

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2017

Mass Intentions

Thursday, December 7th

6:30 P.M. – Sweet Home – Gladney & Betty Harrell, Sr.,
Oscar & Lilly Rau

Friday, December 8th

7 A.M. – Sweet Home – Laddie & Wanda Tomek

Saturday, December 9th

5 P.M. – Sweet Home – Louis E. Pustka

Sunday, December 10th

7 A.M. – Sweet Home – Lillie Chaloupka
Special Intention

9 A.M. – Koerth – J. T. & Benita DeBord

Sanctuary Candle Intention

The Sanctuary Candle will burn this week in memory of
Mrs. Wilma Ebner.

This Sunday's Holy Scriptures

Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37

Your Gift to God: November 26th

Sweet Home	\$1,284
Online Giving	\$20
Building Fund	\$1
Koerth	\$639
Building Fund	\$80

May God reward your generosity!

Celebrate the Lord's Abundant Mercy

Each Saturday the Sacrament of Reconciliation
(Penance/Confession) is available from 4:00 P.M. to 4:40
P.M. in the Sweet Home confessional.

Special Collection

A special collection for the Retirement Fund for
Religious will be taken up at all Masses next
weekend, December 9-10.

*“Show us, Lord, your love;
and grant us your salvation.”*

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the
Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8th, is a holy day of
obligation.

Mass Schedule:

Thursday, December 7th – 6:30 P.M. (Vigil Mass)

Friday, December 8th – 7:00 A.M.

Little Blue Books

With Advent starting we have available in the
church each entrance the “Little Blue Book”
devotionals. These simple and brief daily
reflections can assist us in making the Advent and
Christmas seasons a truly spiritual journey.

Daily Reflections for Advent

In addition to having the handy Little Blue Books,
you can also find on the parish website a link to
Bishop Robert Barron's Daily Advent
Reflection. Check it out:

www.qpcatholicchurch.com.

Advent Penance Services

All services begin at 5:30 P.M.

Monday, December 11 – Shiner

Tuesday, December 12 - Moulton

Thursday, December 14 – Yoakum

Friday, December 15 - Hallettsville

Feast of Christmas Mass Schedule

Sweet Home - December 24th – 5:00 P.M.

10:00 P.M.

Koerth - December 25th – 9:00 A.M.

Christmas Flowers

Extra envelopes for the Christmas Flower donations may be found in the Church entrances. Donors and their listed memorials will be in the bulletin after Christmas. This applies to Queen of Peace and St. John the Baptist.

Live Production of Maximilian: Saint of Auschwitz

Maximilian: Saint of Auschwitz, the moving, live production performed by Leonardo Defilippis of Saint Luke Productions, will be presented at **Holy Family Catholic Church in Victoria on Tuesday, December 5th at 6:30 p.m.**

Experience firsthand the story of the heroic priest, Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, who courageously fought the forces of evil, and offered his life for another man in Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II. The program is filled with all the elements of professional theater, runs 90 minutes, and is suitable for ages 10 and up.

Admission is free. For additional information, contact Holy Family Parish Office at 361-573-5304 or visit www.hfccvic.org.

Religious Goods

The St. Joseph Pastoral Center has various types of religious goods available for sale in the lobby. There are religious cards, crucifixes, rosaries, Bibles, prayer books (English and Spanish), Advent wreaths, religious Christmas ornaments, statues, cemetery candleholders, etc....just the beginning of the list. All are available during office hours. It is never too early to start your Christmas shopping!

Advent Prayer

Father, in the wilderness of the Jordan you sent a messenger to prepare people's hearts for the coming of your Son. Help me to hear his words and repent of my sins, so that I may clearly see the way to walk, the truth to speak, and the life to live for Him, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Inspirational Thought

"O good Cross, made beautiful by the body of the Lord, so long desired, so ardently loved, so unceasingly sought, now thou art ready for my eager soul. Receive me from among men and restore me to my Master, that by thee he may receive me, who by thee redeemed me."

--St. Andrew

Diocese of Victoria 30th Annual Catholic Conference

**Saturday, January 27, 2018
Holy Family Church, Wharton**

The seven principles of **Catholic Social Teaching** will be presented by 22 speakers in 32 workshops. The titles, descriptions and presenter vitae can be seen on the diocesan website.

Also see the newly revised flyer and registration form, mailed in mid-October, for titles and names of speakers. If you did not receive one, call us at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2224, 2225, or 2227.

On line registration is now open. Go to the Diocesan website www.victoriadiocese.org to register.

Cemetery Inquiries

Anyone with questions regarding the Catholic Cemeteries should contact the local representatives for the Cemeteries.

Queen of Peace:

Harvey Matusek & J. O. Hermes

St. John the Baptist:

Gene Velek & Jerry/Joyce Kurtz

They can provide the needed information and help with locating available plots. They will also provide the needed details to complete a purchase/reservation and receive a deed for record purposes.

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Waiting and praying in joyful hope for the graces of Advent and Christmas

Tony Rossi

The holiday season is upon us once again! That means we'll soon be buying gifts, decorating the tree, and maybe attending a Christmas party or two. But as great as those things are, we don't want them to distract us from the Christ-centered nature of the season. That's why it's so important to make time in our schedules to prayerfully observe Advent.

I recently interviewed two authors whose books of daily reflections, prayers, and meditations are specifically designed to help you do just that. Mary DeTurrís Poust, communications director for the diocese of Albany, penned "Waiting in Joyful Hope," while Sister Kathryn Hermes, along with several of her fellow Pauline sisters, authored "Advent Christmas Grace."

For DeTurrís Poust, Advent doesn't come easy. It requires slowing down, she says, "and I'm not a very patient person. I talk fast, I walk fast, I like everything to happen now. Learning [to slow down] has been important for me, and I'm still working on it."

The proximity of Thanksgiving to the start of Advent is appropriate because gratitude should play a role in the season. DeTurrís Poust says, "We hear in pop psychology and on talk shows about the importance of gratitude journals, yet there is that kernel of deep truth there. We [should] start looking at not just the big things in our lives that we're thankful for...Advent calls us to be much more aware of the smaller things. For me, if I'm leaving early [for work] and somebody left their Christmas lights on the night before and they're still on at 6 o'clock in the morning, there's something almost mystical and magical about that whole thing. Those little moments call you back to being grateful for the smaller blessings and larger ones."

Sister Kathryn adds, "Thanksgiving is a beautiful time when families come together. Advent is this beautiful time when the entire Christian family, in a sense, comes together. We read salvation history. We discover the larger family we're a part of."

Both authors note the importance of Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) on the way they put together their books. It's not a passive experience, but rather a deliberate effort to enter the Scriptures and see how God is trying to communicate with us today. That can be especially important for people enduring pain and struggles during the holiday season.

Sister Kathryn advises, "I often suggest walking into the stable with your pain, kind of like the little drummer boy...Walk into the Scriptures with your pain, and imagine picking up the Christ child or sitting next to Mary or Joseph and allowing the presence of Jesus to touch you. The words that are in these books are powerful, and they can give us new thoughts and new direction. The Holy Spirit can speak through them and open up a new door into our hearts, especially for people who are carrying the pain of loss, depression or failure. You've got to bring your own reality into these books and allow Jesus to meet you where you are."

DeTurrís Poust knows that we can miss the relevance of the Christmas story to our modern lives because we've heard it so many times. Entering the story ourselves can make a difference in how we respond.

She says, "We ought to think about Mary hearing this message [from the angel Gabriel]. She was greatly troubled. She had to contemplate that. Then moving forward with Joseph, everything that transpired were difficult human things they had to face. We can forget, when we're caught in our own trouble, that Mary and Joseph faced real challenges, not knowing everything that was coming. [But] they trusted, and we can do the same. We can look to them and find peace and trust in that place with them."

Ultimately, Advent is meant to bring us closer to Jesus. Sister Kathryn says, "More than making a friend of Jesus is realizing that He has befriended us. Just the awe and the humbling reality that God – the divinity, my Creator – wanted to be my friend!..If Pope Francis came and said, 'Sister Kathryn, I want to be your friend,' I'd be like, 'Wow, that is really cool!'"

DeTurrís Poust concludes, "I think children and adults need to be reminded that [friendship] exists. It's not something we have to earn [or] seek in a special way. We just have to turn ourselves toward Jesus and put ourselves in God's presence. Again, it comes back to that daily time spent in prayer."

