

# 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent. This has been traditionally referred to as "*Gaudete Sunday*": "*Rejoice Sunday*". We rejoice as we joyfully anticipate the coming of our God. The Lord is near. In fact, the Lord is nearer than we think. The Lord is already in our midst. We hear in our Gospel reading for today the words of St. John the Baptist "... *but there is one among you who you do not recognize...*" (John 1:27). John the Baptist is the forerunner of the Messiah. John was questioned whether he is the "*one who is to come or are we to look for another?*" It seems that the people assumed the hoped-for Messiah was John. He dressed and lived like one of the prophets of the Old Testament. He lived an austere life. He stood out and people took notice of him. He was not like everyone else. Yet he denies he is the one and then he proclaims that the "*One who is to come*" is already with us but we do not recognize him: The Messiah blends in with all humanity. You must have the eyes of faith to "see" him.

As in the days of St. John the Baptist so it is in our day. In a curious way the Lord is already in our midst. Trusting in the words of John we must "see" with the eyes of faith. In our day Jesus Christ is in our midst in the Church. We believe this. The Church is his gift to the world. In the church Jesus Christ is present to us in *Word and Sacrament*. Nourished by his Word we become aware that he is also in our midst in the *least of our brothers and sisters*. Recalling the words of Jesus; "*whatever you do for the least of these you do for me.*" Indeed, the Lord is in our midst. It is all about our faith in Him and His word.

As in the days of Jesus, his presence had mixed reactions. For those who sought him out and were open to his word (the blind, crippled, the sick, lost, and the sinner) Jesus was their savior and redeemer. In their humble need they saw in Jesus their savior. For those who were not open, those lacking faith, he was a disturbing presence: an annoyance. And so, it is today. The presence of the Lord can be a source of great joy or a disturbing presence.

One of the marks of our joy as faithful followers of our Lord and Savior is to walk with him in this life. We walk with him in the Church. We are watchful and open to him as the Church continues to reveal him to us. We humbly open our hearts to him as we listen to the Gospels. As we follow him through the Gospels we listen to his teachings and miracle stories as he restores humanity and God's creation. We share in the joy he brings to those in need.

We are then nourished with his Body and Blood in the Eucharist. In the silence of the Eucharist he enters our lives to strengthen us in holiness and to be His living presence in the world. As we share in the joy of his real presence in our lives, we are invited to continue his mission to those in need. It is in serving the needy that we witness again the joy Jesus brings. We cannot understand and act as His presence (the Church) without first receiving Him in Word and Sacrament. Thus, during this penitential season of Advent, we are mindful of those who are in need and our need to grow in our faith. We want to joyfully encounter the Lord's goodness to the needy which adds to the true joy of the Christmas celebration.

The care for the poor is something that is always before us as a parish. Jesus tells us that *the poor will always be with you*. Gee, isn't this like what Jesus Christ says at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel before he ascends to heaven: "*I am with you always, to the end of the age.*" The Lord is always with us just as the poor are always with us. As a parish we share in the Lord's work. We preach the gospel, we give counsel, and we bring the sacraments to a world hungry for the Lord. We also care for those

in need. One way we do this is through our active St. Vincent de Paul Society. We also support the local charitable service agencies in our area: Christ's Table, Catholic Social Services, and Eastside Ministries to mention a few. This is all very good and a source for our joy because they are a significant way in which we can bring Jesus to those in need. We have done well in answering Jesus as his followers. However, we also know that there is so much more we can do. Care for the poor is not a onetime deal. We are aware that this good work needs our continued mindfulness and support. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Lord is in our midst in those who seek our help. We are encouraged in knowing that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do for Jesus. Strangely, or rather mysteriously if we think about it, we should be able to find Jesus in the needy and they should be able to see Jesus in us and our Christian service. The poor you will always have with you. The accompanying joy will always be with us as we serve Jesus. Rejoice the Lord is near!

There is still some time left for us to continue helping our local charitable organizations. Whatever help we are able to offer is greatly appreciated. The blessings of our Lord are with us. On the parish level we continue with our response to our annual "Giving Tree" campaign. The response has been very good even though we are in the midst of the pandemic. Donations for this project will be due soon. Those items will soon be heading to their final destinations. A big thank you goes out to all who are and have participated in this act of generosity.

**Also, it should be noted the extra times for confessions this week.** In our preparations for the celebration of Christmas we also spend some time with a focus on our personal openness to receive our Lord and Savior. We desire to welcome and receive our Lord with a pure heart. This week there are a few times offered to assist with this personal preparation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The extra times for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be Monday (12/14) 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., Wednesday (12/16) 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Thursday (12/17) 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Friday (12/18) times will be 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Confessions will also be heard on Saturday (12/19) 11:00 a.m. – Noon and 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 pm and at the regular time before the evening Mass. Regarding this time before Saturday evening mass, the Fourth Sunday of Advent, I ask that you would please be considerate of the priest who will have to be prepared for the 5:15 mass. In the past there has been a line all the way up to the time for mass. Believe me, it is difficult to shift gears and be prepared to celebrate the Eucharist in a few short minutes. Thus, in other words do not wait until the last minute. I am also looking at a couple extra times for next week. I will let you know in the next bulletin.

Again, please consult the bulletin for this week's schedule. The next week will be very busy for all of us. We must not lose patience. During our busyness let us find time to pause and prepare our hearts and homes to welcome our Blessed Lord.

Have a Blessed Third Week of Advent.

Fr. Ralko

**This week we pray Week III of the  
Liturgy of the hours.**

**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 13<sup>th</sup>**. 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 14<sup>th</sup> to be included in the Christmas bulletin.**



**Grief Support** – Tuesday December 15th. This month's topic: "The Grief Recovery Method" Meetings are at 1:00 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Office Meeting Room. The meetings are offered twice in one day to afford the maximum number of participants. Perhaps you have lost someone or know someone who is grieving and would like to learn how to help them. Please join us. The program is free and open to all.

SAVE THE DATE  
**april 17<sup>th</sup>**

**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](http://www.ccyac.org)

Email: [info@ccyac.org](mailto:info@ccyac.org)

Instagram: [@ccyacohio](https://www.instagram.com/ccyacohio)

Twitter: [@ccyacohio](https://twitter.com/ccyacohio)

[www.facebook.com/colscatholicyoungadultconf/](https://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.

*We pray for those who have died recently:  
Bill Kohler and Sam Gianettino*

**Church Support**

December 6, 2020

OFFERTORY	\$15,934.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$12,045.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly surplus	\$5,185.00

**May God bless you for supporting your parish!**

**CALENDARS AVAILABLE**

We wish to thank Hillis, Combs & Nestor Funeral Home for our 2020 calendars. They are available at the entrances to the church.

**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.

**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.

# 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## 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.

## 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](http://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 14, St. John of the Cross

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Mary Anshutz Church*  
2:00 p.m., Rosary: *Parish Office*  
4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., Confessions, *Church*

### TUESDAY, December 15

9:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention, Church*

### WEDNESDAY, December 16

9:00 a.m., School Mass: *Daniel J. Paul, anniversary, Church*  
6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Confessions, *Church*

### THURSDAY, December 17

8:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention, Church*  
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m., Confessions, *Church*  
7:00 p.m., *Adult Children of Alcoholics, Church Basement*

### FRIDAY, December 18

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Dick Dooley, Church*  
10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. -2:00 p.m., Confessions, *Church*

## *Second Sunday of Advent*

### SATURDAY, December 19

11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m. and 4:15 p.m. -4:45 p.m., Confessions, *Church*  
5:15 p.m., Mass: *Camillus Scott, birthday, Church*

### SUNDAY, December 20

8:15 a.m., Mass: *St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church*  
9:15 a.m., Sunday School, *Parish Office*  
10:45 a.m., Mass: *Tom Nash, birthday, Church*

## *Readings for Week of December 14*

Mon. . . . .	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a	Mt 21:23-27
Tues. . . . .	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13	Mt 21:28-32
Wed . . . . .	Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25	Lk 7:18b-23
Thurs. . . . .	Gn 49:2, 8-10	Mt 1:1-17
Fri. . . . .	Jer 23:5-8	Mt 1:18-25
Sat. . . . .	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a	Lk 1:5-25
Sun . . . . .	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16	Lk 1:26-38

## **Cantor Schedule**

December 19 & 20  
5:15 Laura DeCoy  
8:15 Sr. Bernadette  
10:45 Lucille Morosco