

December 08, 2019

Second Sunday of Advent

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Let us consider the Wisdom of the Saints listed in the next column.

First, St Thomas Aquinas relates our physical health to our spiritual health. Our physical health sometimes can decline without any noticeable symptoms until suddenly we realize we have a malignant growth or blood work raises a concern, etc. In fact as mortal beings our health after a while begins to decline "naturally" with aging. It was not meant to be this way. God originally created Adam with the grace of immortality. Once that grace was lost, nature cannot sustain itself indefinitely. We all reach the ends of days, long or short.

Our spiritual health can also decline "invisibly". A little gossip here, a foul word there, impatience grows into anger, disagreement grows into distain, greed intensifies with self-pity and excessive gaming leads to lethargy and excuses for accomplishing nothing. Our tendencies spiritually are like our natural inclinations – decline and death. St. Thomas tells us we need spiritual medicine! In order to get this medicine, one needs to visit the spiritual doctor, a priest, because Jesus instituted a sacrament for this malady.

Are you converted? St Ambrose reminds us that there is more than one conversion in the life of a Christian. He compares two sacraments: Baptism and Confession. Both involve cleansing with water, Confession is accompanied by tears of sorrow. How sweet the tears of repentance – the angels gather them up and present them to the Lord!

How often we have referred to someone as a "good" person. But St. Augustine makes an important clarification. The good are those who are in a state of grace. To confess our serious sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a prerequisite to good works. One cannot be considered good if they are not in communion with the Lord. Serious sin destroys any merit to works that appear good to others, but are unacceptable to the Lord.

Pray for the courage and humility to get to the Sacrament of Penance soon. Our honesty before God is made manifest when we are humble enough to say what we would rather not in the presence of the Lord's representative. Yes, St. John Paul II is right – it is difficult sometimes to go to confession and we might even be tempted to be dishonest in the confessional – yikes! That would make the confession useless.

And St. Faustina insists that humility is the bedrock of a good and fruitful confession. One can leave the confessional without having opened themselves up to the Light which reveals our weakness and brings healing.

Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, save souls!

Fr. Martin Flum

THE WISDOM OF THE SAINTS

In the life of the body a man is sometimes sick, and unless he takes medicine, he will die. Even so in the spiritual life a man is sick on account of sin. For that reason, he needs medicine so that he may be restored to health; and this grace is bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance. - St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Ambrose says of the two conversions that, in the Church, "there are water and tears; the water of Baptism and the tears of repentance." - St. Ambrose (CCC 1429)

The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works. You do the truth and come to the light. - St. Augustine

Confession is an act of honesty and courage – an act of entrusting ourselves, beyond sin, to the mercy of a loving and forgiving God. - Blessed John Paul II

A soul does not benefit from the sacrament of confession if it is not humble. Pride keeps it in darkness. The soul neither knows how, nor is it willing, to probe with precision the depths of its own misery. It puts on a mask and avoids everything that might bring it recovery. --St. Faustina

BEAR HUGS FOR HEALING

Give a sick child a bear hug this Christmas! This program delivers stuffed bears to hospitalized children during the holidays. Please drop off your donated bears before December 9th in the box located at the back of the church. Due to health and safety concerns, donated bears must be newly purchased and delivered in their original packing with store tags attached. Or, your tax-deductible monetary donations can be used to purchase bears at a discounted price! Please make checks payable to the Bread of Life Center for Peace and mail them to: PO Box 338, Leonardtown, MD 20650. You may also purchase a bear or make donations through the website at www.breadoflifecenterforpeace.org -- click on Bear Hugs Project. Please contact Patricia DiSandro at 240-681-3606 for any questions about this special outreach. Thank you for your continued generous support of Bear Hugs!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 8, 2019

Monday: Gn 3: 9-15. 20/ Ps 98/ Eph 1:3-6.11-12/ Lk 1: 26-38
Tuesday: Is 40: 1-11/ Ps 96/ 10ac. 11-13/ Mt 18: 12-14
Wednesday: Is 40: 25-31/Ps 103/ Mt 11: 28-30
Thursday: Zec 2:14-17/Judith 13: 18bcde,19/Lk 1:26-28
Friday: Is 48: 17-19/ Ps 1/Mt 11: 16-19
Saturday: Sir 48: 1-4. 9-11/ Ps 80/Mt 17: 9a. 10-13
Next Sunday: Is 35: 1-6a. 10 /Ps 146/ Jas 5: 7-10 /Mt 11: 2-11

OUR SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS

St. Michael's Offertory Collection for Nov 24th \$ 4,263
St. Dominic's Offertory Collection for Nov 24th \$ 962

ST. MICHAEL'S MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEK

Saturday 12/14/19 5pm
Rosary Leader: TBD Lector: Claude Boswell
Server: James Aviles EMHC: Joan Royal
Sunday 12/15/19 8am
Rosary Leader: Ron Smith Lector: Cheryl Kerwin
Server: TBD EMHC: TBD
Sunday 12/15/19 11:30am
Rosary Leader: Kevin Mondorff Lector: David Mason
Server: Taylor Nickens EMHC: TBD

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

For those who suffer from chronic illness, especially Joe Aviles, Madison Brady, Ann Canter, Charlene Cardwell, Tom Cardwell, Joyce Chambers, Thomas Chambers, Jackie Chapman, Brianna Daniels, Dorothy Dunston, Kathy Fisher, Mabel Hamilton, Florence Henderson, Crystal Johnson, Bernice Kirby, Marie Knobel, Wanda Langley, Betty Lindsay, Kenny Lindsay, Adam Lumpkins, Rachel Makle, Michael Mohun, Ralph and Regina Nasatka, Fannie Newman, Joyce Pickeral, Rev. Robert Pittman, Ann Proctor, Betty Proctor, Dawn Russo, Lucille Shanks, Dee Smith, Geraldine Stewart, Willie Stewart, George Thomas, Terry Wilson and Belinda Windsor, may their crosses be joined to the Cross of Jesus.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 12/07/19 5pm Mary L. Connick +
Sunday 12/08/19 8am Mary Elemore + and Damien Branson +
Sunday 12/08/19 10am Parishioners & their families
Sunday 12/08/19 11:30am David Mason
Monday 12/09/19 8am Deacon Scott C. Stuart +
Tuesday 12/10/19 8am Paul Basak +
Wednesday 12/11/19 8am Rev. Julio Alvarez-Garcia +
Thursday 12/12/19 8am Wilma & Hugo D'Alarcao
Friday 12/13/19 8am Rev. Julio Alvarez-Garcia +
Saturday 12/14/19 5pm Miguel Angel Cabrera +

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is not a holy day of obligation this year since December 8th falls on the first Sunday of Advent. There will be the usual 8am Mass on Monday for the transferred feast.

NEW Christmas Choir – No one has YET responded

Please Consider!

Please consider joining a special Christmas Choir to sing at Christmas Mass (Mass time TBD). We will learn, sing, have fun, and worship God together. Give Jesus the gift of your voice in a special way this Christmas. Please call the office to contact Joanna Mason or by email at evangelization.stmichaelbaden@gmail.com. If you play an instrument, please let me know!

Live the Gospel - Challenge of the Week

Our Advent booklets unfortunately had not arrived last week, but this week they are available! Continue to gather the family together around the candles each night of Advent to sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" or another advent hymn and read a short meditation for the day from the Advent with St. Therese.

You may consider doing a work of mercy this Advent as well to prepare your heart for the Lord. Call the parish office to inquire about volunteering in the clothing closet or food pantry.

Adoration and Healing Prayers

Do you pray for healing in your life or in your family? God may not always answer as we would like Him to, but He always answers according to what is best for us. Come to St. Michael's at 7 PM on December 11th, 2019, the eve of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, for an evening of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament followed by prayers of healing by Fr. Flum over anyone who would like to come forward. We hope to see you there!

Reminder: Confessions available Wednesday evenings

If you have not recently gone to Confession, then one of the most fundamental and fruitful aspects of your Catholic faith is waiting to be realized. The mercy of God awaits your humble, sacramental confession. Just do it. Every Wednesday of Advent, 5-7pm, the Lord will be waiting for YOU in the confessional.

FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Happy Advent! It is a season to prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus! A wonderful way to do this is by serving others. Catholic Charities has many volunteer opportunities throughout December to help people prepare their hearts.

For example, Catholic Charities' Angel Tree provides gifts to over 800 children. Volunteers donate, accept, organize, and distribute the gifts at our organizing party on December 14th. Tell any bakers in the parish, we could use their talents and contributions of homemade treats to create a festive environment to our hard-working volunteers!

Or... Christmas Caroling at Shelters with Deacon Jim! Join the Troubadour Deacon and his fiddling friend to sing carols to the residents at two shelters on the evenings of December 18, 19 and 23. Provide your own transportation and we will provide the song sheets! Get details and sign up at:www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/volunteercalendar.