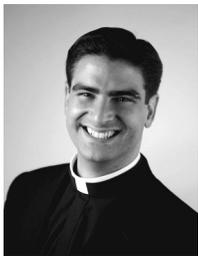

DECEMBER 3 & 4, 2022



Dear Friends in Christ,

The prophets of Scripture came not with a message of humiliation or doom, but with words of consolation and hope and yes, from time to time, words of challenge. Their ministry was not simply to place a bandage on the wounds of Israel's sin with empty words, but to bring lasting healing by highlighting God's past saving acts and assuring her of God's future fidelity.

Today's readings place before us two of the great prophetic voices of Scripture: Isaiah, the prophet of consolation, and John the Baptist, the herald of the Messiah. Together, they give us much to reflect upon as we continue our Advent journey. Isaiah shares with us the powerful image of the shoot sprouting *from the stump of Jesse*. He doesn't want us to see this as a dead shoot, but as one full of new life and potential. That shoot we now recognize as Christ Jesus, whose return in glory we long for and whose birth in time we celebrate.

John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, comes with a message of repentance, inviting us to look for the highway of God where we can walk once more along the straight and level and so experience God's healing presence. Matthew positions John at the Jordan – the place where Israel once crossed into the Promised Land. Dressed in the strangest of attire, John's words echo those of Isaiah but, unlike Isaiah's words, they are addressed to all who seek God – Jew and Gentile alike.

The Baptist calls us to make an exodus from the desert of sinfulness through the waters of repentance to conversion of heart. It's a journey that speaks of hope, not past regrets. John challenges us to prepare the way of the Lord by smoothing the treacherous bumps of sin and by leveling and straightening out whatever are the obstacles in our relationship with God and with one another. In this, we are to let God's mercy fill in the holes of our omissions and failures, and allow his grace to level out the twists and turns of our indifference.

Saint Paul shares a similar message in his Letter to the Romans. In a text full of encouragement and hope, he speaks of harmony, unity, the mercy of God and, above all, the call to glorify the Lord's name so that others will be energized in their journey of faith. Paul prays that their way of life in Christ will abound in knowledge and right judgment so they will reflect the goodness of Christ and give glory to his name.

In these busy weeks, this is the type of prayer we need for one another; these are the moments of quiet reflection we should cherish. As we light the second candle on our Advent wreath, let us try to kindle in ourselves the flame of love and longing for Christ that Paul cherished. May we rediscover the quiet and gentle presence of God in our lives, and encourage others to do likewise. May we pay attention to the situations in which we find ourselves this week, and to the people we meet. Let us be open to seeing how God may seek to use us to make his promise known to others.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Fr. Marco

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS TIMES are as follows:
Wednesday, December 7th at 7 pm, at IHM, Thursday
December 8th at 9 am at IHM, 11:35 am at St. Nicholas
Chapel on Base, and 5:30 pm at IHM.

SVDP CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 2022 The trees with envelopes are up! If you would like to provide a gift for a child this Christmas, please pick an envelope from one of the trees. Open the envelope and leave the small slip with your name, telephone number, and envelope number in the box on the table by the tree. Please bring your wrapped gift to the church hall between 8am-8pm on December 13th, 14th, or 15th. All gifts need to be received by December 15th. If you have any questions, call Janet at 301-863-7263 evenings.

CHRISTMAS CHILDREN'S PLAY Volunteers are needed to assist in the acting and production of the Christmas Nativity Play on Saturday, December 24th at 3:30 pm. To make the play happen we will need child volunteers to be actors and adult volunteers (preferably parents of the children) to assist with costumes, organization, and other such responsibilities. Here are some important dates for the play:

Sunday, December 11 at 2:30 pm – roles assigned

Sunday, December 18 at 2:30 pm – costumes given

Thursday, December 22 at 10 am- 12:00am - dress rehearsal

Saturday, December 24 at 3:30 pm —Christmas play

If you or your child(ren) are interested in participating, please call the CFF office at 301-863-8793.

GARDEN AND GROUNDS MINISTRY We have various projects around the church that need to be completed. Any adult or child would be welcome. If you want to volunteer, please contact Martha Davie by phone or text at 240-434-3510. Thank you!

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



December 5 — 11

Monday	Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/ Lk 5:17-26
9:00 am	Gary Faller (D)
Tuesday	Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13/ Mt 18:12-14
5:30 pm	Margaret and Thomas Kendall (D)
Wednesday	Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/ Mt 11:28-30
9:00 am	Louisa Marcelle Baker (L)
7:00 pm	Edward Riggs (D)
Thursday	Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/ Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
9:00 am	Rev. Ted Hegnauer (L)
5:30 pm	James Trent (D)
Friday	Is 48:17-19/PS 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/ Mt 11:16-19
9:00 am	Gary Faller (D)
Saturday	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18- 19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
9:00 am	Cindy Thompson (L)
4:00 pm	Jorge Bruno (D)
Sunday	Is 35:1-6a, 10/Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10/ Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11
8:30 am	Billy Riddell (D)
11:15 am	All IHM Parishioners
1:00 pm	Cesar Campos (S)

BULLETIN DEADLINE Please email your submission to bulletin@ihmrcc.org by Wednesday at 10 am prior to the Sunday of publication. All entries are subject to editing.

MASS INTENTIONS may be requested at the parish office during regular office hours (M—F, 8 am—4 pm) in person or by phone (301-863-8144 x11), or by e-mailing julian@ihmrcc.org. Your desired date may not be available. We now have the ability to accept Mass intention stipends online (but only **after** the date has been accepted by the office).

MEN'S DISCERNMENT MASS AND DINNER Any men (18 to 50s) that are open to a call to the priesthood are invited to Mass and dinner with Cardinal Gregory at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC on Sunday, December 11. The event is from 4:30 pm until 7 pm and includes Mass at 4:30 pm, followed by a brief social, dinner, and vocation story. There is no cost for this event, but registration is required. Register at <https://dcpriest.org/december-mens-discernment-mass-with-cardinal-gregory-and-dinner>.

Events Calendar

December 5 — December 11

Tues:	9 to 11 am	First Tuesday Coffee
Wed:	7 pm	Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass
Thurs:	9 am	Immaculate Conception Mass at IHM
	11:35 am	Immaculate Conception Mass at St. Nicholas Chapel
	5:30 pm	Immaculate Conception Mass at IHM
Sun:	9 am to Noon	KoC Breakfast with Santa
	4-6 pm	Youth Group at St. Mary's Ryken

IN NEED OF FOOD DONATIONS St. Vincent de Paul of IHM food pantry is greatly in need of donations of peanut butter, spaghetti sauce, and spaghetti. If you can help, please leave your donations in the food pantry bins at the main entrances. Thank you in advance!

MASS IN THE PARKING LOT As a reminder, during IHM's weekend Masses we have in-parking lot options available. While parked at IHM, if you tune to 99.7 FM you can hear the Mass broadcast live. If you park in the second, smaller parking lot, we will bring out Communion at the appropriate time if you have your hazard lights on.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

THE SICK

THAT THEY MAY BE RESTORED TO FULL HEALTH

Audrey Somers, Helen Daye, Kathleen Floyd, Mary Oliver, Judith Ann Allgood, Vince Guerin, Jane Keyon, Linda F. Gieser, Ralph Gough Sr., Betty LePore, Bill Wagoner, Joseph Hugh Weiland, Rylee Corliss, Rose Marie Weiland, Alan Stapanon, Ruby Garcia, Mia Garcia, Matthew Riddell, Marie C. Williams, Kaylee Klier, David Kalil, Wanda Slate, Enedina Melendez, Hector Perez, Josephine, Glenn Thompson III, John Worrell, Tim Brosnihan, Jim Makin, Carmen Colby, Tracey Herrera, Gary Green, Grace Miedzinski, Bruce Riddell, Katelyn Corliss, Robert Weaver, Corinne Geraty

Please note: names will remain on this list for two months, unless otherwise notified. To keep a name on the list, please resubmit by contacting bulletin@ihmrcc.org, or call the Parish Office.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

We pray for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.

Follow us on



DECEMBER 3 & 4, 2022

CATHOLIC TEEN SUMMER CAMP High school teens from St. Mary's County are going to Lifeteen's Covecrest from July 30 to August 5, 2023! Camp Covecrest is a Catholic summer camp in Georgia where parish youth groups from all over the country come together to experience summer camp at its best. Teens are given the opportunity to dive deeply into their Catholic faith and strengthen their relationship with Christ while having unforgettable experiences. For details and local registration, go to <https://www.saintalloysiuschurch.org/camp>.

HELP NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING

This is the schedule for decorating the church for the Christmas season. Please RSVP for the day or days you will be volunteering. To RSVP or if you have any questions, call or text Paula at 301-904-6393. Thank you in advance for your time and talent!

Wednesday, December 21st at 10 am Decorations need to be brought down from the loft. Climbing up and down steep stairs, teenagers would be a great and much appreciated help!

Thursday, December 22nd at 10 am Gather greens from church grounds to make swags for window sills. Please bring pruners and outdoor working gloves if you have them.

Friday, December 23rd at 10 am until completed Decorating the altar area manger scene, sanctuary, and other important spots with indoor/outdoor carpet, snow material and ribbon, lighted trees and poinsettias (54 in all).

MUSICIANS AND SINGERS FOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASS

Any Youth Instrumentalists who are interested in playing for the 4 pm Christmas Eve Mass should contact Mary Stevens at 240-434-8876 or mary@ihmrcc.org. We will be planning rehearsal soon! We are also looking for any young singers who would like to participate with the Youth Choir at that Mass.

THANK YOU To all who helped with the Thanksgiving Dinner! To the ones who purchased and donated the turkeys and desserts, those who helped prepare and serve the food, those who bussed tables and cleaned up afterward, a huge thank you! Most especially, we would like to thank Julie Rose, without whose expertise and coordination the meal would have never happened.

MUSIC MINISTRY Interested in Music Ministry but don't have a lot of time to commit? We have groups that serve at Mass only once or twice a month. You are needed! Also looking for accomplished pianists willing to play for Masses. Let me know if you are interested. mary@ihmrcc.org

DO YOU FEEL ALONE IN YOUR MARRIAGE? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue, or have you just stopped talking to each other? Retrouvaille has helped tens of thousands of couples struggling in their marriage. For confidential information or to register for the upcoming program beginning with a weekend on January 20th, please visit: www.HelpOurMarriage.org, call (443) 400-7017, or email us at: 3015@HelpOurMarriage.org.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING On Monday December 5th at 7 pm. Any and all are invited to attend!

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR GIVING TREE Green Holly Elementary School has an Amazon Angel Tree. Items on the list are specific to a child in need, and can be purchased through the link. The items are sent directly to Green Holly Elementary. The link is <https://www.amazon.com/registries/holiday/50PS1MQIT9Y4/guest-view>. The items can also be found on Amazon Lists as "Angel Tree 2022 Green Holly Elementary."

PARISH COOKBOOK SALES Our 75th Anniversary parish cookbook "Favorite Recipes to Feed the Heart" is here and available at the parish office. Each cookbooks is \$20. Payment accepted in cash, check or credit/ACH through cookbook.ihmrcc.org.

SECOND COLLECTION next weekend is for the Religious Retirement Fund. Please be generous in support for this collection!

KoC PANCAKE BREAKFAST WITH SANTA The next Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast with Santa is Sunday, December 11th from 9 am until 12 pm. \$10 suggested donation to support Christmas in April.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN THE STATE HOUSE St. Mary's Ryken Choir & Youth Honors Chorus presents A Christmas Concert at the State House on Sunday, December 11 at 3 pm. Spend a delightful afternoon listening to talented choir students while supporting the fine arts at St. Mary's Ryken. Heavy appetizers and hot mulled cider will be provided by Quality Street Catering. For additional details and tickets, visit: www.smrhs.org/christmasstatehouse.

FIRST TUESDAY COFFEE The next First Tuesday Coffee will be held on December 6th from 9 am until 11 am in the parish hall. Bring a friend and a nonperishable item for the food pantry!

MASS WITH HEALING PRAYERS This month's Mass with Healing Prayers is at 7 pm on Monday, December 19. After Mass, we will have Eucharistic Adoration and prayers for healing with laying on of hands. Confessions begin at 6 pm and continue as long as there are penitents.



December 4, 2022

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Second Sunday of Advent

Is 11:1-10 | Rom 15:4-9 | Mt 3:1-12

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Harmony. It can seem so elusive in these times when our news-feeds bombard us with reminders of what's wrong with our world: war, political conflicts, hunger, injustice, violence. We may also experience discord in our homes or within our hearts. Perhaps that is why the beautiful imagery in Isaiah's prophecy, where Isaiah envisions a world transformed by the coming of the Messiah, strikes a chord as we prepare for Christ's coming: We picture the wolf lying beside the lamb, and the calf with the lion. All will be right with the world. As we reflect on the areas in our lives that lack harmony, we are reminded to focus on Jesus and the Father, the source of all good. Through prayer and reflection on our Advent readings, we can "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

I have a "smart" alarm clock. To shut it off, I just have to say, "Alexa, turn off my alarm." Easy, right? Well, too easy, it turns out, because lately I've slept right through the one-sided conversation. But it's hard to miss John's wake-up call: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Perhaps, though, we've become complacent; we've heard it so often that we skip right past it. That can happen during Advent, this season of preparation and, yes, repentance. I love our family traditions - candy every day, in the morning!; our well-worn Nativity set; lighting the Advent candles; Christmas concerts and gatherings. None of those are bad, of course, but in the blur of the season we must be challenged by John the Baptist's words to prepare not only our homes but our hearts for Christ's coming. During this season, we can examine our lives to separate the wheat from the chaff, focusing on those things that bring us closer to the Lord and one another. As St. Paul encourages the Romans, "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God."

PRAY St. Paul's words above give us pretty clear instruction for how to live out our faith by welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us. Reflect on these words during daily Advent reflection this week: When have we welcomed others in our lives - and truly loved them? How can we do that for someone in the coming days?