

A MESSAGE FROM FATHER VINCENT

November 24, 2021

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Happy Thanksgiving! Happy Advent!

Advent is a time for us to recall that Christ came to us in a manger so many years ago as a baby. God Incarnate! It's a time for us to remember that Christ comes to us each day of our lives in the miracles that we experience, in the people that we meet, in the blessings that He bestows upon each of us and even in our difficulties and our struggles. God is with us! It is also a time to remember that Christ will come again in glory. We wait in joyful anticipation for His second coming.

This weekend, we will light the first candle on our Advent wreath. Each candle has a special significance. The first candle is for **HOPE**. The second candle is for **PEACE**. The third candle is for **JOY**. The fourth candle is for **LOVE**. As we light each candle, we think of our Advent journey: **Hope becomes Peace. Peace becomes Joy. Joy becomes Love. Love becomes Christ.**

The Advent Giving Trees will be up beginning Saturday, November 27th. Thank you for your constant generosity in helping those in need this Christmas!

Please join us for our Advent Retreat this coming Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.! Monday will be in the Church, Tuesday will be in the school gym (we have First Reconciliation in the Church that night), and Wednesday will be back in the Church. Dr. Dianne Traflet from Seton Hall University will be our guest speaker. She is wonderful and she will most certainly help us all as we begin our Advent journeys together.

Please join us on Friday, December 3rd at 7 p.m. in the Courtyard for the OLM First Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. If you would like to bring your favorite Christmas cookies, please do! We will have hot chocolate and sing Christmas carols.

Join us also on December 8th (the Feast of the Immaculate Conception) at 8 p.m. in the Lowering Gathering Space for Movie Night (popcorn will be served!). We will watch the movie "Power In My Hands" about the power of the rosary in our lives today.

Now, some CYO sports news – our 7th and 8th grade girls' volleyball team (Bergen County CYO champions!) advanced to the finals after winning again Saint Cassian's (Upper Montclair) this past Sunday. From a pool of over 50 teams, OLM played Saint Bartholomew's (Scotch Plains) on Monday night in the championship game. They played a great game! Although they did not win the championship this year, we are so proud and thankful for the successful season and for the efforts of these young ladies, their coaches, and their families. They are incredible. We will honor them at the 5:30 p.m. Mass on Saturday night.

On Saturday, December 11th at the 5:30 p.m. Mass, we will honor four young parishioners who are the recipients of the Youth Recognition Awards. These awards are given to outstanding leaders in youth ministry on the parish and school levels. When exceptional leaders are recognized and honored, they receive the praise they deserve and serve as models for others to imitate. We are proud to honor Kailey Levinson, Gianluca Tredici, Nora Kavanagh, and Kerry Perez.

Just an update on our safety measures...I have asked all the Priests, Deacons and Eucharistic Ministers to wear masks as we distribute communion going forward. As flu season approaches and we get together with family and friends for the holidays, we need to be extra vigilant. If you are unvaccinated, we ask that you please wear a mask. If you are vaccinated and are still a bit uncomfortable being in public settings, please wear a mask.

As we begin Advent, I would like to end my message with a prayer:

Dear Jesus, I long for Your coming. The promise of new light is there for us if we believe. Protect us in these days ahead and let us experience the light of Your presence in our lives to the joy we so long to find in You.

Lift us up and give us the promise of salvation and the light and saving grace of Your love. Amen.

Let us continue to pray for each other. May we have a Blessed and Happy Advent.

In Christ's Peace and with great love for all of you,

+ Father Vincent