

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 13, 2009

THIS WEEK'S READINGS, FOR YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER

Sunday	Dec. 13	Zephaniah 3:14-18	Isaiah 12:2-6	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:10-18
Monday	Dec. 14	Numbers 24:2-7,15-17	Psalms 25:4-9		Matthew 21:23-27
Tuesday	Dec. 15	Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13	Psalms 34		Matthew 21:28-32
Wednesday	Dec. 16	Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25	Psalms 85:9-14		Luke 7:18-23
Thursday	Dec. 17	Genesis 49:2,8-10	Psalms 72:1-4,7-8,17		Matthew 1:1-17
Friday	Dec. 18	Jeremiah 23:5-8	Psalms 72:1-2,12-13,18-19		Matthew 1:18-25
Saturday	Dec. 19	Judges 13:2-7,24-25	Psalms 71		Luke 1:5-25
Sunday	Dec. 20	Micah 5:1-4	Psalms 80	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

It is a long-standing Catholic tradition to have a crèche or manger scene by the Christmas tree. The tree itself is a beautiful Christian symbol. It stands in our houses as a reminder of God's abundant blessings in creation, of Christ's coming as light of the world, and of the gift of divine life we receive in baptism. The book of *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers* provides a blessing prayer for the Christmas tree and for the crèche.

To bless the tree, gather the family and begin with the sign of the cross. Then read from Paul's Letter to Titus 3:4-7. Pray together silently and then say the Lord's Prayer aloud. Then, a leader prays: "God of all creation, we praise you for this tree which brings beauty and memories and the promise of life to our home. May your blessing be upon all who gather around this tree, all who keep the Christmas festival by its lights. We wait for the coming of the Christ, the days of everlasting justice and of peace. You are our God, living and reigning for ever and ever. Amen" (Household Blessings p.113-115).

On Christmas Eve or Christmas Day it is appropriate to bless the crèche. Gather the family and begin with the sign of the cross. Then read Luke's Gospel 2:1-7 and pause for silent prayer. The leader then prays, "God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love; when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love. Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen." Finally, sing a Christmas Carol together (Household Blessings p. 117-120).

Amid the preparations for celebrating Christmas, it is good to pause and pray as a family, to experience the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to be wherever two or three gather in his name. Let us honor His presence with a family moment of prayer.

ADVENT SUNDAY EVENSONG this Sunday, **December 13th, 7:30 PM**, in the Church, and each Sunday evening during Advent. Everyone is welcome to this beautiful praying of the psalms and readings.

LET US JOIN IN PRAYER THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN EMBRACED BY GOD IN A SPECIAL WAY:

In Baptism:

Mary Lou Albis, Jonathan A. Tellames,

Glenn L. Tellames, Jr., Children of
Marylin John

Kaylin Pamela Howells, Child of
Robert & Ashley Howells

Savannah Audrey Maupin, Child of
Jay & Shelley Maupin, Jr.

In His Passage to Eternal Life:

Dale Sherry, brother of Peggy Alley

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

CHRISTMAS EVE: All are invited to participate in the **Midnight Mass Prelude, beginning at 11:00 PM**, entitled *A Journey to the Manger in Song*. We will tell the Christmas Story with wonderful choir anthems, carols, and Scripture. Come, join in the journey!

OUR ANNUAL Christmas Basket Program is in full swing! If you have not done so and would like to sponsor a family or senior citizen from St. Gregory the Great Parish in Baltimore, please contact Elizabeth List, 301-695-6135. You may also make a cash or check donation and volunteers will do the shopping. Make checks payable to "Christmas Basket" and place in the collection basket or mail to the Parish Office. Thank you to all who have already chosen a family. All items will be collected outside the H/F room below the Atrium on **this Sunday, December 13th, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM**.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST! The Knights of Columbus will serve a Pancake Breakfast, **this Sunday, December 13th, 8:00 AM-1:00 PM**, in the Community Center cafeteria. Proceeds will benefit the Birthright Center located here in Frederick. Birthright is there for every woman who calls for help. It supports them in a range of

services from simple pregnancy testing through delivery and beyond. Your support of this very worthy program will be much appreciated by all.

A PILIPINO COMMUNITY is forming here at St. John's. Please join us for a "Get Together & Getting to Know You" afternoon with a Christmas theme. Parishioners are invited to join this International Food Potluck, **Sunday, December 13th, 3:00-6:00 PM**, in the Community Center cafeteria.

ADD/ADHD SUPPORT GROUP: Come join St. John's ADD/ADHD Support Group, **this Monday, December 14th, 7:00 PM**, in the Bishop Murphy Conference Room at the Parish Center. Enjoy prayer, discussion, coffee and dessert. This is not a counseling group, but a faith-based support group for parents and family members dealing with children or relatives who have ADD/ADHD. For more info, call Bob Krajewski, 301-695-9070.

CHOCOLATE RETREAT! A women's retreat is planned for **January 15th & 16th** at the Bishop Claggett Center in Buckeystown. Join us as we connect the extravagance of chocolate with the extravagance of God's love and grace. There are still a few spaces available. If you would like to give the gift of a Chocolate Retreat to a special woman in your life, contact Amy Spessard for details and gift certificates, 301-662-8288 x1102. The registration forms with full details are available at the parish office or on our website, www.stjohn-frederick.org. Contact Amy Spessard, 301-662-8288 x1102.

CANDLELIGHT TOUR of the Historic Houses of Worship, Monday, December 28th, 4:00-9:00 PM. We need your help! Our parish has been asked to be a Hospitality Site for all who visit our Church. See insert in today's bulletin on how you can help with the community outreach program.

MINISTRIES & ORGANIZATIONS

STAND CERTIFICATION FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS: The Archdiocese of Baltimore and St. John's Parish are committed to providing a safe environment for children at our parish. **All volunteer ministers** who work with or around families and children must be STAND certified. STAND training is available on line. Please visit www.stjohn-frederick.org and click on STAND Training. Contact Erica May, 301-662-8288 x1105 for more info.

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE **December 2009**
"You are well acquainted with the favor shown you by our Lord Jesus Christ: how for your sake he made himself poor though he was rich, so that you might become rich by his poverty . . ."
2 Corinthians 8:9

Consider gifts that keep on giving – gifts that make a difference. Ideas from Catholic Relief Services: A gift basket of projects is a simple way to honor the ones you love most by giving hope to people in tremendous need - see gifts.crs.org. Buying fair trade products is a way to bring the values of our faith to bear in the marketplace and to make consumer choices that help lift our brothers and sisters around the world out of poverty – see www.crsfairtrade.org.

RESPECT LIFE CORNER:

Are You Pregnant and in need of help? Call the Gabriel Network, 1-800-ANGEL-OK or Birthright, 301-663-0111.
Suffering Post-Abortion Syndrome? Call Project Rachel, 1-800-286-4224.

SCOUTING: Are You Interested in having your child in a Catholic Scouting Unit? St. John's has Catholic Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts (Elementary boys), and Boy Scouts (Middle & High School). For more info, contact Julie St. Croix, 301-662-8288 x1103 (Girl Scouts), Bill Desmond, 301-662-4151 (Cub Scouts), or Nelson Spessard, 301-846-4217 (Boy Scouts).

Troop 1274 is looking for a burn barrel to be used for flag retiring ceremonies and on camp-outs. If you can help, please contact Amy Spessard, 301-662-8288 x1102.

Congratulations to the girls of Girl Scout Troop 81397 on all their hard work over the last several months. There were over 60 badges awarded at their Court of Honor on Friday.

SPONSOR COUPLES NEEDED: St. John's is looking for Sponsor Couples to help prepare engaged couples for marriage. If you feel called as a couple to share the gift of your Sacrament of Marriage, please contact Amy Spessard for details, 301-662-8288 x1102.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY is looking for more members! If you would like to become a part of this ministry, please contact Nancy, 301-371-9045.

FAITH FORMATION & YOUTH MINISTRY

NATIVITY PLAY: On Friday, December 18th, 7:00 PM, in the Hall, the Elementary Faith Formation Classes will present a Nativity Play. We invite all families to come and join us as we sing some of our favorite Christmas carols.

NO FAITH FORMATION CLASSES from **December 20th through January 4, 2010** for Christmas break. Classes will resume on January 10th & 11th.

CONFIRMATION: PARENTS, Check your parent folder – Letters for Retreat are due this month! Please turn them in ASAP. Also, please contact Erica, 301-662-8288 x1105, to schedule your Confirmation interview.
STUDENTS, Please check out www.stjohne.com for details about Confirmation Retreat & pictures of O'Dwyer so you have an idea of where you are staying. Also check the site for ideas on choosing a Confirmation saint's name and service project ideas.

WINTER LOCK-IN: Last weekend we held our annual Winter Lock-in with St. Katharine Drexel Parish. We had 90+ teens spend the night in the Parish Community Center. Pictures and videos at www.stjohne.com.

HSYM, Sunday, December 13th: Big Feet. Wrapping up our semester on Social Justice, we have a special guest speaker, Ted Miles, from the Catholic Relief Services, Baltimore. Ted will share his experiences of mission work in countries all over the world. The goal: to help teens understand the difference between charity

and justice and to help teens experience the power of God's mercy so that they have mercy on others.

MSYM, Monday, December 14th: *What's Your Priority?* Youth will examine the priorities in their lives and be challenged to see the importance of setting Christ and their faith above all other things. When God is set as number one, other priorities will fall into place. Check out the website for pictures from the semester.

WINTER EVENTS: Middle & High School teens, watch for emails and the website for winter events in December and January!

YOUTH MINISTRY NEEDS YOU! If our recent requests for volunteers have you thinking, "I can't!" Consider this: We need men and women willing to get to know just 10 students, ask them weekly how they're doing, listen to what they say, and – most important – pray for them! Or, you might be more inclined to contribute your artistic or musical talent (teaching and playing), or perhaps to sponsor as a business leader, one of our events or service projects. If you have a gift or talent, share it with our young people. Contact Joe Mele, 301-662-8288 x1104, or joe.mele@stjohn-frederick.org.

SPANISH COMMUNITY

Legion de Maria Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz. Junta semanal todos los Jueves a las 7:00 PM. Necesitamos mas miembros que se quieran unir al grupo. Trabajemos juntos en union a nuestra Madre Maria. Para mas informacion contactar a: Nitza Rivas - 240-409-1998, Myriam Rullan 240-422-1718.

ST. JOHN REGIONAL SCHOOL

APPLICATIONS are now being accepted for Pre-K – 8th grade for the 2010-2011 school year. For more details or to schedule a tour of the school, call Admissions, 301-695-9358 or visit www.sjrscs.org. Tours are conducted daily from 9:00-11:00 AM.

STORY-TIME TOTS, Monday, December 21st, 8:45 AM, at the school located 8414 Opossumtown Pike. This month's theme: *Happy Birthday Jesus*. There will be a take home craft. Please call Jean Wright, 301-695-9358, or email jwright@strcs.org, to reserve a spot for your child.

HELP NEEDED

BIRTHRIGHT of Frederick is in need of items to carry on with its mission in 2010. Items needed: crib sheets, baby towels & wash cloths, receiving blankets, buntings, onesies (premie & 0-6 mos. only), pajamas (premie & 0-6 mos. only), dress outfits (0-6 mos. only), baby blankets, baby shampoo, lotion, and diapers (premie & 0-6 mos. only). They do not accept baby formula or furniture. Contact Birthright at 301-663-0111.

BEYOND THE PARISH

WANT TO STRETCH your Christmas \$? Shop at St. Peter's Thrift Shop in Libertytown. Lots of Christmas items. Clothing, shoes, and books for \$2 a bag. Housewares, toys, outerware, holiday, and new items priced separately. Located on Rt. 26, entrance and parking in rear of building on North St. Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, 10:00 AM-1:00 PM.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCES – 12/06/2009	
Envelope Users (511)	\$21,057.00
Non-Envelope Users	\$ 4,288.67
TOTAL Offortory.....	\$25,345.67
Weekly Stewardship Giving Needed	\$28,251.00
Second Collection: School	\$ 3,329.50
St. Vincent de Paul Society (Poor Fund) \$	1,001.00
Thank you for your continued generosity!	

WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS		
"SP" = Mass in Spanish		
Monday December 14	6:30 AM 8:00 AM	Special Intention Peter Smith
Tuesday December 15	6:30 AM 8:00 AM	Jason Young Julia Fisher
Wednesday December 16	6:30 AM 8:00 AM College View 6:30 PM (SP)	Charles McNickle John T. Harwood Bernard McCaffrey (Anniv.) Charles Marney
Thursday December 17	6:30 AM 8:30 AM	Jack Nelson (Birthday) Charles Denisar
Friday December 18	6:30 AM 8:00 AM	Helen Heim M. Elizabeth McCaffrey (Anniv.)
Saturday December 19	8:00 AM 5:00 PM 6:00 PM (SP) 7:00 PM	Fr. Wayne G. Funk People of the Parish Earl Tracey Barbara Joyce Callahan
Sunday December 20	7:30 AM 9:00 AM 11:00 AM Ch 11:00 AM Hall 1:00 PM 5:00 PM (SP)	Mary L. Root Odette Lopez Edna Brit Richard Loss The Geiglein Family Special Intention

REPORT
<p>During September 2009, the St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) provided assistance to 8 clients with auto expenses, 80 with housing expenses, 73 with medical expenses, 19 with legal expenses, 1 with travel expenses, 1 with childcare expenses, and 236 with utility expenses, for a total of 418 clients.</p> <p>SVDP thanks you for your generous contributions to the Poor Fund, which has made this assistance possible.</p> <p>If you or someone you know needs help with basic necessities, contact SVDP at 301-662-4676. The on-call volunteer will return your call. All requests are confidential.</p> <p>Si usted necesita ayuda o sabe de alguien que necesite articulos de primera necesidad, favor de llamar a la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paul; llame al 301-662-4676. Un voluntario le llamara; toda informacion sera confidencial.</p>