

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. This Sunday our Gospel reading for Mass begins with the first verses from St. Mark. In the first verse we read *"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."* If anything, this opening line is explosive with information. It is a declaration that Jesus is the long-awaited *Messiah* indicated by the title *"Christ"*. He is the *Anointed One* whom God promised his Chosen people of the Old Testament. It is also a declaration that this *Messiah* is also the *"Son of God."* It is a bold proclamation of faith that introduces the content of this Gospel which will reveal the identity of Jesus. This bold proclamation of faith holds together the entirety of St. Mark's Gospel. Not only is this proclamation of faith found in the beginning we also hear it proclaimed again near the end of the Gospel. At the foot of the cross at the moment of Jesus' death there is a Roman centurion standing guard. This pagan is a witness to the last moments of Jesus' life. Then as Jesus breathes his last, the Centurion says... *"Truly this man was the Son of God!"* Mark's gospel is set within the bookends of this proclamation of faith. This encapsulates the focus of Mark's account. This proclamation of faith is intended for all who will hear or read the life of Jesus and upon completing the gospel account of his life will come to the same conclusion. This is the Good News that we are to embrace and proclaim to the world.

Noticeable in St. Mark is the slow manner in which the disciples come to understand Jesus and his mission. Peter shows signs of understanding, but it is also revealed that he has a long way to go. For Mark, this is the long struggle of learning to walk by faith. Mark knows that following Jesus is a long and at times a difficult struggle. Because it is difficult it requires a great deal of trust. Highlighting this very point St. Mark alone adds the parable about the growing seed (4:26-29). Faith grows slowly like a seed that is planted. A man plants the seed. He sleeps and rises, night and day. The seed sprouts and grows yet he knows not how.

St. Mark encourages us to take up and read the Scriptures, especially the Gospel. The seed is the Word of God. The Word of God will grow slowly within us, yet we know not how. We can be assured that it is the grace of God that gives it growth. As the disciples slowly grow in knowing and understanding Jesus and his mission, we too must expect that it will take us a great deal of time to come to know and understand what it means to follow Jesus. We must trust his word. As we persevere in the faith, we hope to echo the words of the centurion and make his words our own with greater devotion and conviction... *"Truly this man is the Son of God."*

As we approach the celebration of Christmas we can meditate on the mystery of the Incarnation by our renewed participation in the life of the Church and her worship. It is through the teaching tradition of the Church that we have the doctrine on the Incarnation. This doctrine on the Incarnation is part of the Sacred Tradition of the Church. Everything we need for our salvation is found in the Church. For this reason, Jesus Christ gave us the Church as a gift, for our ongoing encounter with him throughout time. The Church is the means through which God communicates his great love to the world. The Church is the means through which our teachings are formed for our understanding. Faith seeks reason as St. Thomas Aquinas tells us. In the Church we grow in our faith as well as intellectually.

However, as in all things, God respects the one gift He has given to each of us: our Free Will. God does not force Himself upon us. Nor does God disregard our free will. Thus, it becomes a choice, a free act of the will to put our faith in God. We do this in our personal prayer time as well as when we gather

together in faith to read the Scriptures and receive the Sacraments. The encounter with Christ in the Church and her sacraments is a saving mystery. As a mystery, we will not fully understand the extent of how God works in and through the Church and in each of our lives. However, we do believe that the grace of God indeed acts in and through the Church as well as in our lives for our salvation.

We do have a model of this efficacious work of God in and through his Church. This model is the person of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Blessed Mother is a model for the Church and the Christian. Mary, as the model of the Church, is the one who carried Jesus, the Son of God within her literally. Mary also carried Jesus within her heart all throughout his and her life. This is all possible because of her "yes" to the word of God. The Word was brought to her by the Archangel and by the power of the Holy Spirit the Word became flesh and dwelt within her. Through Mary the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God (Jesus Christ) continues to live in the Church as well as in the world. The Church continues to say "Yes" to the word of God and thus bringing Jesus Christ into the world.

In fact, we can also say that Mary is the first and therefore the model for all Christians. Mary's "yes" to the word of God spoken to her is the model for all Christians. Mary's "yes" brought the Word of God into the world. This is exactly the mission for all Christian disciples. We are all to give our personal "yes" to the Word of God and thus bringing the Word of God into our personal lives as well as to the world. In a very real way, we allow God's Word (Jesus Christ) to work in our lives. This gives us another wonderful insight into the mystery of the Incarnation. As St. Augustine teaches us, we pray that we may become that which we receive: The Body of Christ. We say this of the Eucharist. We also say this about the Word of God. As Jesus' disciples we are to become his living presence in the world. This is what the Christian and the Church are to do; make Jesus Christ present to the world. It is in and through the Church that we are able to hear the Word of God clearly and give our "yes" to God. It is in the Church that we are nourished and sustained by the Word of God: Jesus Christ, in word and sacrament. It is in and through the Church that we proclaim the Word of God to the world.

Please note well that Tuesday is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8th. Morning Mass will be at 9:00 a.m. with some students attending that mass. There will also be a noon mass celebrated by Fr. Sullivan in keeping with St. Thomas' custom of a noon mass on the Holy Day. We will also offer an evening Mass at 7:00 p.m. here at St. Nicholas. Even though the obligation to attend has been lifted because of the pandemic, we are offering these opportunities for those who would like to celebrate the Holy Day.

Also please note the extra times scheduled for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for this week. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available on Monday, December 7th at 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The Sacrament will be available on Friday December 11th at 11:00 – noon and again at 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. On Saturday confessions will be heard at 11:00 – noon and at the regular time of 4:15 pm. Please plan ahead and make an effort to receive this sacrament as part of your Advent preparations.

Have a Blessed Second week of Advent.

Father Ralko

This week we pray Week II of the Liturgy of the hours.

*We pray for those who have died recently:
Sandy Young and Grace Raymond*



Church Support

November 29, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$5,034.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$1,145.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly deficit	\$(5,715.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

Friday, December 6th is the Feast Day of our Patron Saint, St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was the bishop of Myra in Turkey in the 4th Century. He is remembered for being kind and generous to the poor, to children and to those unjustly imprisoned. Legends tell that St. Nicholas gave anonymously; he did not seek praise but wanted good things to be done and the hearts of children to be delighted.

Youth Ministry News!

Catalyst Nights – Students grades 7-12 are invited to a Catalyst Night at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in the activity center on Sunday, **December 13th at 6:00 p.m.** The evening is led by the National Evangelization Team (NET), college age missionaries. The night includes dinner, presentations, games, skits, prayer, friends and fun. This is a joint, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas youth event and all teens grades 7-12 regardless of affiliation are invited. Parents are welcome!

Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition program for men and women who experienced the trauma of being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home. It is a safe place to learn how alcoholism and other family dysfunction affected the past, how it influences the present, and how to heal the wounds for a better future. Meetings are held in the St Nicholas Church Social Hall. **MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THURSDAYS at 7:00 p.m.** Please use the Silliman St. door. Meetings are expected to last no more than one hour, and masks are required. Contact James Sullivan for more Information at (740) 670 –2959.

BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS FOR NOVEMBER

\$25- Bill Hill, Dee Ginikos, Dave Weidig, Marianne Michel, Pamela Schoeppner, Larry Burkhart, Diana Dunn, Tim & Paula Mattingly

THE GIVING TREE



Every Advent we place a Giving Tree in the Church vestibule. It contains paper ornaments with gift items to be purchased for needy families. This year we will be giving the gifts to the Muskingum Valley Clinic for children, Heartbeats, Transitions, and our own homebound St. Nicholas Parishioners. Please pick an ornament, buy the requested item, wrap and securely fasten the ornament tag to the package. All packages must be returned to the church by **December 13th**. You are always so generous, and we thank you for helping others this holiday.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



will once again be ordered to adorn St. Nicholas Church in memory and in honor of our deceased loved ones. Please use the special envelope found in your contribution packet. If you do not receive envelopes, please use a plain envelope and include the name(s) of those to be remembered AND the donor's names **PRINTED CLEARLY**. Send your request to the Parish Office with the donation amount. **Names must be received by Monday, December 14th to be included in the Christmas bulletin.**

MEN OF THE EAST

The Sisters from Children of Mary, 8353 Pleasant Chapel Rd., Newark, OH 43056 will host the Men of the East for a Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration on **12/10 at 7:00 P.M.** in their Chapel. We ask that you wear a mask and observe social distancing. Men of the East is a Catholic Men's Laity Ministry comprised of all practicing Catholic Men who attend one of the twelve parishes in Knox, Licking, or Muskingum Counties. Men of the East exist to support, strengthen, and help maximize the spiritual growth of Men of the Catholic Church.

BLANKET DRIVE

Everyone loves a warm blanket on a cold night. The Good Samaritan Nurses Alumni are collecting clean blankets, new or gently used. We do this as a memorial to our nurses who have passed away. The collection will start on **December 1** and end on **December 31**. Drop off blankets at Eastside Community Ministries. Monetary donations can also be made to the Genesis Foundation by making checks payable to the Good Samaritan Nurses Alumni. Blankets are given to Eastside for their clients. If you need more information call Carol Kohler 740-453-9123. Thank you.

Bishop Rosecrans Athletic Boosters

It's time again to purchase your Booster Mania tickets for the upcoming year. \$25 each or three tickets for \$60, January 1 is the first drawing, they make a good gift. Questions: Contact Marvin Paul at 740-819-3429.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Mt. Olive Cemetery has a part time position available. Duties would include mowing, weed eating, helping to open and close graves, help pouring footers for headstones and snow removal. If interested, please call the Parish Office at 453-0597.

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SAVE THE DATE

april 17th

Columbus Catholic Young Adult Conference 2021

When: Saturday April 17th, 2021
Doors Open at 8:30am

Where: St. John Neumann Catholic Church
Sunbury, Ohio

Registration Opens December 6th:
Follow us on Instagram to be notified when
Registration goes live!

Connect with Us!
Website: www.ccyac.org
Email: info@ccyac.org
Instagram: @ccyacohio
Twitter: @ccyacohio
www.facebook.com/colscatholicyoungadultconf/

"To empower young adults to transform their communities through their identity in Christ"

Contact Patty Boggs at 453-0597 for more information.

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when something prevents you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office or our website: stnickparish.org.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Please join us each Monday at The St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. as we gather to pray the Rosary asking Our Lady's Intercession for the many needs of our nation, community, and parish.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, December 7, St. Ambrose
8:00 a.m., Mass: Pauline Davis, b, Church
2:00 p.m., Rosary: Parish Office
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m., Confessions, Church

TUESDAY, December 8, THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
9:00 a.m., Mass: Marilou Ehleiter, Church
7:00 p.m., Mass: Clara Shumate, Church

WEDNESDAY, December 9, St. Juan Diego
9:00 a.m., School Mass: Myra Tetak, Church

THURSDAY, December 10
8:00 a.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church
7:00 p.m., Adult Children of Alcoholics, Church Basement

FRIDAY, December 11, St. Damasus I, Pope
8:00 a.m., Mass: Sr. Miriam Dorsch, Church
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. -2:00 p.m., Confessions, Church

Second Sunday of Advent

SATURDAY, December 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe
11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. and 4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Bob Cherrington, birthday, Church

SUNDAY, December 13
8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church
9:15 a.m., Sunday School, Parish Office
10:45 a.m., Mass: Paul Cherrington, birthday, Church

Readings for Week of December 7

Mon.	Is 35:1-10	Lk 5:17-26
Tues.	Gn 3:9-15, 20	Lk 1:26-38
Wed	Is 40:25-31	Mt 11:28-30
Thurs.	Is 41:13-20	Mt 11:11-15
Fri.	Is 48:17-19	Mt 11:16-19
Sat.	Zec 2:14-17	Lk 1:26-38
Sun	Is 61:1-2a, 10-11	Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Cantor Schedule

December 8 (Immaculate Conception)

9:00 a.m. no music
7:00 p.m. Sandy Black

December 12 & 13

5:15 Ryan Teti
8:15 Sr. Bernadette
10:45 Kerby Staker