



First Sunday of Advent

December 2, 2007

“You...must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect,
the Son of Man will come.”

- Matthew 24:44

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Classes resume today Dec. 2.

We give thanks to all of our catechists, the students who attend our classes and the parents who support our program.



ADVENT ANGEL The tree is up and the angels are ready for you to select. We have 6 families this year including the parents who have some very large requests in order to take care of their children. Thank you for your continued commitment to this ministry. Please be sure to return your new gift, wrapped with one angel tag attached so we'll know whose gift it is. Checks

should be made out to St. Joseph on the Brandywine with "Advent Angel" on the memo line by Dec. 9th. Contact Casey Dauphin (302) 998-4848.

VOCATIONS: “Dear Lord help me to know what you want me to do with my life. Give me wisdom and understanding.” If you think God might be calling you to a priestly or religious vocation, call or write Fr. Joe Cocucci, Diocesan Director of Priestly and Religious Vocations (302) 573-3113, jcocucci@cdow.org.

A Season of Giving - can I make a pledge with a stock gift. Yes, gifts of stock not only benefit the church, but can have significant tax advantages to the donor. In addition to receiving a tax deduction for the current value of the stock, a donor avoids paying capital gains on stock that may have increased in value over the years. Informational brochures are in the back of church for your convenience.

A MERRY MUSICAL HOLIDAY

Sunday, December 16 at 2 p.m. Traditional arrangements of familiar Christmas Carols will be presented by St. Joseph's Adult & Youth Choirs.

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS COLLECTION

Next weekend the second collection benefits the Retirement Fund for Religious. More than 32,000 women and men religious are now past age 70 and their institutes struggle daily with the spiraling costs of health care. These men and women deserve our assistance. Please show your gratitude with a generous gift.



Pope Benedict XVI will come to the United States with visits to Washington and New York City on a six-day trip which includes an address at the United Nations. The visit is slated for April 15-20. Among venues during the visit will be the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where Pope Benedict will meet with the Bishops of the United States. The Diocese may be able to secure tickets for stadium masses; however no info is available yet.

PASTOR'S NOTES

Filled With Hope

The spiritual writer, Henri Nouwen was once asked: "Are you an optimist?" His reply: "No, not naturally, but that isn't important. I live in hope, not optimism." At first, the difference between hope and optimism may seem rather vague, but it is very real. An optimistic person is one who is usually cheerful, upbeat, always looking at the positive side of any situation. It's often pleasant to be around this kind of person, but occasionally they can get on your nerves when they constantly refuse to see that some things don't have a positive side to them.

The great theologian Karl Rahner once defined hope this way: A woman sees the tiny stream of her life and fears that it might not mean anything, that it might die out completely. Yet she somehow still believes it will flow significantly into the great ocean, despite the immeasurably huge, dry sand-dunes it must cross to get to an ocean it cannot even see.

Hope is believing in a God who believes in us. It is living with the spiritual conviction that God loves whatever God has created, and that God loves me in a way beyond my wildest dreams, and that God will never let go of this love for me. Hope is seeing beyond the dryness of the deserts of my life, and believing that God is calling me to life that is full and never-ending.

If we want to keep our hope alive and strong, we need the support of a community. If we have made a choice not to be closely connected to any supportive community, we may soon find ourselves weighed down by a spirit of negativity and focused on what is wrong in our lives. Our Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is meant to give us the strength we need by calling us together around the table of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is here that we are reminded there is more to life than meets the eye.

GIVING THANKS FOR SO MANY GOOD THINGS!

The Advent Ecumenical Service with Lower Brandywine was a special event. Thank you to Michael and Mary Ellen and all those who had a part in making this special advent event a great start to our advent journey. Thanksgiving weekend collection goes to Habitat for Community.

A TRIP TO ITALY!

Run, don't walk to join the Majestic Italy Choir Pilgrimage. Each week the choir is including in the mass at offertory or communion meditation one of the pieces they are preparing to present during the ten-day tour. Dates are changed by one day to April 15-24 to make sure we get an audience with the Holy Father who will be at the UN in New York, in April. The itinerary has been switched to begin in Venice and end in Rome with a papal audience. Everyone is welcome.



Emmanuel Dining Room (EDR)—Dinners and Desserts Needed
Help St. Joseph's on the Brandywine bring tidings of comfort and joy to the more than 200 people who depend on EDR for their hot meals each day. We need volunteers to cook chicken and bake desserts at home; we need others to prepare boxed stuffing at the Family Center. We also need people to bake or purchase desserts. This month, we'll meet at the Family Center on Tuesday, December 11, at 8 a.m. Call Jeanne Harkin, 610-388-1845, or Ann Hapka, 610-388-1362, if you have questions. Join us and learn about the true spirit of Christmas giving. Please note the new start time--8 a.m. Deliver desserts no later than 9 a.m. Thank you.

In the Shadow of the Church...

A Modern Cemetery with a Traditional Setting...

The Cemetery Committee wishes to remind you of the opportunity to purchase Rights of Burial if you have not already done so. Obtaining your final resting place before the actual need arises is most beneficial to all concerned. Please call the rectory to arrange an appointment with one of our sales consultants (302) 658-7017.

In today's second reading, St. Paul reminds us that we are called to "throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." Some are called to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" in a way that serves the rest of the Body of Christ: as priests, deacons, religious sisters or religious brothers. Could God be calling you to one of these vocations? If you'd like to pursue that possibility, please call or write Father Joe Cocucci, Diocesan Director of Priestly and Religious Vocations 302-573-3113; jcocucci@cdow.org

WELCOME, YULE?

It's here; a series of handouts for each Sunday of Advent and each week of the Christmas season. Welcome, Yule! provides an ideal way for our faith community to honor and celebrate these holy seasons. Enjoy

Listen to Catholic Forum every Sunday morning at 10:05 a.m. on 1150AM WDEL. Next Sunday, December 9th, tune in to hear an interview with Dr. Ray Guarendi, author of the new book "Good Discipline, Great Teens." Catholic Forum is a production of the Office of Communications of the Diocese of Wilmington.



- Saturday (Dec. 1)
 - 5:00 p.m. Phyllis McDonald by Donald McDonald & Donald McDonald, Jr.
- Sunday (Dec. 2)
 - 7:30 a.m. Beryl McDonough by Jane Jones & family
 - 9:00 a.m. June & William Tucker by June Francella
 - 10:30 a.m. Parishioners
- Monday (Dec. 3)
 - 7:00 a.m. Theresa Nicastro Wahl by Chuck Wahl
 - 12:05 p.m. Brad Hublein by friends of Brad
- Tuesday (Dec. 4)
 - 7:00 a.m. Hugh Curtis Christian by Mark Christian
 - 12:05 p.m. Angie Beck by Dan & Lynn Christenbury
- Wednesday (Dec. 5)
 - 7:00 a.m. Patrice Crocini by Diane Sawyer
 - 12:05 p.m. Beatrice Blackburn by family
- Thursday (Dec. 6)
 - 7:00 a.m. Charles W. Holland by Ann Holland
 - 12:05 p.m. Phoebe Carbello by Msgr., Rebman
- Friday (Dec. 7)
 - 7:00 a.m. Marvin Gilmour by Peggy Butler
 - 12:05 p.m. David O. Beatson by Lisa & David
- Saturday (Dec. 8)
 - 8:00 a.m. Thomas Giblin by Ann & Ed Schultz
 - 5:00 p.m. Ray Carr by Marie

A Holy Day of Obligation

Saturday, Dec. 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We honor her as preserved from original sin from the moment of her conception. It was defined as a dogma of the faith by Pius IX in 1854. *Masses to fulfill the holy day obligation will be Friday, Dec. 7 @ 7 p.m. and Saturday 8 and 10. The 5 p.m. mass Saturday will continue to fulfill Sunday's obligation.*

The Delaware Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Campaign is looking for volunteers to assist low-income families claim the tax credits they have earned. Will train. Call (302) 655-0803. A Catholic Charities sponsored program.

Families with deceased loved ones laid to rest at Cathedral or All Saints Cemeteries may purchase their cemetery Christmas decorations by contacting 737-2524.

TENDING THE FLOCK

Thank you to our parish family for their gifts that help support the many ministries and services funded through the Annual Catholic Appeal. Remember, for end of year giving, final payment should be received by early December to allow us time to process and credit your payment before the campaign closes at the end of December 2007.