

December 22, 2019
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

What is it that gives us joy at this time of year? Our family traditions certainly bring back fond memories. The seasonal pastimes like caroling for the homebound, snow sledding with neighbors and eggnog shared at the card table give spice to life. One personal favorite was the family visit to grandma's house at Christmastime. Upon our arrival, her love was so warm and the cookie jar was filled with fluffy sugar cookies that only she could make.

Those familiar moments that gladden the heart at this time of year are a reminder that we are social beings. We were made to love and be loved.

Some movements of the heart are shallow, mere outbursts of emotion of little substance. Others are more important, providing the necessary impetus to respond fittingly to the circumstances of life. The preparation for Christmas during the holy season of Advent gives us the opportunity to heed the deepest stirrings of our heart.

What is that movement which all of us experience at least from time to time - not at the surface of human passion - but at the more profound origin of our being?

It is a natural desire and yearning to know God. And that desire to know God moves us because He endowed us with primordial knowledge - that we came from Someone. We know deep down that we are not here by chance or mere natural selection.

God caused this very desire to know Him so that we would want to love and be loved by the One who made us. Yes, we desire to know our Father in heaven. He lovingly impressed on our souls a sweet ache for the Love that made us.

The word "religion" is formed on the root Latin word, "religare" which means to tie, to fasten, or to bind. From this same Latin verb we get the word "ligament". A ligament is a tissue which joins bone to bone. In a similar way, religion is that virtue which serves to join our being with the Being who made us.

Religion is also a body of knowledge revealed by God. Occasionally we hear the phrase "organized religion" spoken with a dismissive attitude. In some instances, this is understandable because there are many so-called "religions" that are merely the novelties of men.

In fact, Jesus came to show us the way to the Father's heart. That is the purpose for establishing the Church upon the rock of Peter. That is the Catholic religion. When we respond to the Infant lying in the manger, we leave behind nostalgia and the trappings of cultural holidays. We are responding to the work of the Holy Spirit who reminds us of the simplicity and humility with which the good God seeks to draw our hearts to His.

Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, save souls!
Fr. Martin Flum



Lessons and Carols - Dec. 31st

Join us at St. Michael's on December 31st for *Lessons and Carols* followed by the Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Scripture and song that dates back to the late 19th century. We will hear the word of God relating to the promise of the Messiah and His coming and sing carols to accompany our meditation on the scriptures. End the year 2019 well and come enjoy! Lessons and Carols will begin at 6 PM, followed by Mass at 7 PM. This 7 PM Vigil Mass will fulfill your obligation to attend Mass on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Jan. 1st).

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	12/21/19	5pm	Parishioners & their families
Sunday	12/22/19	8am	Stanley B. Schock +
Sunday	12/22/19	10am	Charles Thomas Grimes +
Sunday	12/22/19	11:30am	Mary Farrell +
Monday	12/23/19	8am	Doris B. Riess +
Tuesday	12/24/19	8am	Helen Schock Daly +
Tuesday	12/24/19	5pm	John, Pat & Nicolas DiSandro
Tuesday	12/24/19	7pm	Geary Deptula
Wednesday	12/25/19	12 am	Maria J. Gancayco +
Wednesday	12/25/19	8 am	Brian McCall +
Wednesday	12/25/19	10 am	George and Teresa Fritz
Thursday	12/26/19	8am	Joy Jones Schock +
Friday	12/27/19	8am	Mariela Garzon
Saturday	12/28/19	5pm	Doris B. Riess +

YOUR SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS

St. Michael's	Offertory Collection for December 15 th & 16 th	\$ 4,729
St. Dominic's	Offertory Collection for December 16 th	\$ 795

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 22, 2019

Monday:	Mal 3: 1-4. 23-24/Ps 25/ Lk 1: 57-66
Tuesday:	2 Sm 7: 1-5. 8b-12. 14a. 16/ Ps 89/ Lk 1: 67-79
Wednesday:	CHRISTMAS
Vigil:	Is 62:1-5/ Ps 89/ Acts 13: 16-17, 22-25/ Mt 1: 1-25
Midnight:	Is 9:1-6/ Ps 96/ Ti 2: 11-14/ Lk 2: 1-14
Dawn:	Is 62:11 -12/ Ps 97/ Ti 3: 4-7/ Lk 2:15-20
Day:	Is 52:7-10/ Ps 98/ Heb 1:1-6/ Jn1:1-18
Thursday:	Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59 /Ps 31/ Mt 10: 17-22
Friday:	1 Jn 1: 1-4 /Ps 97/ Jn 20: 1a and 2-8
Saturday:	1 Jn 1: 5 — 2: 2/Ps 124/ Mt 2: 13-18
Sunday:	Sir 3: 2-6. 12-14/ Ps 128/Col 3: 12-21/ Mt 2:13-15.19-23

Consecration to the Holy Family

Next Sunday is the feast of the Holy Family. We will renew the consecration of the parish and mission to the Holy Family during Mass after the General Intercessions. Please prepare for this renewal by praying the consecration prayer each day until Sunday 29th.

ST. MICHAEL'S MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEK

Tuesday	12/24/19
5pm	Christmas Vigil Mass
Rosary Leader: Irene Goldsmith	Lector: Irene Goldsmith
Server: James Aviles	EMHC: TBD
12:00	Midnight Mass
Rosary Leader: Betty Lindsay	Lector: Cheryl Kerwin
Server: Claude Boswell	EMHC: TBD
Wednesday	12/25/19
8am	Christmas Day
Rosary Leader: Ron Smith	Lector: Jeanine Wilson
Server: Dan Wilson	EMHC: TBD
10 am	Christmas Day
Rosary Leader: Kevin Mondorff	Lector: Chris Patterson
Server: Taylor Nickens	EMHC: TBD
Saturday	12/28/19
5pm	
Rosary Leader: Arlene Bloom	Lector: Vicky Hayden
Server: Kathy Fisher	EMHC: Joan Royal
Sunday	12/29/19
8am	
Rosary Leader: Ron Smith	Lector: Jeanine Wilson
Server: Dan Wilson	EMHC: TBD
11:30am	
Rosary Leader: TBD	Lector: Maureen Ingle
Server: Kayla Aure	EMHC: TBD

Holy Days of Obligation

Can you imagine celebrating Christmas without Mass? Christmas and January 1st (Mary, Mother of God) are **holy days of obligation**. Catholics is required to attend Mass on those days just like Sunday. The celebration of these great feasts is so important, that the Church has bound us to attend Mass under the pain of suffering mortal sin if we do not! We come eagerly, not merely out of obligation, but for the love of our Lord Jesus.

OUR CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Tues	12/24	8am	Daily Mass
			NO CCD Classes – Christmas Break
		5pm	Christmas Eve Mass – St. Michael
		7pm	Christmas Eve Mass – St. Dominic
Wed.	12/25	12am	Midnight Mass – St. Michael's
		8am	Christmas Day Mass – St Michael's
		10am	Christmas Day Mass – St. Michael's
Thurs-Friday		8am	Daily Mass
Saturday	12/28	4/5pm	Confessions & Regular Mass
		6pm	Movie Night – "Christmas Carol"
Sunday	12/29		Regular Mass Schedule
Tuesday	12/31	8am	Morning Mass
		6pm	LESSONS & CAROLS – St. Michael's
		7pm	Vigil Mass – St. Michael's
Wed.	1/1	9am	Mass Solemnity of Mary -St. Michael's

Don't miss FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT!

On December 28th, we will be hosting another Family Movie Night for all parishioners of St. Michael's and St. Dominic's. The Parish Hall doors will open at 6 PM, and showtime will be at 6:30 PM. Please bring a dish/snack/dessert to share. Last week, we asked for your input on which version of "A Christmas Carol" we should watch. The winning version is.... *The Muppet Christmas Carol!* Be sure to bring your (grand)children, and invite friends and neighbors! We can't wait to see you!

Live the Gospel - Challenge of the Week

Center your Christmas family time around Christ; it's His coming, His birth, that we celebrate, lets not forget that. Here are a couple of suggestions: read the Gospel narrative of His birth (Luke 2: 1-20) before or after Christmas dinner together, and pray for graces for each family member to know, love, and serve God in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next. Also, sing Christmas Carols! A free printable booklet is available at www.christmas-corner.com (select "printables" from the main menu). Another great resource for lyrics is available by downloading the free Relevant Radio app on smartphone; once you have the app, just click the little "Pray" icon in the top right corner, and then select "Christmas Carols." Have a Merry and Blessed **Christmas!**

Netflix – An outrageous insult to the Faith

Netflix has released a blasphemous "Christmas special" that depicts the Virgin Mary as an adulteress and Jesus as a homosexual. Netflix has endorsed and is streaming the video which is in Portugese and produced by a Brazilian "comedy" troupe. By bringing out this filth during Advent, Netflix is mocking the things of God and insulting Christians. *They should expect a response from us. If you subscribe to Netflix, I urge you to show respect for the Lord and our Lady by unsubscribing from their service.* As we prepare to celebrate the Birth of the Lord Jesus at Christmas, cancelling Netflix will be a gift to the Infant King.