

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Joyful Anticipation

Saving God,
how will you come to us today?
And will we know you?
You sent John the Baptist
to testify to your light—
and still some did not see.
Put your spirit in us,
and grant us a love of unceasing prayer,
so that we will know you,
rejoice in you, proclaim your liberty,
and bring your glad tidings to our
portion of the world.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, December 14, 2014
Proclaim the Good News



Today's Readings: Isaiah 61:1–2a, 10–11; Psalm: Luke 1:46–48, 49–50, 53–54; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24; John 1:6–8, 19–28. On this Third Sunday of Advent, we rejoice. The joy that should be apparent today is proclaimed in the first prayers of the Mass. The Entrance Antiphon quotes the Letter from Philippians 4:4–5: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” Soon after, the priest prays the Collect, which looks to the Nativity and asks that we “attain the joys of so great a salvation.” Today's reading from Saint Paul to the Thessalonians begins similarly to the antiphon: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing.” Drawing near to Christmas, we come closer to the meaning of this season. As we heard on the First and Second Sundays of Advent, we are to repent to ready ourselves for the Lord. But we are also to rejoice in the Lord's coming. Yes, we are to be alert and watch-

ful. But if we are to testify to the light, as John the Baptist did, are we not to do that joyfully? Should we not have the same regard for the Lord as is apparent in the reading from the prophet Isaiah? There, Isaiah says, “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God.” We are to keep Advent, but we should do it with joy that God has sent his Son.

In the First Reading, we hear that the prophet has been anointed to do several things. First, he brings glad tidings to the poor. He then heals the brokenhearted, proclaims liberty to captives, releases prisoners, and announces a year of favor. In the Gospel, we hear John the Baptist state his role. He is the “voice of one crying out in the wilderness.” As the season of Advent winds down, perhaps we need to consider that we have been anointed and Christ has called us. How have we responded?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 15, 2014

Open the Doors

Las Posadas, Spanish for “lodging” or “accommodation,” is a traditional nine-day novena that includes a procession with individuals portraying Mary and Joseph searching for a place to give birth to Jesus. During the novena, believers accompany the couple, walking from door to door each evening until Christmas Eve, when doors open to feasting and welcome. Explore other seasonal customs from around the globe and learn the traditions of other cultures, races, and nations. Today’s Readings: Numbers 24:2–7, 15–17a; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8–9; Matthew 21:23–27.

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Universal Holiness

In today’s Gospel Jesus tells the chief priests and the elders, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.” These chief priests and elders may obey the laws, but God wants a reform of the interior of our lives. We need to do what is right but also to strive to be holy. We are all called to a life of holiness. Do your actions reflect such holiness? Today’s Readings: Zephaniah 3:1–2, 9–13; Psalm 34:2–3, 6–7, 17–18, 19 and 23; Matthew 21:28–32.

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

O Sapientia, O Wisdom

Today begins the proclamation of the “O Antiphons.” We are familiar with these texts from singing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” The “O Antiphons” help us get in touch with our yearning for hope and love. Their poetry inspires us to trust in Jesus’s promise of abiding presence in our world. In today’s Gospel, we consider the presence and work of God as we listen to the genealogy of Jesus Christ. God worked through all of these ancestors of Jesus to bring about salvation. Today’s Readings: Genesis 49:2, 8–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 3–4ab, 7–8, 17; Matthew 1:1–17.

Thursday, December 18, 2014

O Adonai, O My Lord of Lords

In today’s Gospel we hear of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of Mary and Joseph. The Holy Spirit is the transforming agent at work in the Church. In the Eucharistic celebration, when we call down the Spirit over the gifts of bread and wine, they become the Body and Blood of Christ. The Holy Spirit also changes us. We are sent forth from the liturgy to “go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.” We are to help change the world. Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 23:5–8; Psalm 72:1–2, 12–13, 18–19; Matthew 1:18–25.

Friday, December 19, 2014

O Radix Jesse, O Root of Jesse

Perhaps today you might want to look closely at the hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” We know the first verses of this hymn by heart but often falter by the time we arrive at the fourth verse, “O Come O Branch of Jesse’s stem.” The verse tells of how Christ delivers us from our foes and provides victory over the grave. Already, we are singing of the Resurrection. God has given us this infant to save us from our sins so that we can share eternal life with him. Today’s Readings: Judges 13:2–7, 24–25a; Psalm 71:3–4a, 5–6ab, 16–17; Luke 1:5–25.

Saturday, December 20, 2014

O Clavis David, O Key of David

In today’s Gospel, the archangel Gabriel greets Mary, saying, “The Lord is with you.” Once the angel has delivered his message to Mary, she responds, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Reflect on how the Lord has called you since last Advent. When have you been ready to respond, and when have you been reluctant? Do you take time to listen to the Lord in the quiet of your heart? Today’s Readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4ab, 5–6; Luke 1:26–38.



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Keeping the Seasons
Reproducibles for Advent-Christmas 2014–2015

AGAPE YULE BALL

DEC 21 | *St. Cecilia Narthex*

6-8:30pm | A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

AGAPE is a Life Teen ministry for 8-12th graders.

RSVP tinyurl.com/YULEBALL2014

#OnlyAwaiting



HELP STUDYING FOR FINALS!!
St. Cecilia Multi Purpose Room
(Education Center Gym)
Wednesday, December 17

5-8pm

We will have study breaks every 30 minutes, snacks & super-smart Core to help you focus & prepare. Wednesday Bible Study on the Sunday readings will follow -at St. Cecilia- from 8-9:15pm

YULE BALL

Life Teen + AGAPE Christmas Dance

Sunday, December 21

6-8:30pm

Celebrate the love & wonder of the Nativity.
Learn to Ballroom Dance. Dates welcome!

Wear a formal or muggle outfit; magical costume optional!

Please RSVP at tinyurl.com/YuleBall2014
so we can have lots of food for you.

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities



Women's Advent Book Club

Begins Sunday, December 14, 2014 - 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Location: South Social Hall

Join other women of the parish in reading and discussing the book: *A Friendship Like No Other*, by William Barry SJ. Grounded in biblical tradition and with a clear focus on Ignatian spirituality, this book offers a fresh, heart-changing approach to living fully in the freedom of the divine embrace.



Financial Peace University

Begins Wednesday, January 7, 2015 - 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Location: St. Louis Room

- This isn't your typical "money class." *Financial Peace University* is practical, entertaining and fun!
- More than 1.5 million families and individuals have taken FPU.
- The average family completing the course pays off \$5,300 and saves \$2,700 in just 90 days. That's an \$8,000 change in position!
- Whether you're struggling to make ends meet or you're a millionaire, FPU has something for you.
- FPU is based on more than 800 verses of Scripture and is a proven plan that will work for you.



Introduction To The Bible

Begins Monday, February 16, 2015 - 6:15 pm - 7:30 pm

Location: Ed. Center Library

Participants will become comfortable finding their way around the Bible, develop a better understanding of its themes and writing styles, and gain clear insights about Catholic use and interpretation of the Bible. Study is 7 sessions.



Lenten Scripture Reflection

Begins Tuesday, February 17, 2015 - 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Location: Sun Room

This group will take a look at the Sunday Readings throughout Lent and reflect how the Holy Spirit is speaking through them.