



# FROM THE DESK OF FR. RICH

Today we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent.

TV coverage of events in the Middle East has familiarized us with the empty expanse of arid desert described in today's first reading. Therefore, we can appreciate the unbelievable transformation that Isaiah promises. The prophet says that the desert will become a lush garden, as God's chosen people return singing and dancing from their 70-year exile in Babylon.

The letter of James was written approximately 50 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was addressed to a group of Christians who were disappointed that Jesus had not yet returned in glory. Using an agricultural image, the author encourages them to keep their hope alive as they face the day-to-day trials of life.

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Our Parish Communal Advent Reconciliation Service with individual confessions will take place this coming Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. Confessions will be heard in both English and Polish. As you make your personal preparations for Christmas, I invite you to join us in receiving the healing power of Jesus and the gift of God's grace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please plan on joining your parish community on Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. There will be many priests hearing confessions on this night, as this will be the only parish Communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for Christmas, other than our regular Saturday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. However, please do not wait until Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, as we will not have the extra priests that we are providing for your convenience on Friday, the 19<sup>th</sup>. Please plan on joining us then.

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As practicing Catholics, we all know that going to Mass every weekend is not an option but rather an obligation, something that faithful Catholics participate in and share in. I prefer to see our gathering with each other around the Lord's Table each week as an opportunity

to come together with our fellow believers to offer thanks and gratitude for all God has done for us, as we are fed with both Word and Sacrament to go out into the world to put our faith into action. We do this because it is one of God's desires for us, one of His Commandments, namely -- to keep holy the Sabbath Day. God must have known something of the value of His creations setting time aside each week to give thanks and praise for all He has done for us.

It's hard to believe that in a little over a week from now we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord at our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses. As you know, there will be many more worshipers than usual at these Masses. For this reason, I ask that all in our parish do your best to arrive earlier if you are able. And remember...it's Christmas, so let's try and be nice even when that may be the last thing you're feeling when being delayed in the parking lot for a few extra minutes. 😊

I look forward to seeing all of you and your families at our many Masses over the next couple of weeks. Please note that our Christmas and New Year's Mass schedule are slightly different than regular weekends. Hopefully, by now, you have received my Christmas letter and our Christmas Season Mass Schedule. As you know, some of our Masses during the holidays can be very crowded. If you are planning to attend these Masses, again, please try to get here a little earlier than usual to help ease the congestion.

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Oplatki (wafer) is now available in the gathering space at the back of church and at the parish office during normal business hours, for those who wish to share in this beautiful custom at their Christmas family meals. The "Little Blue Books" and Parish Calendars are also available at the doors of our worship sites, as well as in the gathering spaces of our two church sites. Don't miss out on getting your copies because once they are gone, they're gone.

Wishing all in our parish a blessed conclusion of the Advent Season and the week ahead.

*Fr. Rich Yanos*