

Saint Francis Xavier Parish

Third Sunday of Advent

December 16, 2018



REV. DENNIS M. DINAN, PASTOR

ABBY RODDEN, PARISH SECRETARY

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:30AM-11:30AM TELEPHONE: (845) 252-6681
Web Address: www.sfxnarrowsburg.com Email: sfxnarrowsburg@gmail.com

Our Lady of the Lake Church

Rt 52, Lake Huntington

Masses

Sunday 8:30am
Holydays of Obligation As Announced

Confessions & Daily Mass

At St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier Church

151 Bridge St., Narrowsburg

Masses

Saturday 4:30pm
Sunday 11:00am
Daily (Tuesday-Friday) 8:30am
Holydays of Obligation As announced

Confessions

Saturday 4:00pm
Or by appointment

Dear Parish Family,

Have you ever thought what it would be like to meet Jesus in person? In some respect, it might be like meeting his advance publicity man, John the Baptist! I say that because meeting both would put us in a position of having to make some possible severe and decisive life-altering changes.

There was a softly sung song that was popular when I was growing up. It's still played on the Oldie's Stations. It was written by John Sebastian of The Lovin' Spoonful, entitled, *Did You Ever Have to Make up Your Mind*. I am sure so many of you know it or have heard it. Although the song is about choosing between girlfriends, the first verse sounds like ordinary decision-making that we all have to do:

Did you ever have to make up your mind
Pick up on one and leave the other behind
It's not often easy and not often kind
Did you ever have to make up your mind

The second verse, however, adds another level of complexity. It speaks about finality! That is a different story. Not every decision we make is that serious or difficult, as the words themselves reveal:

Did you ever have to finally decide
Say yes to one and let the other one ride
There's so many changes and tears you must hide
Did you ever have to finally decide

Although the situation differs entirely, the gospel today lets us see that, even for people who thought they had it all together, meeting John the Baptist, or Jesus—the one he says is mightier than him—could be an earth-shattering experience. It is almost as if the encounter leaves the people speechless or without a clue. The response, over and over, is *"What then should we do?"* (Lk 3:10). The answer is always: decide on a different way of living and make some changes. The change for each person in the gospel was different. I am sure that it was also costly. Otherwise, why would it be necessary? Therefore, I am sure that it would be the same for us.

In short, many people say that in meeting Jesus, he makes us choose. The choice is between him and his gospel and something we have, are doing, or not doing. We all recall the story of the Rich Young Man (see Mt 19:16-22) who came to Jesus and asked, *"Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?"* To begin with, Jesus answered him, *"Keep the commandments,"* which he said he was already doing and Jesus did not refute that. But Jesus added, *"Sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."* And we know that *"when the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions."* It's like, in the song, it says,

In walks [the] father and takes you in line
And says, "You better go home, son,
and make up your mind"

And then you bet you'd better finally decide...

I suppose it was like this for the young man. It was not just decisive; but a crucial juncture in his life. Clearly, Jesus gives us time, if we really need it. He is patient beyond imagining. Still, he makes us stand at crossroads. Meeting Jesus, or John the Baptist, might likely be the defining moment of our lives, the moment of Truth. Those in the gospel were told, point-blank, "Share your clothes." "Share your food." "Stop stealing!" "Stop shaking down people!" "Stop falsely accusing others!" He also told them, "To be satisfied with what they had." I suppose we should wonder, "What would he have said to us?"

What is Jesus asking of us right now? It need not be to give up something sinful. Mary was called to choose what God asked of her at a cost to herself and to her relationships with Joseph, her family and the community in which she lived. Remember, Mary made her decision without seeking advice,

comparing her options or weighing the consequences. God spoke to her through an angel. She believed. That was enough for her. She responded, giving God what he wanted.

What is Jesus asking of us right now? *"What then should we do?"* (Lk 3:10). We may never have the benefit of being sought out by an angel. We are all sought, however, in the inner recesses of our being. If our conscience is well formed, and sometimes if it is not, God will speak to us there. In my early twenties a friend told me "Conscience is the voice of Jesus Christ telling us what we must do to achieve our salvation." It must be in accordance with Sacred Scripture, the teachings of the Church or even the experience of one of the saints for it to be authentic. He might be calling us to be a witness, in whatever capacity. He might be calling us to be another John the Baptist to the world or our community and likewise, *"Exhorting them in many other ways, [preaching the] good news to the people"* (Lk 3:18). That can come in some very surprising ways! Here's one.

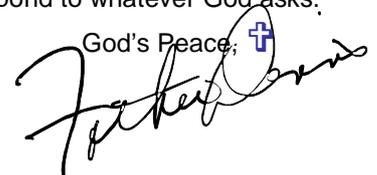
This past Friday, December 14th, the Church celebrated the legendary Saint John of the Cross, someone both admired and feared. I was reminded, and many people are not aware of it, that there was a connection between him and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, between his sublime teaching and what she believed and taught. I know this because of what Father Marie-Eugene of the Child Jesus, in his book about Saint Thérèse, *Under the Torrent of His Love*, told us,

The young Carmelite [Thérèse] was captivated by the powerful thought of St. John of the Cross, his rigorous and loving logic, the sublime descriptions which expressed what she was feeling. She was enthralled with the harmonious music of his words and the audacious poetry of his symbols, which left in her soul the ineffable effects of the divine contact. She fed on these pages and let herself be carried away in recollection towards the regions where the contacts were renewed. St. John of the Cross' texts were so easily and profoundly impressed upon her memory that they poured forth later on in her conversations with the novices each time she wanted to instruct them, to support an affirmation, or to stir up love.

The fundamental principles of the doctrine of St. John of the Cross became those of the teaching of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. True, St. Thérèse assimilated them and expressed them in her personal style, but the fact remains that the doctrine of spiritual childhood found the powerful framework, of its structure only in light of the teaching of the Doctor of Carmel. Apart from the Gospel, no work stamped her soul and her spirituality more profoundly than the treatises of St. John of the Cross.

So, her Little Way was actually a Big Way! She made it so with her love, reflection, and devotion. She paid the price for it! So did John the Baptist and all those who died for Christ. They have no regrets, however. They chose to do the Will of God. If this is how we are living, Saint Paul tells us in the Second Reading we should, *"Rejoice in the Lord always.... Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"* (Phil 4:4, 6-7). Be not afraid! *"The Lord is near"* (Phil 4:5). And then, you bet you'd better finally decide...! We all have been given gifts, specifically, *"so that the church may be built up"* (1 Cor 14:5). Therefore, *"What then should we do?"* Respond to whatever God asks.

God's Peace; 



Reconciliation Monday

Monday, December 17

St. Francis Xavier Rectory Chapel

4:00pm-6:30pm



*Please come to the front door of the
Rectory
151 Bridge St., Narrowsburg*

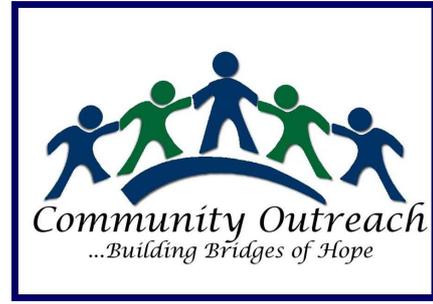


The Ecumenical Food Pantry Toy drive is on! Donation boxes are located at the back of both of our parish churches for your *new and unwrapped gifts*.

You may also make a monetary donation by using the pre-addressed envelopes provided at the back of the church. These can also be dropped in the collection basket. Please make checks out to the "Ecumenical Food Pantry" and write "Toy Drive" on the memo line.

The deadline for donations is December 20th. For more information please call Joanne Letendre at 252-3971.

St. Francis Xavier Outreach Program



Christmas is quickly approaching and many families in our parish and community are in need. Please prayerfully consider making a donation to our Outreach Program. Donations can be placed in the collection basket or sent to: PO Box 8 Narrowsburg NY12764

Parish Christmas Mass Schedule



Christmas Eve SFX-4:00pm

OLL-6:30pm

Christmas Day SFX-10:00am

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 15th

4:30pm -Fr. William Scully
Requested by A Friend

Sunday, December 16th

8:30am -Our Parish Family
11:00am -Nicholas Junjulas
Requested by Christina & Butch Passarella
-Betty Creamer
Requested by Wendell & Lillian Putz

Tuesday, December 18th

8:30am -Our Parish Family

Wednesday, December 19th

8:30am -Dr. Robert Lucas
Requested by Patty Moser & Judy Stringer

Thursday, December 20th

8:30am -David Michael Hartley
Requested by David & Mary Hartley

Friday, December 21st

8:30am -Eugene Meyer
Requested by Ron & Anna Meyer

Saturday, December 22nd

4:30pm -Our Parish Family

Sunday, December 23rd

8:30am -Our Parish Family
11:00am -Maria & Joe Meyer
Requested by The Indelicato Family
-Ralph M. Rielly
Requested by The Totten Family



Remember your friends and relatives at our parish masses during the Christmas season.

The names of loved ones will remain on the altar throughout these Holy and grace-filled days.

Collection

December 9, 2018

1st Collection

Our Lady of the Lake	\$359.00
St. Francis Xavier	\$1,076.00

2nd Collection (Religious Retirement)

Our Lady of the Lake	\$158.00
St. Francis Xavier	\$434.00

Other (Repairs & Maintenance)

Our Lady of the Lake	\$10.00
St. Francis Xavier	\$120.00

Total

\$2,157.00

Thank you!

Collection

Immaculate Conception of Mary

Holiday Collection

Friday Vigil	\$124.00
Saturday	\$315.00

Total

\$439.00

Thank you!

Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:10-18

Please Pray for our Parish Family

(This list will be cleared for the new year. Please let us know who you would like on the new list as soon as possible. Thank you!)

For the Sick: Peggy Bayly Lohmann, Dennis Falk, Barbara Walter, Gloria Saures, Ed Brennan, Amy Ernano, Clayton Snow, Barnabas O'Driscoll, Sean Sweeney, Jose Mabama, Ron Burke, Charlotte Mills, Carol Mash, Mary Cauvaris, Barbara Smith, Janine Perry, Hilde Bielfeld, Rosemary Barile, Christine Mary Faggione, Tracy Larssen, Helene Indelicato, Madeline Sheans, Peggy Lee Romano, Mary Weiden, Mary Tresh, Ida Alvarez, Mildred Meyer, Kenneth "Boomer" Meyer, and all those struggling with any kind of illness and suffering.

For the Deceased: Theresa Delaney, Helen Bunis, Maria Meyer, Pat Noble, Joseph Meyer, Gloria Ackermann, Eileen Dempsey, Martin Ferrick, Jacoba "Cobi" Campfield, George Johnson, Josephine Kelly, Joanne Barnes Brennan, Dr. Robert Lucas, Daniel Kelly, Fr. William Scully, Jean Salmeri, Barbara Smith, Mary Ann Janowsky, Helen Guttzeit, William Ackerman, Lewis Meckle, Alix Fils-Aime, Elizabeth Creamer, and all those who have gone before us.

For those Serving in the Military: SGT Vaughn Schlott USMC (TX)