



## Padre's Corner

December 10, 2017  
Second Sunday of Advent

Henry David Thoreau wrote in 1849, in an essay entitled "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers", this observation about the past: "Most events recorded in history are more remarkable than important, like eclipses of the sun and moon, by which all are attracted, but whose effects no one takes the trouble to calculate. " Thoreau was born on July 12, 1817 in Concord, Massachusetts and died in the same setting on May 6, 1862. He was only forty-four, but his words as an essayist and philosopher live on, despite his melancholy viewpoint about the deep-rooted effects of historical moments. A Harvard graduate in 1837 Thoreau shunned the typical professions for a college graduate of his time: law, medicine, business, or the church. Aimless, he went to work in 1841 in the pencil business of his family. **Four years later** on July 4, 1845 he moved to a small house on Walden Pond, to live simply for two years. He wrote in *Walden*, words that still echo through history 172 years later: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life... " Thoreau planted words in future generations of readers, stirred by a similar call to make a lasting impact in this world. Though he was not a devotee of organized religion, his integral humanism can merge at points with the world of faith.

Trees planted in parks also leave their marks on the history of a park, a place of memories and emotions. I have deeply imbedded recall of innocent days in Bogota, New Jersey in the late 1960's at Beechwood Park playing baseball, football, and basketball. Whenever I pass my childhood recreational field the trees that were there then resonate with me today nearly five decades later. In recent months I have noticed the passing of many trees at Downing Park in the City of Newburgh, first opened to the public in 1897. Trees die like flowers, humans, pets, and many ideas do. Parishes also face the same wrecking ball of destiny when populations of faith move, stagnate, die, retire, or become indifferent to the social norms of the current age they are challenged by.

The heavy process of merging and closing parishes of any denomination have escalated in recent decades. Europe began this decline three decades ago, reduced to low single digits of Mass attendance numbers and churches closing only to be reopened as bar lounges and flying circus schools in some cases. Developing moments in time will dictate their future relevance and survival. The United States now has caught up to those European numbers of the 1980's, devoid of many young people that once filled their school playgrounds and wooded surroundings. A few years ago I spent a few days at a scenic sea coast setting in Maine, far removed from the burdens and stresses of priestly ministry that the diocese had me running in another parish before coming back home to Newburgh. I understood well at that point what Thoreau was looking for seventeen decades earlier. Later I would become aware of seven parishes merged in the Portland Diocese, because of the same priestly number and parishioners attendance in church declines that are now plaguing the Archdiocese of New York. All Saints Parish ("A Roman Catholic faith community on the coast of Maine") was comprised of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Boothbay Harbor, Saint Ambrose in Richmond, Saint Charles Borromeo in Brunswick, Saint John the Baptist also in Brunswick, Saint Katharine Drexel in Harpswell, Saint Mary in Bath, and Saint Patrick in Newcastle. The regional school for the seven parishes is Saint John's in Brunswick.

They shared the same small group of part-time employees, faith formation and musical ministry efforts, confession schedules, combined income (for June 18, 2017 the total collection was \$23,996 (which averages \$3, 428 per parish), choir rehearsals, pilgrimage trip to the Holy Land (which our parishes are heading to in just a few weeks), statue dedications, material collections for those less fortunate, educational classes, pastor reflections in bulletins, baptism formation sessions, news of both the community plus the diocese, marriage name announcements, Knights of Columbus activities, notifications of staff names, and advertisements that mark a typical bulletin in any New York parish.

Be it Maine or New York we share the same challenges, concerns, blessings, and graces within the life moments God has us all here together. Our collective fates are in His divine hands and the human forces running His parishes. May we choose wisely.

**Father Bill**

## MASS INTENTIONS

### Mon. Dec. 11

7:00am Vocations  
Noon Coner Laverty  
By Mom

### Tues. Dec. 12

7:00am St. Francis Parish  
Noon Ralph Puglielle Sr.  
By The Hall Family  
**Our Lady of Guadalupe  
Patroness of the unborn  
In the Americas**  
By The Respect Life Group

### Wed. Dec. 13

7:00am City of Newburgh  
Noon Paul King  
By Mary King

### Thur. Dec. 14

7:00am John J. McGraw  
By Wife Mary & Family  
Noon Rose Ann DiSpigna  
"Health & Blessings"  
By Mary King

### Fri. Dec 15

7:00am Susan Randall  
By Mary Randall  
Noon The Unborn

### Sat. Dec 16

Noon Jake Alonge  
By Fran Catania Family  
4:30pm Augie Pirillo  
By Wife & Sons  
**Grace Schirmer  
(17<sup>th</sup> Anniv)**  
By Kathy, Mary & Susan

### Sun. Dec 17

8:30am Josephine Wassi  
By Bill & Marion Pushman  
**Mary Lee Lancaster**  
By Paul & Rachel Neugebauer  
11:00am **Antonio Lorusso &  
Joseph Sucalo**  
By The Lorusso Family  
**Barbara Pavlik**  
By Husband & Children



### WEEKLY COLLECTON

Dec 2-3, 2017  
1<sup>st</sup> Collection \$ 6,416  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection 1,601  
TOTAL \$ 8,017

### MASS ATTENDANCE

Dec 2-3, 2017  
4:30pm 225  
8:30am 186  
11:00am 200  
1:30pm 90  
TOTAL 701

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection this week is for  
**THE RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS**

Our Holy Hour with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament this  
Wednesday from 5:00pm to 6:00pm is for the intention of  
the Unborn.



### THE STORY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE Feast Day – December 12th

In 1531 the Aztec's in Mexico were practicing human sacrifice to such a degree that the bishop wrote that if God Himself did not intervene with a miracle, the entire continent would be lost. To this desperate plea, God responded not with military force, but by sending His mother with the transforming power of maternal love. Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to St. Juan Diego, a humble peasant man, leaving her image on his tilma. In the ten years following the apparition, the brutal, pagan practices ceased, and over ten million people were baptized and converted to Christ. Her miraculous image hangs in the Basilica in Mexico City and is visited by more than six million pilgrims a year.

**TODAY**  
**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11**

Isaiah emphasizes that from the desert to the mountains, all people must prepare for “the glory of the Lord to be revealed.” Rather than looking only at God’s power, Isaiah focuses on God’s kindness, comparing it to a shepherd who feeds and cares for his flock.

**Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14**

For those who are impatient for the Second Coming, Peter explains that time is different to God than to people. He reminds them that they should be grateful for the extra time to prepare, and concentrate on striving to become all that God would want them to be.

**Gospel: Mark 1:1-8**

In this passage, John the Baptist stressed the importance of the coming of the Messiah. He acknowledged that he was only the messenger, and unfit to “stoop and untie his sandal straps.” John urged them to prepare for one far holier than he, who would walk among them.

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

**Monday**

Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26

**Tuesday**

Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab; Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

**Wednesday**

Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30

**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



**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK**

Vincenza Secor, Aaron Stagliano, Marie Wiejak, Ashley Barco, Agnes Casey, Rose Marie Michalowski, George Vecchio Jr, Carol Brown, Luzia Araujo, Celio Thomaz, Rosalie Nogay, Rose Jurik, Robert & Helen Osborn, Manuel DiNapoli, Rachael Neugebauer, Maureen Kelly, James R. Purpura, Jane Pustola, Frances Dolan, Parker, Jane Holloway, Donna Delconte, Joan Ponesse, Jim Taylor, Marilyn Lennox, Bruno Marchatta, Anne McClellan, Louis Arbia, Dottie Rodriguez, Maureen Sullivan, Frank D’amario, Amanda Keane, Tom (Manay) Conroy, Gertrude Poland, Rita Froehlich, Brian Scott Monahan, Chelsea Dunderdale, Mary Hollenbeck, Donnie Ruckdeschel, Patrick Comyns, John Marullo, Jaddon Johnson, Rina & Richard Bozzone, Rebecca Pacella, Lena Biasini Zullo, Pam Kunert, Janet Coiteux, Vincent McParkland and Family, Jozef Froniewski, Teresa Centeno, Bobbi Hull, Angie Monaco, Emily Cooley, Frank Celeste, Amy Finnegan, Brian Hanrahan, Toni Loparco Shepardson, Donald (Leed) Zubawicz, Louise McHugh, Pat Alexander, Alex Galant, Evelyn Kawula, and Taylor Fogel



**Food Pantry Hours:**  
**Friday 9:00am to 12noon**  
**Saturday 9:00am to 12noon**

In your goodness please bring **PANCAKE MIX AND SYRUP** to Church next weekend to be distributed to the less fortunate in our area thru our Food Pantry.

If you are involved in a church and/or Newburgh School program and your child needs **volunteer hours**, the Food Pantry will coordinate service hours through **Curt Bourdage** at **845-863-6504**. All students need to pre-register with Curt Bourdage before showing up at the pantry, please.

**WE’RE MOVING**

Due to much needed building repairs, the Deacon Jack Seymour Food Pantry is moving on Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup> to the Monsignor Valsastro Center. If you have a vehicle and a few spare hours and can please help move products and tables between the hours of 12:00 to 4:00 pm please meet at the Food Pantry.

**SPANISH MASS**

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Day**

**There will be no Spanish Mass at 1:30pm**

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Night**

**We will have the last night of the Posadas, the rosary and Christmas all in Spanish at 8:00pm followed by Christmas Eve Mass at 9:00pm**

**Dec 25<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Day**

**There will be no Spanish Mass at 1:30pm**



**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE**

Our Giving Tree is located in the back of the church. Please pick an angel (or angels) and bring your unwrapped gift that corresponds to the information on the angel and place it under the tree. We will be sharing your donations with the clients of the Deacon Jack Seymour Food Pantry at St. Francis Church on Friday and Saturday, **Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>** and **Dec.15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**. The total number of children registered ages 1-12 at the pantry is 813. Our need is great and, as always, we appreciate your generosity.



**AN INVITATION FROM THE PRESENTATION SISTERS**

The Sisters of the Presentation invite you to join them at 2:00pm on Tuesday, December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and of the unborn, for a special reflective recitation of the Rosary. Come to Mt. St. Joseph Convent Chapel, 64 Presentation Way, New Windsor. For questions or directions please call 845-401-8531. All are welcome.



Sister Virginia along with the ladies of "The Women's Craft Project" will hold a pre-Christmas sale of their one of a kind handcrafted necklaces and bracelets after Masses this weekend December 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>.

**HEALING MASS**

A Healing Mas will be celebrated at Our Lady of Fatima Church on Route 32 in Plattekill at 4pm on **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm.**



**CALLING ALLCHILDREN WHO WANT TO SING FOR CHRISTMAS**

Practice for the Children's Christmas Choir singing at the **4:30 pm Christmas Eve Mass** has begun. There will be two more practices on **Dec 12** and **Dec 19**. Practice times start at 6:00pm and ends around 7:00pm. If you are interested in joining the choir for Christmas Eve, please text or call Desiree Abbruscato, our Music Director, at [abbruscator@aol.com](mailto:abbruscator@aol.com) or 845-541-0769 for more information.

**SCANDINAVIA & ST. PETERSBURG CRUISE**

On Board the NCL Norwegian Breakaway  
September 21- October 3, 2018

Hosted By:  
Father Bill Damroth



Copenhagen (Denmark), Warnemunde (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), St. Petersburg (Russia), Helsinki (Finland), Stockholm (Sweden)  
Starting at \$3,049 per person including airfare. includes roundtrip air from New York, COruise taxes, port charges and transfers between airport/hotel/pier.

**OCEANS OF MERCY**

**Healing after Abortion**

Do you know someone who is carrying the grief of a past abortion? There is help and hope available, and the pain and sorrow of abortion need not endure for a lifetime. A "Day of Prayer and Healing" offers the opportunity to experience the love and mercy of God and to heal the wound of abortion. For dates, location and confidential registration, or to talk to a sister, please contact the Sisters of Life at 866-575-0075 (toll free) or e-mail [hopeandhealing@sistersoflife.org](mailto:hopeandhealing@sistersoflife.org).

**Days of Prayer and Healing for Men**

For more information or to register for men, please call Lumina at 877-586-4621 or e-mail [Lumina@postabortionhelp.org](mailto:Lumina@postabortionhelp.org).

**BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR PARISH TODAY**

**\_\_YES! I want to register as a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish and receive offertory envelopes.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill out and drop in the Offertory Collection or mail to St. Francis of Assisi Church, 145 Benkard Avenue Newburgh, NY 12550.....and *Welcome*.