

**FIRST SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT**

**NOVEMBER 28, 2021**

**SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS for December 5<sup>th</sup> Second Sunday of Advent**

*Baruch 5:1-9*

What "mountain" of pride do you need to be leveled?

What "gorge" of depression or anxiety do you need filled?

*Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11*

For what good work might you rejoice today?

Where is your conduct in need of change and growth?

*Luke 3:1-6*

For what sins must you repent this Advent?

How are you preparing for the Lord's coming?

**WEEKDAY MASSES November 30 – December 3**

Tues: 5:00 pm +Mary Fetsch

Wed: 8:40 am **School Mass** +Ellie Madeline Bachman

Thurs: 5:00 pm +Rose Ann Hoffarth

Fri: 10:30 am **Maple Manor** +Rallan Beck (No Public is Allowed)

**WEEKEND MASSES December 4 – 5**

**Sat: St. Edward's - Nekoma NO MASS UNTIL SPRING**

**5:00 pm St. Alphonsus** +Kathy Kram

**Reader:** Michael Neubert

**EMHC:** Carol Hoffarth

**Sun: 8:30 am St. Alphonsus** +Wayne Gendreau

**Reader:** Darlene Brooks

**EMHC:** Bill Brooks

**Musicians:** Bob & Choir

**St. Michael's – Wales NO MASS AT WALES TODAY**

**10:30 am St. Alphonsus** +Francis & Loran Illerbrunn

**Reader:** Jenny Chaput

**EMHC:** Diane Schill

**Musicians:** Bob & Choir

**Fellowship Hall Host:** Dennis & Diane Schill

**Fr. Michael Hickin's cell phone: 701-891-1238**

**Website for St. Alphonsus Parish – <http://www.stalphonsuslangdon.com/>**

**Confessions: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays after Mass or  
by appointment**

**Weekly Reflection for November 21, 2021:** This week's reflection of the parishioner's relationship with God and with the parish

Adult Envelopes	\$1,477.00
Intentional Givers	\$80.00
Plate	\$330.00
Children	\$13.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,900.00</b>

# First Sunday of Advent

At first glance, today's scripture readings seem to come from another world. Jeremiah looks forward to honesty and integrity in the land. Paul expects us to live a blameless life as we wait for Christ to come. And Jesus speaks of a day when "the powers of heaven will be shaken", which almost sounds like a scene from a movie. Jeremiah and Paul, and even Jesus himself, may appear more concerned with another world than relevant to the one in which we live. Yet their world was not that different from the world we know today. Jeremiah's words were spoken in a time of conflict and division, as the Babylonian armies began their destruction of Jerusalem. Paul wrote when the first Christians were beginning to despair under the pressure of persecution. And Jesus' words came as he faced the prospect of his passion; it was a time when his teaching about God's love met opposition from an unbelieving world.

How can we see the vision of today's readings as relevant to our lives and our world today? When we look at the world using our own eyes it can appear broken and confusing, as if we were looking at the back of the elderly woman's embroidery. But if we learn to look through the eyes of Christ, we can recognize something beautiful. We see a purpose in life; we are given true insight. The necessary "tidying up" may not come until the end of time when, in Jesus' words, the Son of Man will appear "with power and great glory", but the picture can already be recognized.

Taken from the Living Word

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

*"But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand."* (LUKE 21:28)

We celebrate Advent each year in preparation for the birth of Jesus, His first coming, as we await His second coming. What will you do differently this Advent season to grow in friendship and love with Jesus? How will you inspire others to do the same? Start by sharing your God story with others, especially those closest to you. Invite and accompany them on their faith journey this Advent.

**SYNOD – *syn-* (together) + *-od* (way).** Last Sunday, a small group met after Sunday Masses to discuss this up & coming synod. We'll keep you informed.

We now conclude Pope Francis' opening address from Oct 10, 2021. Builds on the Gospel about the rich young man. He highlights 3 verbs: *encounter*, then *listen*, and finally *discern*. If we can experience each of these verbs together, and draw from the experience what the Spirit is saying, then the Synod will have become more than an idea. It will have become a happening.

Finally, *discern*. Encounter and listening are not ends in themselves, leaving everything just as it was before. On the contrary, whenever we enter into dialogue, we allow ourselves to be challenged, to advance on a journey. And in the end, we are no longer the same; we are changed. We see this in today's Gospel. Jesus senses that the person before him is a good and religious man, obedient to the commandments, but he wants to lead him beyond the mere observance of precepts. Through dialogue, he helps him to discern. Jesus encourages that man to look within, in the light of the love that the Lord himself had shown by his gaze (cf. v. 21), and to discern in that light what his heart truly treasures. And in this way to discover that he cannot attain happiness by filling his life with more religious observances, but by emptying himself, selling whatever takes up space in his heart, in order to make room for God.

Here is a valuable lesson also for us. The Synod is a process of spiritual discernment, of ecclesial discernment, that unfolds in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the word of God. Today's second reading tells us that God's word is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb 4:12). That word summons us to discernment and it brings light to that process. It guides the Synod, preventing it from becoming a Church convention, a study group or a political gathering, a parliament, but rather a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Spirit. In these days, Jesus calls us, as he did the rich man in the Gospel, to empty ourselves, to free ourselves from all that is worldly, including our inward-looking and outworn pastoral models; and to ask ourselves what it is that God wants to say to us in this time. And the direction in which he wants to lead us.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us have a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. Let us not miss out on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening and discernment. In the joyful conviction that, even as we seek the Lord, he always comes with his love to meet us first.

## PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS

**MISSING** Birch Branches from behind the altar, they were moved 2 years ago when the construction to fix the West wall was done. If you have them can you please return them, we would like to use them again for decorating the church.

Catholic Daughters meeting on Monday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm in the cafeteria. Potluck with meeting to follow. All members and their families are welcome

Knights of Columbus - Knight of the month for November is Cory Hoffarth

The Religious Ed Department is looking for someone to teach 5<sup>th</sup> grade RE on Wednesday nights for the rest of the school year. If interested please call Carla at 370-0594.

You're invited to join us on Wednesdays at 12:05pm as we pray the Rosary for the protection of the unborn.

St. Edward's in Nekoma would like to thank everyone that attended their fall supper. We would especially like to thank the people from St. Alphonsus that brought desserts.

This Advent, discover and choose the things that draw you to the light! Get inspiring daily video reflections sent straight to your inbox—for free. Sign up for the daily emails at <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/advent.html>. Taken from Matthew Kelly's life-changing new book, *Life Is Messy*, each reflection will help you infuse your life with prayer, reading, authentic love of self, genuine friendship, beautiful kindness and so much more! The book, *Life Is Messy*, will be available at the St Alphonsus weekend Masses. Make this your BEST ADVENT EVER and take advantage of the book and emails available to you at no cost.

**Fellowship Hall Cleaning for November - 27** – Kathy Borgen & Patty Fetsch

**WELCOME TO ADVENT!** Advent means waiting. - What are you waiting for?

If you've been following the bulletin, maybe you can see into my heart. I'm waiting for the stars to align for our church renovation. I'm waiting to hear how we as a community wish to meet the needs of the needy. I'm waiting to see if we can embrace this 'synod'-thing and learn how to listen to the Holy Spirit and journey together toward the future God has in store for our Church. It's incomplete, but it's a start.

I encourage you—make a short list of what you're waiting for. It's something personal to give to Jesus in this potent time of preparation for Christmas Day. Speaking of which....

For your future planning, as Christmas falls on Saturday this year, just want to clarify how Masses will go. We'll celebrate Christmas Masses as usual. But on the evening of Christmas, Saturday evening, the Mass and Readings will be of Christmas, not the Mass of Holy Family.

Christmas and Sunday (Holy Family) are both Holy Days of obligation, fulfilled by attending Mass on each liturgical day, that is, from the evening before through the day itself, regardless of which Mass are celebrated. So, those who go to Saturday eve Mass this year, even though it'll be their 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas Mass, still satisfies for the Sunday obligation.

Jan 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, will also, then, land on Saturday. This is not a day of obligation this year. Therefore, on Saturday evening, January 1st, we will use the Mass of the Epiphany.

**Donations for Christmas Flowers** can be made by filling out the below form and can be placed in the collection marked "flowers" or brought to the parish office by Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Thank You.

In Memory of/honor of \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_