in an envelope marked "Christmas Flower Donations". Place the envelope in the collection basket or Mass or drop off at the Parish Office, no later than 12/20/2020. Please print the names of those you wish to be remembered on the Christmas Flower Flyer.

NOT AVAILABLE...

COMING SOON...

Again, due to an earlier deadline because of the holiday, our financial information could not be prepared prior to the publication of the bulletin. An update will be provided next weekend.

Advent Word Search

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

Words to Find

Words can be found left to right and up and down.

- Advent
- Wreath
- Candles
- Purple
- Hope
- Peace
- Joy
- Love
- Mary
- Joseph
- Jesus



WELCOME TO ADVENT

Advent and Lent are the two penitential seasons of the church year. However, Advent is a season in anticipation of the birth of Christ in time. Now, what is meant by "the birth of Christ in time"? Our four Sundays of Advent are not just Sundays in preparation for the birth of a child destined to become the Savior of the nations, but the birth of a child every day in the hearts of every Christian and the future return of the second coming in time where everything will be taken back by our God.

In today's Gospel, for some this reading might strike fear into their hearts: "...perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright." Even today, we hear about doomsday sayers professing the end of the world on a particular date. To be sure, the end of the world will come! However, we truly do not know the time. Only God knows when God will call everything to return to him. In the final lines of today's Gospel we are told to "be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent."

This first Sunday in the season of Advent is a time for us to joyfully await the coming of Christ for the first time, at birth; for the second time, into our everyday lives; and looking forward to the last time when he will come to take all of creation back to his Father.

"Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come."

- Mark 13:33

News for Our Partnership

#iGiveCatholic 2020

The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Pennsylvania is facilitating the 2020 #iGiveCatholic Giving Day. With your participation, we look forward to surpassing our 2020 donations. Especially during this year of pandemic, your support of local Catholic organizations is critical.

On December 1st, the #iGiveCatholic Giving Day, your gift will help your parish receive extra funds for ongoing projects for the upkeep for our parish maintenance and improvements. **Every gift of \$25 or more will go further with matching funds provided by local matching funds sources!** You can make a difference with your gift.

All gifts you make to your respective parish from November 16th - 30th (advanced giving period), or on December 1 "Giving Day," either online or offline through a gift of cash or check directly to your parish, will increase our impact by allowing us to maintain our facilities. Visit <https://erie.igivecatholic.org> for more information, or to make an online donation.



"Amazon Smile" is a website operated by Amazon that let's you enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping as is found on "amazon.com." The difference is that when you shop on Amazon Smile, the "Amazon Smile Foundation" will donate a percentage of the purchase price directly to our respective parishes. To start, simply follow the link:

Saint Stan's: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-0967487>

Holy Trinity: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1091810>

POLISH FALCONS RE-OPENING

Nest 431, located on East 3rd Street, will re-open on Sunday, December 6th, from Noon-5PM. Over 50 baskets will be raffled off for \$10 for 25 tickets. Winner need not be present. Proceeds benefit the Benedictine Sisters ministries and the Children's Art House. Masks are required and social distancing will be observed. Additional games of chance will also be available.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As the number of Covid cases in the county and throughout the country continues to surge, we remain vigilant in promoting a safe environment in which to worship. Given my near-daily interactions with college students - in the classroom, with my fraternity, and with my hockey team - I am considered "at high risk" for exposure to the virus. Consequently, out of an abundance of caution, I have voluntarily submitted to a weekly Covid test for the safety of our communities. I have been tested through Gannon University every Thursday morning; I receive my results every Friday morning, so that I - and you! - can have confidence going into every weekend that I am not a carrier of the virus. I have undergone this weekly rapid testing for the past four weeks, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Please remain vigilant - wash your hands, wear a mask, and maintain distance - so that we can continue to keep our communities safe and healthy. We will continue to sanitize our churches (as we did the Social Hall at Holy Trinity) after every Mass. Continue to pray for a quick end to this pandemic, and for all those affected by it.

- Fr. Jason

TOWARD MORE EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION

Of the many challenges the pandemic has imposed on us in our parishes' ability to communicate frequently and efficiently with our people. Mass mailings are too cost prohibitive. We would like to begin building a parish e-mail distribution list. To be included on this list, **please send Fr. Jason an email at glover001@gannon.edu.** Indicate who in your household will have access to the email.

CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE AND MARKET

Our Lady of Mount Carmel is sponsoring a Christmas Bake Sale and Market on December 12-13. The sale features nut bread, pumpkin rolls, cookies, pepperoni balls, pierogi, czarnina, and cabbage rolls. All orders must be made in advance and prepaid. Order forms can be obtained online at www.olmc-erie.org or at the parish office. Pick-up is from 3-5PM on Saturday and 8:30-11AM on Sunday.

THE 31 CLUB - PRAYING FOR VOCATIONS

11/30 Edie Luniewski & Ed Czulewicz; 12/1 Kathy Smith, Debbie Majewski, & Mary Speice;
12/2 Patty Czulewicz & John Oldenski; 12/3 Judy Tucceri & Jackie Vargo; 12/4 Ed Czulewicz, & Evelyn & Ed Selleny;
12/5 Mary Ann Merski & Michelle Inter; 12/6 Msgr Dan Magraw & Joan Oldenski

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

11/30) Msgr. Henry Kriegle; 12/1) Fr. Bernie Urbaniak; 12/2) Msgr. Dan Magraw; 12/3) Fr. Jason Glover;
12/4) Bishop Donald Trautman; 12/5) Bishop Lawrence Persico; 12/6) Fr. Tom Whitman

Sunday, Nov 29, 2020

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Keep your eyes open

Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:33-37
"What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'"

Advent brings with it a new gospel to guide us through the new liturgical year: Mark, the shortest of the four narratives about Jesus. Consider reading all 16 chapters at the start of the liturgical year to grasp the breathless beauty of Mark's story. Reflect on other ways to stay alert to new spiritual discoveries, in keeping with Jesus' summons: "Watch!" Pay attention, not just to the news of the day but also to the movements of the Spirit in you. Where might you be prompted to forgive, be generous, get involved, or keep silent.

Monday, Nov 30, 2020

FEAST OF ANDREW, APOSTLE

First responder

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

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

Saint Andrew is sometimes known as the "first called" apostle because of his early encounter and following of Jesus, alongside his better-known brother and fellow fisherman Simon Peter. When confronting his own crucifixion in the year 60, it is said Andrew chose an X-shaped cross, or saltire, because he felt unworthy to be crucified on the same kind of cross as Jesus. Give first-called Andrew a special place in your heart.

Tuesday, Dec 01, 2020

ADVENT WEEKDAY

A light shines in the darkness

Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24

"There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain."

In this first week of Advent, the church highlights the theme of hope. We remember that the "people who walk in darkness will see a great light." Good news at this time of long nights as we are reeling mentally, physically, financially, emotionally from the coronavirus pandemic and find it hard to cope. But today is also World AIDS Day, a time to remember another virus-borne pandemic that has killed more than 30 million worldwide, calling to mind the inspiring way our world can come together at its best to respond to terrible diseases. Pray for an increase in hope and healing today.

Wednesday, Dec 02, 2020

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Martyrs in our time

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

"My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have nothing to eat."

Forty years ago today, four American churchwomen were murdered in Santiago Nonualco, El Salvador. Maryknoll sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline sister Dorothy Kazel, and lay missionary Jean Donovan were victims of the country's civil war, killed by members of the Salvadoran National Guard. The women knew they faced danger and yet they could not leave the people. Jean Donovan wrote in a letter two weeks before her death: "Several times I have decided to leave El Salvador. I almost could, except for the children, the poor bruised victims of this insanity." Inspired by the life and martyrdom of Archbishop Saint Oscar Romero, all four women shared a commitment to the church's "preferential option for the poor." Ita, Maura, Dorothy, and Jean—you walk with us still and we remember.

Thursday, Dec 03, 2020

MEMORIAL OF FRANCIS XAVIER, PRIEST

Gain from apparent loss

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

"The house... did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock."

While focus is often on Francis' youthful fervor, which sparked his missionary adventures in Asia, less emphasis falls on his maturation. In Japan, he learned to appreciate local culture, connecting it with the gospel. While ocean travel in the 16th century was perilous, long separation from Ignatius of Loyola may have been an even greater suffering. Francis was one of Ignatius' first companions at the founding of the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, as they are commonly known. And imagine Francis' disappointment when he couldn't reach his ultimate dream destination: China. Have you ever had a "dream deferred," an unrealized goal? What have you learned from the apparent failure that you might not have learned from success?

Friday, Dec 04, 2020

MEMORIAL OF JOHN OF DAMASCUS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

An iconic witness

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

"Then he touched their eyes and said, 'Let it be done for you according to your faith.' And their eyes were opened."

History takes some strange turns. John Damascene is considered one of the great fathers of the Eastern Church, known today for its beautiful iconographic representations of the communion of saints. Yet back in the seventh century, John had to *defend* the use of icons against a movement in the East to ban them. And who protected him from being arrested by his powerful opponents? The Muslim caliph of Damascus under whose rule John lived and served administratively. Beneath the twists of history, search for the hidden story of salvation, unfolding through the centuries and before our eyes in these iconic times as well.

Saturday, Dec 05, 2020

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Pay it forward

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

"Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give"

Why is it that the season of Lent seems to get all the instructions of what to do—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving—but with Advent, we have no handy summary about what to actually do during the season—besides wait? Sure, we have our creches and wreaths, maybe even a Jesse tree or, better yet, an Advent calendar with chocolate hidden behind each door. While all these customs are good, how can we "effect"—that is, bring about—the new life we so eagerly await? The world may have an answer for us. Today marks International Volunteer Day. How can you put into action on behalf of others your faith and expectation of new life in God?

A PRAYER FOR THE
First Sunday of Advent

God of light and life,
give us hope as we wait
for your coming again.
When we are tempted
to be grateful to have found you
while others are lost,
send us out into the darkness
in search of those
who need you most.
Amen.



