

GAUDETE! "THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL"

"Are you the one who is to come? Or are we to wait for another?" This question, posed to Jesus in today's Gospel, is our question too. As we reach the middle of the Advent season, as we begin counting down the days till Christmas, we are invited to reflect on a vital question: **"What ... or who are we waiting for?"** **How** should be waiting? Today's liturgy invites us to cultivate two key Advent attitudes: **patience** and **joy**.

The early Christians expected Jesus to return soon – within their lifetime, in fact. But it didn't seem to be turning out that way. The apostle James proposes the image of a farmer, **patiently** awaiting the harvest: trusting in the forces of nature to accomplish their work at the right time. This does not mean the farmer's work is over! The farmer continues to work diligently each day, but knowing that the results are in God's hands, not his. In the same way, James suggests, we too must be patient **and** engaged: "Strengthen your hearts, for the Lord is near!"

In the Gospel, we see Jesus sending a message to his imprisoned cousin, John the Baptist. John was a true prophet, formed by the Scriptures. He trusted that when the Messiah would come, the prophecy of Isaiah would be realized: *the blind would see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead be raised, the poor lifted up, the weak strengthened, the fearful given courage*. As John languished in prison, his life hanging from a thread, his faith began to waver: had his mission been in vain? Jesus reassures John that it had not: his courage and patient endurance had borne fruit. John would go to a martyr's death, but knowing that **joy** was on the way.

The first major teaching document of Pope Francis is his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: **"The Joy of the Gospel"**. Dedicated to theme of the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world, he provides the church with an exciting program for realizing the so-called "new evangelization": not a painful task, but a "joy ever new, a joy to be shared." As a diocese, we have studied it carefully, and through such recent initiatives as the Parish Vitality Conference and the Forum for the New Evangelization, we are seeking to put its many recommendations into practice. Pope Francis reminds us: *"Some Christians' lives seem like Lent without Easter. I realize that joy is not expressed the same way at all times in life, especially at moments of great difficulty. Joy adapts and changes, but it always endures, even as a flicker of light, born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved."*

So let us make our own the words of the Entrance antiphon which gives this 3rd Sunday of Advent its name, "Gaudete": **"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say to you, rejoice! The Lord is very near."** May we await the Lord's coming with patience and with joy.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

St. Monica's Advent Reconciliation service will take place from 2:30 to 3:45 p.m. on Saturday, December 17 and on Sunday from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. Also, please pray for the children of our community who, on the same day of December 17, celebrate their First Reconciliation from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, their service will take place on Tuesday, December 20 at 7:00 p.m.

**WARDEN ELECTION RESULTS**

Last Sunday, following the 11:00 a.m. Mass, we held a meeting for all parishioners living within the parish boundaries for the purpose of electing two new wardens. This year we welcome Carmel Kilkenny and Christen Audet, replacing Angela Onesi and Douglas Robb, whose 3-year terms are shortly coming to an end; and we extend our profound thanks to Angela Onesi and Douglas Robb for their dedicated service to St. Monica's parish.

**Offering
Envelopes****2017 SUNDAY DONATION ENVELOPE BOXES**

Special message to owners of Sunday Envelope Donation Boxes, please remember to pick up your new 2017 box as soon as possible. They are located at the main entrance to the church. Thank you.

MASS INTENTIONS DEC. 10 TO 18, 2016

Saturday, December 10: Our Lady's Saturday

4:00 Giovanni & Palma Farinelli By the Family
 Vincenzo & Antonietta La Posta By Concetta La Posta
 Ermando Giuseppie Nudo By wife Elvira Nudo

Sunday, December 11: Third Sunday of Advent

8:30 **In Loving Memory:** Leona Clarke, Alba & Luigi Paliotti, Emma & Colombo Salvati, Pietro DiMeglio, Caterina Matera DiOrio.
 11:00 Maria Lonardo Aiello By her husband Carmelo Aiello
 Loreto & Paolina Ciambella By their daughter Gabriela
 Vincenzo Salituri By Angela Onesi & Patrick Laurin

Monday, December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:00 Elisa Palucci By Vince Palucci & Family

Tuesday, December 13: St. Lucy

8:00 Ignazio Ciampini By wife Ernesta Ciampini & Family

Wednesday, December 14: St. John of the Cross

8:00 Oksana Cybulski By Claudia & George
 Andre Gervais By Carmel Kilkenny & Family

Thursday, December 15: Weekday Mass

8:00 For Good Health By Vaz & Pinto Family

Friday, December 16: Weekday Mass

8:00 Beatrice Gagon By Glen Clairmont & Family

Saturday, December 17: Our Lady's Saturday

4:00 Angelo Caucci Teresa Caucci
 Antonio Bei By his wife Gabriella Bei
 Leonardo Ricciardi By wife Maria Carmela Ricciardi

Sunday, December 18: Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 Ascensio Francescangeli By his daughter Eliza & Family
 Special Intention for Dennis By Glen & Mary Smith Moore
 11:00 **In Loving Memory:** Fioravante Rotiroti, December members of Charles J. McDonald Family, Beatrice Gagnon, Deceased members of the Cullen Family.

Your Generosity...

Thank you for your on-going support of our parish... Collection for the weekend of December 3/4, 2016 totalled \$3,481.97.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE FOR 2016



Saturday, December 24:

Family Mass at 7:00 p.m.
 "Midnight Mass" at 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25:

Christmas Day Masses at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

ADVENT PRAYER BOOKLETS

Advent prayer booklets are still available for you to purchase at the main entrance of the church. The booklets are now at the reduced price of \$1.00 each. Please put your payment in the **Payment Box**.

AND

2017 SUNDAY MASS BOOKS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT \$5.00 EACH



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

We would like to thank the members of the GUFFMAN 5 for entertaining us St. Monica's church last Sunday, December 4, with their delightful music and adding a jazzy twist to classic Christmas songs!

Total sales for concert and raffle tickets came to \$2,290.75 Also, thank you to all who sold tickets and organized the concert.



The winning raffle ticket for 2 free tickets to a hockey game in January 2017 is number #168158. If you are the winner, **please claim your prize no later than Monday, Dec.19.** (Note: you must present your half of the raffle ticket to claim the prize.)

