

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



December 5, 2021

Today we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. We are one week into the season of joyful expectation for the coming of our Savior: Our Lord Jesus

Christ. Joyful expectation is something that is part of our human experience. When we are looking forward to something of great significance, we experience an expectation that is filled with hope for great things. Our hope is not baseless or empty. It is different from wishful thinking. Wishful thinking is like a desire to win the lottery but not buying a ticket. It is wishful thinking with no real possibility of seeing the object desired.

Our hope is based upon something that we know for certain: God's Word. Our hope is based upon Divine revelation in which we receive the promise of a Savior. God can be trusted. God is always faithful to His people. Our certainty is based on the faithfulness of God, of the coming of our God. We are fortunate in knowing this promise was fulfilled in the Birth of Our Savior in Bethlehem. Our Lord and Savior has indeed come. By his life, death and resurrection, he has conquered the ancient adversary of sin and death. He ascended to his place at the right hand of the Father. He promised to return again at the end of time to establish his eternal Kingdom. In our fortunate position we now live with the Joyful expectation of his second coming. Jesus promised to come again and we put our faith in His Word.

His first coming was and is the manifestation of God's unconditional love and faithfulness to His people. The second coming of Jesus Christ, at the end of time, is when he will bring the love and faithfulness of God to its perfection in the fullness of His Kingdom: perfect communion with God in Heaven.

While we await the coming of our God, we are to be prayerfully vigilant.

As such Advent has this double meaning. We recall the coming of Christ as we celebrate the Nativity of the Lord at Christmas. We also anticipate the coming of Christ at the end of time when he establishes his Kingdom in its fullness. These are the two meanings of Advent. When we celebrate the coming of Christ at Christmas, we are reassured that God is faithful to his promise to come to save His people. Recalling the event at Bethlehem our confidence in the word of God is renewed. With this confidence we trust his word that he will come again at the end of time.

Last Tuesday, November 30, we celebrated the feast day of St. Andrew, Apostle. Our Gospel was about Jesus calling his first disciples. Andrew was one of the first of the Apostles along with Peter, James and John. The words of Jesus were "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus' call was direct and bold. Andrew followed Jesus. Little did Andrew know but following Jesus led him to be present at the Last Supper, witness to the resurrection, his presence at the Ascension, and receiving the Holy Spirit with the others on Pentecost. He then went out to preach north of the Black Sea and on into Greece where he was martyred for the faith. Andrew did great things. It is important for us to consider how this came about. He first followed Jesus when he was called. Secondly, it is Jesus who made him an Apostle.

Our lesson for Advent as we celebrate the feast of St. Andrew is precisely what we are called to do during this holy season: watch and listen. St. Andrew started by following Jesus. The first step was to simply follow Jesus. In his

following he watched and listened to Jesus. Along with Andrew we watch and listen to Jesus. Jesus in turn begins to shape our lives. Jesus calls us and makes us into what he wants for us.

This is a good example for us when it comes to our faith/spiritual life. We think we can make ourselves into the best possible persons we can be. In reality we do not make ourselves. We fall short of in this endeavor. In reality it is the grace of God (the call) that precedes all things. Our spiritual and faith life then becomes a response to the grace of God (follow). In the case of Andrew as it is for us, the Word of God first speaks to us. We, in response, are to follow, watch and listen to the Word allowing it to enter, take root and shape our lives. We do not make ourselves Christians. It is Christ who makes us Christians.

As we wait and listen for the coming of our God we are not abandoned to our own efforts. Like Andrew, as he followed, he was with Jesus Christ. Like Andrew, Jesus Christ is with us now as we await his Second Coming. Jesus is with us in Word and Sacrament. Jesus continues to speak, nourish shape our lives. Jesus shapes our lives to his. Thus, we can pray as St. Augustine once quipped, *that we may become what we have received: Jesus Christ.*

With faith we believe the words of Jesus when he says the Kingdom of God is in our midst. Where Jesus is present, there is the Kingdom. The Church is the Body of Christ in the world. The Church represents the Kingdom of God in our midst. However, since the Church is present in this imperfect world, the experience of the Kingdom here and now is imperfect. Even though it is an imperfect presence, the Church is still the best in this world.

In the Church we encounter our Lord. We do so as we gather as the community of Baptized believers. Jesus reminds us in the Gospels: "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I in their midst." This is both a perfect and an imperfect experience of the Kingdom. It is perfect because he is present. It is also imperfect because the Church is composed of flawed and sinful human beings. In this manner we say that the Kingdom of God is present but not yet. Just the same, it is in the Church that we encounter the Lord. Again, this is another reason why we must watch and listen as Christ continues to shape our lives.

We are indeed a fortunate people. We are blessed because we experience the presence of Christ and his Kingdom when we receive the Sacraments. The sacraments of the Church are encounters with Jesus Christ. The Sacraments sanctify and strengthen our lives and the Church. The Sacraments unite us with Christ and thus unite us with his Church. This is particularly noted in the Sacraments of Initiation. Of these, it is the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is central and essential since we experience intimate communion with Christ. It is also essential as we look forward to the coming of the Kingdom at the end of time. The Eucharist is a foretaste of our perfect communion with Christ in the Kingdom. In this manner we experience the Kingdom of God here and now with hopeful expectation for future fulfillment in Heaven. In general, the Sacraments are a foretaste of the Kingdom. They are icons or "windows" into heaven.

We have a model of this efficacious work of God in the person of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As we read from the Gospel of St. Luke during this year, it is Luke who speaks the most about the Blessed Virgin Mary at the beginning of his

Gospel. Mary is revealed as the perfect model for the Christian. In fact, we can legitimately say that she is the first Christian in that she said “yes” to the word of God spoken to her by the angel. Mary’s “yes” was her response to the word of God and thus, she physically brought Jesus into the world. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the model for all Christians. Following her example, we say “yes” to the Word of God and thus we bring Christ into the world through our lives. This is discipleship: a Christian in the world. In a greater way Mary is also the model for the Church. It is in and through the Church that the Word of God is proclaimed and Christ is made present in the world. For us, we rely on the Church to sustain and nourish us in Word and Sacrament that we may better be the presence of Jesus Christ in the world.

Have a Blessed Second week of Advent.
Father Ralko

NOTE WELL: Wednesday is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It is a Holy Day of obligation. Mass times are at 8:10 (BRHS and BFS students will be in attendance; 12:00 noon and 7:00 pm. Also note the extra times for Confessions. Monday 12/6, 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.; and Saturday 11:00a.m. – Noon and 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. (in time for mass).

This week we pray Week II of the Liturgy of the Hours.



*We pray for those who have died recently:
Sharon K. Glauk & William Martin Ph.D.*

*We welcome into the Church
the recently baptized:*

*Landry Elizabeth and Oakley Richard
children of Kyle & Allison (Church) Dale*



JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST!

Sunday, December 12th following the 8:15 A.M. AND 10:45 A.M. Masses. If you haven’t tried our breakfast, you should! We have fancy potato casserole made by Nancy Arnold, amazing French toast made by Kelly Taylor, “Steve Evans” sausage, which in our opinion is way better than “Bob Evans” sausage, and delicious scrambled eggs. The breakfast is served in the Church Social Hall (church basement) and is free; however, we do accept donations for support of future breakfasts.

Youth Ministry News!

Catalyst Night– Students grades 7-12 are invited to a Catalyst Night at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in the activity center on Sunday, December 12th at 6:00 p.m. The event is led by the National Evangelization Team (NET), college age missionaries and includes dinner, presentations, games, skits, prayer, friends and fun. This is a joint, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas youth event and all teens grades 7-12 regardless of church affiliation or no affiliation are invited. Parents are welcome!

Men of the East Traveling Holy Hour- Saint Thomas Aquinas Church, 144 N 5th St, Zanesville will host the Men of the East for a traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration on **Thursday, December 9** at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. All Men of the twelve-parish consortium are invited and encouraged to participate in these once-monthly Holy Hours.



2nd Sunday of Advent,
December 5, 2021 **Real Presence, Real Future reflections: Gifts from**

God Lead Us to Service Dcn. Tom Berg, Jr., St. Andrew Parish

The season of shopping for Christmas gifts for family, friends, and colleagues is well underway. Since this is on our minds right now, let us also consider other kinds of gifts besides the ones we will purchase, wrap up, and place under trees. Let us also collect the grace-filled gifts that our loving Lord offers us: His Word and Eucharist, His Holy Sacraments, His Wisdom. May those gifts empower us better and more humbly to love and serve the Lord and one another. As we continue our diocesan *Real Presence, Real Future* initiative, let’s also consider how we can use the gifts God gives us to help this effort and assist our pastors in the work and decisions that lay ahead.

For more about the life of faith and discipleship in the Diocese of Columbus, visit www.RealPresenceRealFuture.org.

THE GIVING TREE



Every Advent we place a Giving Tree in the Church vestibule. It contains paper ornaments with gift items to be purchased for needy families. This year we will be giving the gifts to the Muskingum Valley Clinic for children, Heartbeats, Transitions, and our own homebound St. Nicholas Parishioners. Please pick an ornament, buy the requested item, wrap and securely fasten the ornament tag to the package. All packages must be returned to the church by **December 12th**. You are always so generous, and we thank you for helping others this holiday.

Monday, December 6th is the Feast Day of our Patron Saint, St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was the bishop of Myra in Turkey in the 4th Century. He is remembered for being kind and generous to the poor, to children and to those unjustly imprisoned. Legend tells that St. Nicholas gave anonymously; he did not seek praise but wanted good things to be done and the hearts of children to be delighted.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

will once again be ordered to adorn St. Nicholas Church in memory and in honor of our deceased loved ones. Please use the special envelope found in your contribution packet. If you do not receive envelopes, please use a plain envelope and include the name(s) of those to be remembered AND the donor’s names **PRINTED CLEARLY**. Send your request to the Parish Office with the donation amount. **Names must be received by Monday, December 13th to be included in the Christmas bulletin.**



BISHOP ROSECRANS ATHLETIC BOOSTERS:

Booster Mania tickets are available for the upcoming year. \$25.00 each or three tickets for \$60.00, drawings for tickets are for every day for this next year. Questions or concerns, please contact Marvin Paul at 740-819-3429.



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NOVEMBER BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS

\$25.00- Bob & Shirley Neel, Joe Nash, Monica Belder, Trish Longstreth, Bernice Sigrist, Steve Dickerson, Sue Hillis, Jeff Shawger and Mark Moyer



The Daughters of Isabella seek to promote the welfare of the community in accordance with the teachings and rules of the Catholic Church. All women ages 16 and up are welcome to join us. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 14th at 6:00 p.m. at the St. Nicholas Parish Office.

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when something prevents you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office or our website: stnickparish.org.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Please join us each Monday at the St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. as we gather to pray the Rosary asking Our Lady's Intercession for the many needs of our nation, community, and parish.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, December 6

8:00 a.m., Mass: **Pauline Archer**, Church
2:00 p.m., Rosary, Parish Office Chapel
6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m., Confessions, Church

TUESDAY, December 7, St. Ambrose

9:00 a.m., Mass: **Sharon Glaub**, Church
10:00 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office
6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m., Confessions, Church

WEDNESDAY, December 8, The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary

8:10 a.m., School Mass: **Clara Shumate**, Church
12:00 p.m., Mass: **Pauline Archer**, birthday
7:00 p.m., Mass: **Marilou Ehleiter**, Church

THURSDAY, December 9, St. Juan Diego

8:00 a.m., Mass: **Donald Thompson**, Church

FRIDAY, December 10

8:00 a.m., Mass: **Judy King**, Church
10:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m., Confessions, Church

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SATURDAY, December 11, St. Damasus I

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: **Pauline Davis**, Church

SUNDAY, December 12

8:15 a.m., Mass: **St. Nicholas Parishioners**, Church
9:15 a.m., Sunday School, Bishop Fenwick School
10:45 a.m., Mass: **Robert Cherrington**, birthday, Church

Readings for Week of December 6

Monday	Is 35:1-10	Lk 5:17-26
Tuesday	Is 40:1-11	Mt 18:12-14
Wednesday	Gn 3:9-15, 20	Lk 1:26-38
Thursday	Is 41:13-20	Mt 11:11-15
Friday	Is 48:17-19	Mt 11:16-19
Saturday	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11	Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Sunday	Zep 3:14-18a	Lk 3:10-18

December 8, 2021 – The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary			
December 11& 12, 2021- The Third Sunday of Advent			
LITURGICAL MINISTERS			
SCHEDULE	CANTORS	LECTORS	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS
Wednesday, December 8 7:00 p.m.	Sandy Black	Keena Hansel	Scott Peterson, Dan Snider, Josh Wright
Saturday, December 11 5:15 p.m.	Laura DeCoy	Keena Hansel	Margaret Kronenbitter, Josh Wright, Laurie Harmon
Sunday, December 12 8:15 a.m.	Kerby Staker	Bill Sullivan	Phil Kocoloski, Dan Sylvester, Cheryl Sylvester
Sunday, December 12 10:45 a.m.	Jackie Connell	Susan Thompson	Claire Tiberio, Gerald Tiberio, Diana Dunn