

**SECOND SUNDAY
OF ADVENT**

DECEMBER 6, 2020

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS for December 13th Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-11

How have you experienced the spirit of God upon you lately?

What can you do to promote God's justice in your home or community?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

For what can you pray with thanks and rejoicing today?

What decision do you need to test with discernment from the Spirit?

John 1:6-8, 19-28

How have you given witness to Christ lately?

Make an examination of conscience, preparing for reconciliation.

WEEKDAY MASSES December 8 – 11

Tues: 8:40 am **School Mass** +John E. & Jon Delvo **Immaculate Conception**

5:00 pm +Darlene Mikkelsen **Immaculate Conception**

Wed: 8:40 am +Sonia (Chaput) Heinle

Thurs: 5:00 pm +Olga Feil

Fri: 12:05 pm Living & Deceased Members of George & Wilma Brooks Family

WEEKEND MASSES December 12 – 13

Sat: St. Edward's - Nekoma NO MASS AT NEKOMA TODAY

5:00 pm St. Alphonsus

+Aelred Dettler & +Mary Beth Sexton

Reader: Corey Stremick

EMHC: Carol Hoffarth

Sun: 8:30 am St. Alphonsus

+Bill & Clint Scheffer & People of the Parishes

Reader: Jackie Thom

EMHC: Dennis Karsky

Musicians: Bob & Cantor

St. Michael's – Wales NO MASS AT WALES TODAY

10:30 am St. Alphonsus

+Bernice Larson

Reader: Zach Schaefer

EMHC: Diane Schill

Musicians: Bob & Cantor

Fellowship Hall Host: LaVern & Margaret Chaput

Fr. Michael Hickin's cell phone: 701-891-1238

Website for St. Alphonsus Parish – <http://www.stalphonsuslangdon.com/>

**Confessions: Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays after Mass or
by appointment**

Weekly Reflection for November 29, 2020: This week's reflection of the parishioner's relationship with God and with the parish

Adult Envelopes	\$3,926.00
Intentional Givers	\$80.00
Plate	\$374.00
Children's	\$5.00
Fuel	\$25.00
Total	\$4,410.00

Second Sunday of Advent

John the Baptist described himself as a voice crying in the wilderness as he called upon the people of his time to prepare the way of the Lord. The Jewish people had a long history of hearing prophets challenge them to repentance and saw the Baptist in the light of their sacred traditions. John's words and unusual lifestyle fitted into a recognizable and deeply cherished pattern. That is why they headed towards the River Jordan for a good dose of spiritual cleansing. John gave practical, common-sense suggestions for leading a better life and thereby inspired many people to try to follow his ideas. It's something we can recognize and appreciate. Most of us appreciate the feel-good factor after a session of renouncing past shortcomings. How many of us have emerged light-hearted from the sacrament of reconciliation?

Yet John was far from putting himself on a pedestal: he was merely the pointer in the right direction. However high he might rise in people's estimation, he recognized his unworthiness even to unfasten the Messiah's sandal strap. How did John feel when the Messiah turned out to be his cousin? Most of us would hold back from equating a cousin and God. That, however, says something about John's humility: in a way that he couldn't understand, the Baptist knew that he was merely the vehicle for a song that was greater than himself.

Taken from the Living Word

2nd Sunday of Advent

"Prepare the way of the Lord..." - MARK 1:3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, puts us on the path to holiness and is an example for others to be holy, too. We are responsible not only for our own lives, but for the lives of others as well.

DEC 8, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,

Holy Day (no obligation due to COVID). This is the Patronal Feast of the United States.

On 13 May 1846, the United States bishops unanimously chose the Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as patroness of the country, a decision approved by Pope Pius IX and published in a decree, 2 July 1847.

Our Yes to God always needs a boost. In the Immaculate Conception, we celebrate the unfailing power behind Mary's Yes: God's choice & God's grace. We celebrate in Mary what God's current offer is to us—full sharing in God's life, holiness, and protection from evil.

Above, I asked to pray to the Holy Spirit about the future direction of our parish in this time of trial. Mary too knew something about being isolated, but she also knew how to live out of the fullness of the Spirit's overshadowing. She will show us the way forward.

Giving Hearts Day: St. Alphonsus School will participate in its first Giving Hearts Day in February. Giving Hearts Day is a 24-hour fundraising event for non-profits in North Dakota and northwest Minnesota. Since the first event in 2008, generous donors have given more than \$90 million – 100% of which goes directly to participating charities.

Wanted! Match donors. We are looking for up to 7 donors for our \$7,000 match pool, please contact Carrie at 256-2354 or email at carrie.hope@k12.nd.us.

Wanted! Giving Hearts Day donors! Donate online any time on Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021 at givingheartsday.org. Checks are also welcome on the day of the event, they must be dated February 11 and can be dropped off at our school. We will reserve special parking spots in front of our school for Giving Hearts Day donors who wish to donate in person.

Donations for Christmas Flowers can be made by filling out the below form and can be placed in the collection marked "flowers" or brought to the parish office by Friday, December 11th. Thank You.

In Memory of/honor of _____

From _____

Welcome Chesney Blake Schill, daughter of Trevor & Janie who was baptized last weekend. May she continue to be filled with grace.

Due to the nursing homes being closed to the public Mass on Friday's until further notice will be held at the church at 12:05pm. Note the change of time

Altar Society will meet in January with the new circle leaders. General church cleaning on Monday, December 7 will still be held as scheduled.

Catholic Daughters – NO meetings until further notice

MASS TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS will be 4:00pm Christmas Eve, Midnight, and 10:30am Christmas Day. New Year's Eve will be 5:00pm and New Year's Day will be 10:30am.

NOTE MASS SCHEDULE CHANGE FOR SATURDAYS. St. Edward's, Nekoma, will be suspending Saturday Mass until Saturday, April 10, the week after Easter.

From here on out, until Easter, the Saturday evening Mass in Langdon will be at 5:00pm. I have promised the good people of St. Edward's that, come April, we will return the 5:00pm Mass time to Nekoma.

United Communications will be having a blood drive on Tuesday, December 15th from 12:15pm-6:00pm at United Communications. Call Mikan @ 256-5156 to schedule an appointment or click on www.vitalant.org.

A GIFT - A thoughtful parishioner has purchased copies of Matthew Kelly's *I Heard God Laugh: A practical guide to life's essential daily habit*. There are enough for every household in the parish. Pick one up for yourself, and take one for your neighbor. Many thanks to our anonymous benefactor.

Advent Communal Penance Service Thursday, Dec 17, 5:30pm, follows the 5:00pm Mass. Guest priests will be in attendance. **CONFESSIONS** – will be the first full weekend of each month at 6:45-7:15pm and Sunday 9:45-10:15am. There are still Confessions after Mass on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

COVID-19 - While the virus remains in the news and a part of our lives, we're grateful to see the numbers in North Dakota significantly declining. Facial coverings, while not mandated by the bishop, are strongly encouraged.

In this Advent Season, let's keep an eye out for one another. Check in on your neighbors. I've gotten a few calls from people who suggest a person who could use a visit from a priest. Such calls are highly welcome. Isolation is very difficult over the long run. Short visits full of love and care can do a lot to lift spirits.

At last week's Parish Council meeting, we talked about the impact the virus is having on our community. We are grateful for the live-streaming that permits participation from home. This is a real gain. It's a modest way to stay in contact, but our unity and community are being strained.

People tell me frequently about the great Masses they are able to access far and wide. This is a good thing. But we need to be aware that a new kind of identity may be emerging—being Catholic without the parish, nourished from afar.

Is this simply a way of responding to a crisis and looked at as an exception, or is there a transition going on in the way we're experiencing Church? We're being stretched. Will we snap back or take another shape?

I'm grateful to the Council for taking these questions to heart. As the coming weeks and months unfold and gathering restrictions remain in place, let's let the Holy Spirit work on our hearts. Where are we heading as a community of believers? Is the current trial increasing our spiritual hunger? Is the isolation eating away at our sense of belonging?

Pray for me and let's pray for one another. Let's each do our part to be present to others as circumstances allow. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our Council in the ways that lead to bright possibilities for our future. Thank You!

100th Anniversary Celebration Planning Committee: We are starting a committee to plan our big 100th celebration weekend in July of 2021. We know that plans can change, but we want to be prepared to welcome alumni home if we are able to do so. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Carrie at 256-2354 or email at carrie.hope@k12.nd.us.