



Second Sunday of Advent

December 9, 2007

The earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD,
as water covers the sea.

— Isaiah 11:9

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

On Sunday, December 2 the students in the sixth grade began working on the Christmas Pageant which will be held on Sunday, December 16 in the family center. The other classes worked on projects dealing with Advent such as the advent wreath and the Jesse Tree.

The 9th grade Confirmation class studied the “Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew.” Using their Bibles they compared the narratives of both Gospel writers.

On Sunday the 9th the classes from grades 3 to 10 will have the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a part of their Advent observance.

ADVENT ANGEL All gifts must be returned this weekend. Please be sure to attach the angel tag to the gift. Please make checks payable to St. Joseph on the Brandywine with "Advent Angel" on the memo line. We have 6 families this year including the parents who have some very large requests in order to take care of their children. Help is needed after the Masses to carry the gifts to the rectory basement. Many hands lighten the load! Thank you for your continued commitment to this ministry. *Contact Casey Dauphin (302) 998-4848.*

PASTOR'S NOTES

When the ties of affection and authority that bound Europe's Catholics unraveled in the sixteenth century, many cultures lost time-honored customs of faith. Some customs proved to be especially difficult for the reformers to wrest away from the people, especially those celebrated in the home. This week in Sweden, a country where the Catholic Church was disestablished four hundred years ago, a Catholic martyr from Sicily is the most beloved figure. St. Lucia, Lucy, is celebrated on December 13. The long-story-short is that Lucy was a Christian whose father wanted to marry her off to a pagan fellow, and she rejected her father's authority. To make an example of her, her father had her killed. In the course of the brutal martyrdom, Lucy lost her beautiful eyes, but her vision was miraculously restored. The candles worn today by the eldest daughter of the family are tokens of the fire that refused to harm the saint. So this patroness of light and clear vision is revered on the shortest, darkest days of the Nordic winter. Before the reform of the Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century, December 13 was the winter solstice.

Today, young girls appear in the morning wearing lighted candles on their crowned heads (battery-operated now after many mishaps), and serve sweet rolls and coffee to everyone in the house. For the Swedes, who are not churchgoers, the “Lucias” are the official heralds of the holiday season and a sign of everyone's yearning for more light in this world. Europe once abounded with customs like this; the survival of this custom in Scandinavia is a sign of God's grace, and how fertile the soil is to receive the true message of Advent.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

We encourage all to celebrate the glories of Christmas by celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in our Church or elsewhere if you choose.

Wednesday, December 19th 11:30 (before 12:05 Mass)
Thursday, December 20th, 11:30 (before 12:05 Mass) and 4 – 5 p.m.
Friday, December 21st, 11:30 (before 12:05 Mass) and 7 – 8 p.m.
Saturday, December 22nd 8:30 a.m. (after Mass) and 11 – 12 a.m., and 4-4:45



Sunday, December 16 at 2 p.m. Classic choral settings of Christmas carols will be presented by St. Joseph's Adult & Youth Choirs. All are welcome!

Obey: The Unwritten Rule!

Parishioners parking on the 141 side of Old Church Road in front of the church are asked to observe the longstanding custom of diagonal parking only. Since it is a County-owned street, we cannot paint diagonal parking lines but diagonal parking can be tolerated and it enables more cars to park there.

Altar Servers

They are Jesus' Friends

Boys and girls fourth grade and up are invited to register for this ministry by calling Ann Michels, Director, Altar Servers (302) 654.9273 or (302) 750.0089. Training session will be scheduled in January. Pope Benedict XVI's August appearance in St. Peter's Square was mainly for an audience of 42,000 European altar servers. “Dear friends, in reality you already are apostles of Jesus. When you offer your service at the altar, you give a witness to all. Your attitude of prayer, your devotion that comes from the heart is expressed in gestures, song and responses, all this is apostolic.” - Catholic News Service

All-Catholic Christmas Concert to be held December 11: A Delaware tradition for more than 50 years, the All-Catholic Christmas Concert will be held at Salesianum School on Tuesday, December 11, starting at 7:00 p.m. Choral and instrumental groups from Saint Mark's High School, Saint Elizabeth High School, Saint Thomas More Preparatory School, Padua Academy, Archmere Academy, Ursuline Academy and Salesianum School will be performing. The concert will conclude with the reading of the Christmas story and the combined choirs performing a special arrangement of "Adeste Fidelis." This concert is open to the public and is free of charge.



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

...that their light may always shine.

Light a candle for all children who have died.

Second Sunday in December (Dec. 9)

7 PM Around the Globe

*Sponsored by The Compassionate Friends Worldwide
 Candle Lighting*

The Little Sisters of the Poor are holding the 1st Annual "Rocking Chair Olympics," a competitive 40-Rock Dash for adults ages 60 and over, Saturday, December 15, 2007, 12:00-4:00 PM at Boscov's, Christiana Town Center. Msgr., Rebman will be rocking the day away. Entry fee is \$15.00; discount price is \$7.00 per person for groups of 4 or more. Call 302-368-5886, ext. 226 for more details. Help the Little Sisters of the Poor provide for the elderly poor and "Rock the Halls!"

Kindergarten Registration: St. Catherine of Siena School, Wednesday, Jan. 30 from 9 - 12 in the Gathering Space. Bring a copy of your child's birth and baptismal certificates and a non-refundable application fee of \$60 per family. If you can't make the date and time, please call school office (302) 633.4901 for more information. Open houses for parents who want to visit the school on Thurs., Jan. 31 9:30 - 11:00. Guided tours of the school are provided weekly. Call the office to make an appointment.

WOMEN OF THE BIBLE VISIT JESUS HOUSE THIS ADVENT! On Tuesday, December 11 women from the Old and New Testament will make a visit to Jesus House. The day begins at 9:30 - with refreshments and registration and ends at 2:45 p.m. Call Edie (302) 995-6859

- Saturday (Dec. 8)
 - 5:00 p.m. Ray Carr by Marie
- Sunday (Dec. 9)
 - 7:30 a.m. Edith Giacco by family
 - 9:00 a.m. Parishioners
 - 10:30 a.m. John Limmina by Vivian Limmina
- Monday (Dec. 10)
 - 7:00 a.m. Nelson Sublett by Charles Seitz
 - 12:05 p.m. Drs. William & Stephen P. Butler by Peggy Butler Baird
- Tuesday (Dec. 11)
 - 7:00 a.m. Thomas Giblin by EDR Group
 - 12:05 p.m. Phoebe Carabello by Tom & Francine Harkins
- Wednesday (Dec. 12)
 - 7:00 a.m. Matthew B. Speicher by Margaret Speicher
 - 12:05 p.m. Richard & Jeffrey Reese by family
- Thursday (Dec. 13)
 - 7:00 a.m. M/M Edward Bielicki by Rita & Robert Gutekunst
 - 12:05 p.m. Stanley Figiel by Mark Christian
- Friday (Dec. 14)
 - 7:00 a.m. Louis DiFedelto by Karen Dougherty & Jim Erickson
 - 12:05 p.m. Alfred Columbio by M/M Stephen Shearer
- Saturday (Dec. 15)
 - 8:00 a.m. Eric Billings by Michael & Christy Fleming
 - 5:00 p.m. Rita Kearns by family

You may or may not be aware of a law passed by congress in 2006. This law included what is called the Charitable IRA Rollover which is an incentive for an individual to donate a portion or all of his/her RMD, required minimum distribution from his/her IRA. At 70 1/2, the IRS requires you to take a distribution from your IRA. This becomes part of your income and will be taxed. Many parishioners need that income and taking the distribution will not affect their taxes significantly or penalize their social security. Other parishioners may realize substantial savings by directing a portion or all of your mandatory IRA withdrawal directly to our parish. You will not have to report that amount as income and you will avoid having to pay taxes on those funds. Before this year draws to a close, I wanted to make sure that you were aware of this opportunity and ask you to consider a gift from your IRA to our parish if this will benefit you.

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