



WITNESS

A life showing the way to fulfilling a prophecy

It was a winter Saturday when a Christian Brother who favored outdoor manual labor over studying in the library was painting a fence at the school in Guatemala where he was a teacher. That's what he was doing when he was gunned down by forces of the national militia.



Fr. Tom's
Note

On the day next month when Brother James Miller is beatified on his rise to sainthood, I will join hundreds, maybe thousands, of others at the Beatification Mass in Guatemala. In the first reading we'll hear of a world transformed by "wisdom and understanding," justice and faithfulness. Transformed to such a tumultuous extent that rules governing nature are tossed aside: wolves are guests of lambs, leopards rest with goats, cows and bears are neighbors. And a child will lead them all.

We can reject it all as fairy tale ridiculousness, or we might marvel at the potential for such a day — when human propensities for violence and incivility are overcome by more divine forces.

Of course lions will not cavort with lambs, but teachers could paint a fence without being murdered. We honor our holy women and men, such as James Miller, because they give us a glimpse into realizing what the prophet describes. They witness to what it means to be Advent people. **TL**

MARANATHA ADVENT'S DUAL NATURE CONTAINED IN ONE WORD

The first word we will utter as we begin Advent is, admittedly, a strange one. It looks odd, it's challenging to pronounce. In a season of dramatic scripture — swords beaten into plowshares, demands from the wilderness to repent, shocking angelic dreams and greetings — it is all vowels and soft consonants. It is to vocabulary what Jello is to food.

It's another one of those strange church words: ambo, sacristy, chasuble — we have plenty of them. Despite its peculiarity, however, it is actually a powerful word denoting hope, trust and confidence.

The word is significant not only for what it says, but also in terms of the language from which it is derived. It is Aramaic in origin, the language Jesus spoke. He wouldn't have spoken this word because it refers to him, but his first followers most assuredly used this word. It's found in Paul's first letter to the people in Corinth, Chapter 16, verse 22. The word also appears in other texts of the early Church.

There is dispute, however, among language and scripture scholars as to how it is spelled or, more specifically, whether it is one or two words. Depending on

which side you take, the word would mean "our Lord has come" or "come, O Lord." Either definition makes it a perfect



word for Advent.

Maranatha (or *Marana tha*) is the word we'll sing as we gather for Lord's Day Masses in Advent. We'll follow the original Aramaic word with English phrases favoring both intents: "Maranatha, come, Lord Jesus;" "Maranatha, God with us." But, which is it: Are we asking God to come and be with us, or are we professing that God is with us? Obviously, it's both!

We don't pretend that what we celebrate at Christmas hasn't already occurred. It has, dramatically and wonderfully. We're not preparing to celebrate a birthday, but rather the Incarnation — God's indwelling among all humanity in the person of Jesus.

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One of the most daunting tasks that ever confronts a parish community — aside from, of course, always being dedicated to living the Gospel with love and courage! — is building or renovating a church, the community's place of worship. It is always a monumental undertaking and not merely because some churches are very large or because such projects invariably cost lots of money.

Construction and re-fashioning are challenging because they demand insight as to the existing needs and realities of an often fluid and diverse faith community, as well as foresight as to what that parish will look like and need decades into the future.

Those powerful realities were at play when our founding members — several of whom still thankfully worship among us each Lord's Day — built our church in 1951, as well as the formidable effort of 1986 toward "Renewing the House of the Church" in which the altar and ambo were moved to the center of the church and most of the assembly seated in a semi-circle around the sanctuary. Another feat of insight and foresight was realized in 2000 with the addition of a baptismal font allowing full immersion and adjoining space for assembly participation.

The creativity, vision and sacrifice of parishioners, parish leaders and pastors at these moments and the years in between have allowed the people of St. Anne Parish to worship with style and grace.

THE CHURCH, the Body of Christ, is a living, vital entity, however. As such, new priorities become emphasized or better understood. Re-modeling and additions occur without fully realizing the impact on the larger picture. The composition and size of the assembly evolves. What's always seemed to *work* may not in reality be working all that well.

These are some of the general concepts that have guided consideration over the past several years as to re-creating the interior of our church. Those conversations began as early as 2013 and became more intentional with a capital campaign in 2017 that identified funds for the "update and repair of church interior." Campaign materials offered a brief written explanation of what was being considered, but there were no drawings or architectural renderings to help people better appreciate what was being considered.

Fr. Tom arrived with

the campaign well underway, but he was reluctant to move quickly on renovating the church. First of all, as a new pastor, he

from now. Regrettably I come to this after the game is already underway, but still in early innings. In the end, as pas-



Special attention must be given to the unity of the entire liturgical space. ... The space should communicate an integrity (a sense of oneness, of wholeness) and a sense of being the gathering place of the initiated community. ... The wholeness of the total space should be strikingly evident.

— *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, U.S. Bishops*

wanted to get a better sense of the community and the church before proceeding. He also wanted time to review the process that had unfolded and assess whether all elements intended to guide church construction and remodeling had been considered.

As Fr. Tom explained in November of last year, "I'm not eager to move forward without stepping back a bit to gain a more clear, well-rooted understanding as to what is best for us to do — for our community today and the parish of St. Anne 50 years

tor, I need to be on board with whatever we do, and so I think it would be helpful for us to do a bit more re-imagining."

WHICH IS WHAT has occurred over the past year. With the Pastoral Council's support, a committee was formed to study Church documents guiding church architecture and worship, the history and evolution of our changing worship space, as well as the needs and potential needs of our

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CELEBRATING ADVENT AS A FAMILY

I remember as a child the anticipation of Christmas, those long weeks of December that seemed to drag on forever. As an adult my experience is that the weeks pass too quickly, there is never enough time to fit in everything.

Our lives are so hurried. The danger of rushing to Christmas is that we miss out on the beauty of the liturgical season that precedes it. The temptation is that when we look ahead we miss what's happening now. Advent calls us to slow down, to enjoy the quiet darkness of this season, to prepare our hearts first and then ready ourselves for the coming of Christmas.

Advent is a time of mindful preparation. So how can we as families in this traditional-



ly busy time of the year celebrate Advent and not miss out on the experience of the season?

- ◆ Find materials at the Advent resource table in the church entrance to use together.
- ◆ Try to share at least one meal each week as a family, use that time to pray together (see below for prayer ideas) and share the experiences of your day.
- ◆ Participate as a family in planning what to purchase and give in the **REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR** to help those in our community.
- ◆ Attend Lord's Day Mass together as a family. Afterward go to dinner or brunch as a family and talk about the homily, readings, music, etc.
- ◆ Participate in Advent gatherings of the Disciple Small Groups (details at right).
- ◆ If you would like more ideas on how to enter into this beautiful season of Advent, please go to the Disciple Formation page at www.stanneswausau.org. You'll find links to various Advent resources and prayers that you can use with your family. We encourage you to truly make time to celebrate Advent this year as a family.

— Lee Ann Lella, Disciple Formation co-director

LITTLE BLUE BOOKS

These books to guide our prayer through Advent and Christmas are available at all church entrances.

Advent & Christmas

SMALL GROUPS FOR ADVENT

The Disciple Small Groups that have been very well received as they've met through the fall will continue during Advent, and all parishioners are invited to join the group that seems most convenient. Group conversations will revolve around the readings proclaimed at Sunday Mass, as well as other Advent themes. Groups meet in the Fireside Room, downstairs from the main entrance, at 6 p.m. Monday, 5 p.m. Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday and noon Thursday.

BLESSED JAMES: ADVENT WITNESS

Fr. Tom and parishioners attending the Beatification of Blessed James Miller on Dec. 7 in Guatemala will share the story of this martyr from Central Wisconsin, as well as reflect upon their pilgrimage to celebrate his Beatification, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 19 in the downstairs meeting rooms.

CELEBRATING RECONCILIATION

There will be numerous opportunities to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent:

- ◆ Wednesday, Dec. 11, 5-6 p.m., St. Anne.
- ◆ Wednesday, Dec. 18, 5-6 p.m., St. Anne.
- ◆ Sunday, Dec. 8, 3:30 p.m., Holy Name.
- ◆ Sunday, Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m., St. Matthew.
- ◆ Tuesday, Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m., St. Michael.
- ◆ Saturday, Dec. 21, 10 a.m., Resurrection.
- ◆ Monday, Dec. 23, 6:30 p.m., St. Therese, Schofield.
- ◆ Saturday, Dec. 14 and 21 at 9 a.m., St. Anne.
- ◆ Mondays at 6 p.m. Resurrection.

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"Our Lord has come!"

There's also the reality that what Mary initiated in giving birth to Christ remains unfinished and incomplete due to our human imperfection. Something is lacking in our fulfilling the mission of Christ, in our shining the light of Christ, in our being like Christ. As Thomas Merton, the great spiritual writer and Trappist monk, once wrote: "The Advent mystery ... is the beginning of the end of all, in us, that is not yet Christ."

Which gets to the dual nature of our Advent prayer: Our Lord has come, but we still plead for the Lord to come, striving to realize the fulfillment of the mystery, the realization of the Advent promise that the Christ born in Bethlehem will be born more clearly and resolutely, be revealed more dramatically, in who we are and how we live. Maybe even this Advent.

Maranatha!

— Fr. Tom

Solemnity of CHRISTMAS

4P Christmas Eve

6:30P Christmas Eve

9P Christmas Eve

- carols at 8:30

9:30A Christmas Day

Feast of the HOLY FAMILY

4P Saturday, Dec. 28

8:30A, 10:30A and 6P

Sunday, Dec. 29

Solemnity of MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

4P Tuesday, Dec. 31

9:30A Wednesday, Jan. 1

Solemnity of the EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

4P Saturday, Jan. 4

8:30A, 10:30A and 6P

Sunday, Jan. 5

As we remember the Magi bringing their gifts to Bethlehem, this is the weekend we invite parishioners to bring contributions for the **REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR** Project.

EPIPHANY OPEN HOUSE:

Parishioners are invited to celebrate Christmas at the rectory from 5-6:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 4.

Advent / Christmas REVERSE Giving Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Depends	2 Cake Mix	3 Toothpaste Toothbrushes	4 Reusable Cereal Bowls	5 Mouthwash	6 Women's Socks	7 Paper Towels
8 Gas Gift Cards	9 Light Hand Soap	10 Reusable Silverware	11 Adult Winter Boots	12 Shaving Cream	13 Bus Tokens	14 Bath Towels
15 Bed Sheets	16 Men's Socks	17 Hand Warmers	18 Wash Clothes	19 Cookware - Pots & Pans	20 Disposable Razors	21 Adult Men's Gloves
22 Adult Winter Hats	23 Thermal Underwear Hats	24 Women's Gloves	25 Children's Winter Hats	26 Toilet Paper	27 Lounge Bath Towels	28 Children's Socks
29 Laundry Soap	30 Children's Gloves	31 Spatulas	1 Deodorant	2 Foot Warmers	3 Children's Winter Boots	4 Feminine Hygiene Products

BRING YOUR GIFTS TO MASS ON EPIPHANY, Jan. 4/5 | DONATIONS WILL BENEFIT NEIGHBOR'S PLACE AND ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR is a twist on the Advent Calendar we find this time of year — the ones we purchase and which have a series of doors with treats behind them. They are called Advent Calendars, but really have very little to do with Advent.

The REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR puts a different spin on our Advent and Christmas observance. Instead of an Advent calendar that gives you something, the REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR suggests items we might give. It offers parishioners of all ages an opportunity to honor the season by attempting to reveal the generosity and compassion of Christ through our generosity and compassion.

This calendar identifies items that are needed by Neighbors Place and St. Vincent de Paul Society. Families, couples and individuals can plan, week by week, which items to purchase, maybe a few or maybe all of them. The "gifts" can be gathered near the Christmas tree or another prominent spot in the home.

REVERSE giving continues until the Solemnity of the Epiphany, Jan. 4/5, a day upon which we remember the gifts given by the Magi, and when we'll gather the generosity of our Advent/Christmas generosity.

CHURCH from Page 2

community. Fr. Frank Corradi, a senior priest of the diocese with a master's degree in liturgy and experience building a church, assisted the committee.

Here are some of the committee's most significant discoveries and observations:

◆ UNITY is strongly emphasized in the U.S. Bishops' instruction on churches, *Built on Living Stones*. It states, "The design of the church should reflect the unity of the entire assembly." This is meant to guide how the community gathers, how the assembly interacts with one another, common posture and movement. Such unity is challenging in the current church arrangement because some people are seated behind pillars and in corners where they are isolated from the action of worship. The church accommodates far more people than is currently needed, which fosters further separation and threatens the ideal of unity.

◆ "THE ALTAR is the natural focal point," states *Built on Living Stones*. This is not necessarily the case in our church. The prominence of the altar depends upon where you enter and where you sit. There is symbolic significance in Catholic teaching of moving from the font of Baptism to the altar of Eucharist. Ideally this symbol-

ism is realized at every Mass as worshipers arrive at the font and ultimately make their way to the altar to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. In our church people sitting in the elevated, mezzanine section aren't normally invited to the altar.

◆ THE LINK of baptismal font and altar is fundamental. "Because the rites of initiation ... begin with Baptism and are completed by the reception of the Eucharist, the baptismal font and its location reflect the Christian's journey *through* the waters of Baptism *to* the altar," states the Bishops' document. The connection of font and altar is described as an "integral relationship." The addition of the font brought a delightful, powerful new reality to our church, but it's also quite separate and disconnected from the altar. The necessary architectural or design connection is lacking.

◆ THE CHURCH has multiple entrances which creates challenges for hospitality and the sense that all worshipers are gathering as *one* community. *Built on Living Stones* presumes

that the font is "accessible to all who enter the church," which is true at the main/west entrance, but not for others.

◆ PROCESSIONS are a



significant part of worship in that they signify, ultimately, the movement of the Christian life – moving from world to worship and worship to world. As Mass begins ministers pass through the assembly as it finishes gathering. Similarly, the ministers lead the assembly in departing when worship concludes. Such processions usually flow through the midst of the assembly, which was true of our church in its initial configuration, as well as in the 1986 renovation. There was one main aisle for

Lord's Day processions, as well as for weddings, funerals and other special occasions. With the addition of the font, that dominant "center aisle" largely disappeared. It's quite a stretch to say that our current procession from the font to altar moves *through* the assembly.

◆ BETTER HOSPITALITY and accommodation of people with limited mobility and various special needs must be a priority in our re-imagining. Access to the altar and ambo for ministers is essential, as is more intentional seating or space for people in wheelchairs or limited in other ways.

THOSE WERE the key observations that influenced a re-imagining plan that has been recommended and endorsed by the Pastoral Council, and which is now being studied by Ellis Construction, a design/construction firm from Stevens Point. By early 2020 we hope to have precise details and imaging, as well as cost estimates, to present to the parish for consideration and further input. We hope this overview of our yearlong study and discernment will help you anticipate our next major step in this process, and we look forward to communicating the specifics and rationale of our proposal.

– *Re-Imagining Committee:*
Michelle Allen, Fr. Tom Lindner, Helen Luce, Jeanette LeNoir, Bob Polesnak, John Schmitt, Jill Warsaw



In remarks initiating the Connect-Grow.Serve. experience of parish renewal last month, parishioner Kendall Gullo recalled listening several weeks as appeals were made at Mass for someone to chair the St. Anne's Fish Fry. "Finally I made the call and volunteered to chair the committee," he said.

Recognizing a need in the parish, considering the potential of one's ability, or the potential of developing an ability, are part of the discernment necessary for Connect-Grow.Serve. Such discernment and response are essential for the ongoing vitality of our parish.

If you haven't retrieved your Connect-Grow-Serve packet, you can do so this weekend. If you've taken your packet, please take some time to review and respond to the pledge forms for Time & Talent and Treasure, and return them as soon as possible. If you've already returned your materials: Thank You!

ST. ANNE PARISH

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Advent begins this weekend

Join us for Mass at 4 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 a.m. Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Sunday and 6 p.m. Sunday as we begin this brief season of patient and hopeful anticipation.

TASTE OF ST. ANNE

'Could I get the recipe for this?'

What would a potluck supper be without people trying a new dish and asking for the recipe. One of several recipe-seeking dishes at the Taste of St. Anne CHILI SUPPER on Nov. 2 was parishioner Shelley Gering's Chili Cornbread Salad — a salad with "chili" in the title. We're providing Shelly's recipe here but a few chili recipes also can be found at *St. Anne Parish* on Facebook.



CHILI CORNBREAD SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package (8-1/2 ounces) cornbread/ muffin mix
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chiles, undrained
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon dried oregano
- Pinch rubbed sage
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cans (15-1/4 ounces each) whole kernel corn, drained
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese



DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare cornbread batter according to package directions. Stir in chiles, cumin, oregano and sage. Spread in a greased 8 -in. square baking pan. Bake at 400° until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 20-25 minutes. Cool.
 2. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, sour cream and dressing mix; set aside. Crumble half of the cornbread into a 13x9-in. dish. Layer with half of the beans, mayonnaise mixture, corn, tomatoes, green pepper, onions, bacon and cheese. Repeat layers (dish will be very full). Cover, refrigerate for 2 hours.
- TOTAL TIME: Prep - 20 min. + chilling; Bake - 20 + cooling