

ADVENT The Season of Joyful Anticipation

A Reflection from Fr. Joseph

Many years ago when I was still in the Seminary, I participated in prison ministry for one year. It was a very positive experience. Once a week we would go and hold a prayer service for the inmates. Then, afterwards, we would spend some time sharing coffee and talking with them. But before I began that semester, I remember asking one of the older seminarians, who had previously taken part in that ministry, what had been his experience of it. He said: "Oh, it's challenging but quite important. I think you'll learn a lot from it." Then he looked at me and said, "But get ready for a lot of old altar servers."

Now, I did not know what he meant by that comment. But I discovered later, that a remarkable number of the inmates would tell me, "I used to be an altar server." Now this perplexed me and I wondered whether there was a connection between being an altar server when you are young and ending up in prison. I have to assure our altar servers that I have not been able to substantiate that connection.

However, one of the lessons I learned from that experience was this: The important question is not what have we done for God? The important question is what have we done for God *lately*? That seems to be the issue John the Baptist has in today's Gospel. When some of the religious leaders come for baptism, he insists that they must demonstrate their goodness by their actions. He does not want them to presume their holiness by saying that they have Abraham as their ancestor. Now, having Abraham as your ancestor was a good thing and John the Baptist certainly respected it. But he insisted that their pedigree be accompanied by action. Or to put it in other terms, what had they done for God lately?

To be a follower of Jesus is not simply to collect a couple of actions of faith and love and then move on to other things. To follow Jesus is a way of life. It is not enough to garner together a couple of religious experiences that you can point to when the topic comes up in conversation. Being a disciple is living today and every day as a person who is trying to build the Kingdom of God. That is why Jesus asks us to take up our crosses and follow him daily.



Now, that request can seem demanding and even unreasonable. But I assure you, it is not Christ's intention to shame us or to place heavy obligations upon us. For the truth is that by doing what Christ asks us to do, following His will, is the best thing that we can do for ourselves. There is no deeper satisfaction than knowing that we have served as He has asked us to serve, that we have forgiven as He has asked us to forgive, that we have loved as He has asked us to love. Doing His will is the greatest joy we can achieve. He asks us to do His will, not for his benefit, and not only for the benefit of others, but for ourselves.

Christ is counting on us today and every day, to build His kingdom, to be people of service, justice, and love. That is what He asks. That is what He commands. We would do well to follow His commands, for doing His will brings us lasting joy. His question, "What have you done for me lately," is really only another way of asking, "What have you recently done for yourself?"

YOUTH MINISTRY SUNDAY: December 4, 2016

The purpose of this archdiocesan collection is to assist the work of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office (OYYAM) in providing formation, training, and support for youth ministry in parishes.



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE NEWS

- *Friendship Day: This Sunday, Dec. 4th after the 9 and 11 am Masses at the entrance of the church. Please joins us!*

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. Dec. 5th - Is. 35:1-10; Luke 5:17-26

Tue. Dec. 6th - Is. 40:1-11; Mat. 18:12-14

Wed. Dec. 7th - ST. AMBROSE, memorial

Is. 40:25-31; Mat. 11:28-30

Thurs. Dec. 8th - THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, solemnity

Gen. 3:9-15, 20; Ephes. 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38

Fri. Dec. 9th - Is. 48:17-19; Mat. 11:16-19

Sat. Dec. 10th - Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Mat. 17:10-13

Sun. Dec. 11th - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Is. 35:1-6a, 10; James 5:7-10; Mat. 11:2-11



ALTAR SERVERS

Wed. Dec. 7th - 7:30 PM - Volunteers

Sat. Dec. 10th - 5:00 PM - C.Barraca, Jennifer & Matthew Fierro, Carter & Chloe Tsang.

Sun. Dec. 11th - 9:00 AM - Janna & Ryan Huang,

K.Tuguinay, Joshua & Natasha Yuen. 11:00 AM - Emily, Kaitlyn

& Vivian Chan, J.Largo, L.Soliman, James & Mark Tran, K.Tria,

V.Yen. 5:00 PM - M.Breaker, M. De Leon, A.Ferreira, D.Giuliano,

K. Ogatis-Saboco, Deanna & Jolin Ruan.

Please Note: Servers are reminded to sign-up in the sacristy for the Christmas and New Years Masses.



ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

Up-Coming Events

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Sun. Dec. 4 th	9 am Mass for all the souls in purgatory 11 am Mass for parishioners 5 pm Mass for Elizabeth Rayappu, R.I.P.
Mon. Dec. 5 th	8 am Mass for Yat Sheung Choy, R.I.P.
Tue. Dec. 6 th	8 am Mass for all the souls in purgatory
Wed. Dec. 7 th	9 am Mass for Patrocinia Maramara, R.I.P. 7:30 pm Novena Mass
Thur. Dec. 8 th	8 am Mass for Siu Ching Law, R.I.P.
Fri. Dec. 9 th	8 am Mass for Joseph Chun-The Chu, R.I.P.
Sat. Dec. 10 th	9:00 am Mass for Eduino & Filomena Medeiros, R.I.P. 5:00 pm Mass for the int. of Mariotti Fmly.



PARISH ENVELOPES FOR 2017

Your new sets of parish envelopes are ready to be picked up from the tables at the entrance of the church. They are arranged in alphabetical order. Anyone wishing envelopes for 2017, who are not currently using them are asked to call the parish office.

RCIA & ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Wednesdays, at 6:30 pm, in the church hall. The program is suitable for anyone who is interested in learning more about our faith, for Catholics who have not yet received the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Communion and for those who would like to deepen their faith. "Drop-ins" and those interested in a specific topic are welcome. Our topic this Wednesday will be: "God Unity and Trinity"



SCHOOL NEWS

- **School Mass:** This Wed., at 9 am. Join us.
- **Advent Carol Service:** All are invited to join us and get into the spirit of Advent this Monday, Dec. 5th at 7 pm in our church. The whole school is involved.

SQUIRETTES NEWS

Poinsettia Sale: Next Sunday, Dec. 11th, after the 9 & 11 am Masses, in the church vestibule.



ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE

Friday, Dec. 16th at 7:00 p.m. at St. Jude's



Advent is the season of preparation. Throughout these weeks, the Scriptures tell us to "awake and be vigilant." During this time we are all encouraged to go to confession as a way to prepare for the coming of the King of Kings. We have enclosed in this weekend's bulletin, an insert with the schedule of Penitential Services being held in our area.

SIMBANG GABI 2016: Advent Novena Masses in Filipino

The Filipino Community of the Archdiocese of Vancouver is once again hosting the Novena Masses leading up to Christmas day, in accord with the Filipino tradition. Simbang Gabi will be held at St. Jude's on Monday, Dec. 19th at 7:30 pm. All are welcome to attend. See bulletin board for schedule of Masses.

Stewardship Reflection

St. John the Baptist was chosen to be a prophet of God. As baptized people, we too are called to be prophets. Being prophetic is a part of our identity as followers of Jesus. Advertisers today are very adept at luring us into a case of mistaken identity. They relentlessly tell us our identity is found in what we possess. Stewardship prophets, in today's culture, swim against the tide of excessive materialism and consumerism. We are called to be God's instruments by speaking truth. We can confidently do so by completely relying on God's spirit working through us, giving us the words and courage we did not know we possessed. Speaking the truth can be very disconcerting, especially to those who wish to simply go with the flow. However, good stewards joyfully and kindly profess the truth, because they know that by sharing the hope and the joy that they have, others will be set free. Thus, like St. John the Baptist, we too can prepare the way of the Lord.

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LITTLE FLOWER ACADEMY is accepting applications from prospective Grade Eight candidates for the 2017-2018 school year. All students wishing to apply must sit the Entrance Exam on Saturday, Dec. 10th. To apply please fill out the online form on our website: www.lfabc.org/apply or call Kathi Wilson at 604-738-9016 ext.114.

Thinking of the Seafarers at Christmas

Please extend an act of God's love to sailors who will be spending their Christmas in Vancouver, away from their families. No need to shop, just make a cheque out to "Archdiocese of Vancouver," put "Seafarers Gifts" on the memo line and we'll do the shopping for you. Please mail your cheque to 4885 Saint John Paul II Way, c/o Finance Office. A charitable receipt will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

Women's Discernment Night

Do you have questions about your vocation or are you discerning God's call for your life? Vocations in Progress for women is an opportunity to meet religious, ask questions, and learn about their life and spirituality. Join other single women aged 18-35 for an informal evening including prayer, dinner, and discussion on Friday, Dec. 9, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Centre, Port Coquitlam. For more info., visit vocationsvancouver.ca/events/vip/

Men's Discernment Night: *God has a plan for your life.*

Are you discerning God's call for your life? Vocations in Progress for men is an opportunity to meet priests, ask questions, and learn about their life and spirituality. The informal event will include prayer, dinner, and discussion. Join us on Wednesday, Dec. 14, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at St. Nicholas Parish, Langley. For more info., visit vocationsvancouver.ca/events/vip

Rise Up: Called By Name

Rise Up is a conference for young adults (aged 18-35) hosted by Catholic Christian Outreach, a Canadian university student movement. If you are a young adult then you are invited to come to Rise Up. Join us from Dec. 28/16 to Jan. 1/17 at The Westin Bayshore, Vancouver. For more info visit www.cco.ca/riseup or call CCO at 613-736-1999.

