

TODAY IS THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 6, 2009

**Scripture Readings for Today****1st Reading:** Baruch 5:1-9**2nd Reading:** Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11**Gospel:** Luke 3:1-6**Scripture Readings for December 13th****1st Reading:** Zephaniah 3:14-18a**2nd Reading:** Philippians 4:4-7**Gospel:** Luke 3:10-18

Good stewards believe that God, who has begun this good work in them, will carry it through to completion. They can sing with the psalmist, "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!"

Dear Parishioners,

Last Thursday was the feast of St. Francis Xavier. As a young man he was a fine Christian, but he was also a member of the privileged class and had intended to live his life as such. One evening he ignored a beggar asking for alms. As he passed, the beggar called out, "tell me, Francis, how shall it profit a man to gain the world and forfeit his soul?" Apart from wondering how this beggar knew his name, these words haunted him, as he recognized in them the voice of the Lord. A few days later he sought the beggar and found him, and learned that his name was Ignatius Loyola. They formed a friendship and, eventually, Francis joined what would become the Jesuits and went on to be one of the greatest missionaries the Church has known.

Just as a few simple words changed the life of Francis, the simple words of John the Baptist changed the lives of those to whom he preached. "Repent. Prepare the way of the Lord." These words struck to the heart and gave people the impetus to follow God more faithfully. Part of our Advent observance should be spending time alone with the Lord, where perhaps He will speak a simple word to us that can deeply affect us. Also, we should never underestimate the power of the proverbial "good word" to those whom we encounter. If the words of Christ and the Scriptures are always fresh in our minds, we too can offer simple yet powerful counsel to others. Perhaps we will not begin the conversion of the next St. Francis Xavier, but at least we can give others a great Christmas gift; some words of Jesus to ponder.

Fr. Tim

MASS COUNT FOR NOVEMBER 28-29TH

5 PM – 250 7:30 AM – 144 9 AM – 320
10:30 AM – 320 12 PM – 286 Total – 1320

COLLECTION FOR NOVEMBER 28-29TH

Envelopes\$12,701.82
Loose\$1,193.28
Poor Boxes\$457.64
Children's\$32.50

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOULS of our deceased parishioners.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS, especially those in hospitals: Robert Scheile and Mary Strunck.

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED for all those recovering from surgeries and illness and for: Alice Tates, Jane McManus, Patrick Daschbach, Catherine Applegarth, Cecilia French, Francis Vizzini, Milton & Timothy Getka, Beth Szczybor, Therese Lipscombe, Quinn Degenhard, May Herzing, Brother James Kelly, Bernard Maddox, Edward Flannagan, Kyla Zeilinger, Jo Keyes, Teddy Skinner, Bill Herman, James DeMatteo, Margaret Peter, Mary Barber, Florence Fink, Lillian Goldwine, Lorraine Keough, Kathleen Ricker, Helen Bopp, Frances Amann, Genevieve Randle, Evana Feeney, Heather LaMartina, Ann Finnel, Dottie Lappe, Concetta Fowler, Sandy Miller, Margaret Blinke, Mr. & Mrs. William Lang.

PRAYERS FOR OUR SERVICE PEOPLE: We ask you to remember the parishioners, family & friends serving in the military: **USMC** – Cpl. Joseph Bytella, LCpl. Sean Fitzpatrick, LCpl Alex Webb, LCpl. John J. Cohee, Jr., Sgt. David Burton; **NAT'L GUARD** – Pfc. Ryan Kamauff, David Parker; **NAVY** – Harrison Seward, David Roussey, Daniel Gately; **ARMY** – SSG Patrick Flanagan, Sgt. Alex Kuziel, James Lowe, Andy Giotis, Andy Deponai, Timothy Muhl, Sgt. Joshua Callow, Specialist Stephen Grenfell, 1st Lt. Stephen Winter, Capt. Sheldon Broedel.



MASSES FOR DECEMBER 7-13TH

MONDAY 6:30 a.m. – Charles Payne
 12/7 8:00 a.m. – Amy Adams
 7:00 p.m. - Ints. of Robert Myers

TUESDAY 6:30 a.m. – Thomas Tacka
 12/8 8:00 a.m. – Charles Harris
 10:00 a.m. – Ints. of Beth Szczybor

WED. 6:30 a.m. – Mary Tacka
 12/9 8:00 a.m. – Cecilia Turbe

THURS. 6:30 a.m. – Nicolaus Bruns
 12/10 8:00 a.m. – Frances Pruski

FRIDAY 6:30 a.m. – Simon Avara
 12/11 8:00 a.m. – Carmen Merete

SAT. 8:00 a.m. – Frances Shaver
 12/12 5:00 p.m. – Robert Kreft

SUNDAY 7:30 a.m. – Melvin Duckett
 12/13 9:00 a.m. – James Hannon
 10:30 a.m. – Ann Bianco Alexander
 12:00 p.m. – For the Parishioners

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH, is The Feast of the Immaculate Conception; a Holyday of Obligation. Our Masses will be held on Monday evening, Dec. 7th at 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday, Dec. 8th at 6:30, 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - It



is the tradition of our Sisters at St. Agnes Convent to observe this feast day in prayer and celebration! The Sisters want you to know that you and your families will be in their prayers.

The IHM Sisters arrived in this parish in 1933. They serve in various ministries in the Baltimore area. The Sisters presently living in St. Agnes Convent:

Sister Gracette Baker, IHM
Sister Joan Bastress, IHM

EVENING PRAYER WITH JESUS: Please join us to pray the Liturgy of the Hours before the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesday evenings during Advent (12/8, 12/15, and 12/22) at 6:30 p.m. 'O Come let us Adore Him.'

ST. AGNES PASTORAL COUNCIL will meet this Thursday, December 10th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Old School Hall. All organizations should be represented. Parishioners are welcome.

THE SECOND COLLECTION to be taken up at all the Masses **next** weekend will be for the Retirement Fund for the Retired Religious. Your contribution can ensure that the more than 45,000 elderly Sisters, Brothers and Order Priests who have given us a lifetime of service will be adequately cared for in their later years.

OPERATION CRECHE KRINGLE is drawing to a close. **There are names left in the manger**, please take one, so that each request may be filled. **All gifts must be in by the end of the 12 noon Mass NEXT weekend.** If you would like to help package the gifts, please call Rich or Cookie Hauf at 410-747-0398.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE:



Next weekend, members of the St. Agnes Council Knights of Columbus will be outside after all the Masses conducting a membership drive. This is an excellent time to join the largest, Catholic, family, fraternal, service organization in the world!

DAILY READINGS

Monday **St. Ambrose**
 12/7 **Reading:** Isaiah 35:1-10
Gospel: Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
 12/8 **Reading:** Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Reading: Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Wed. **St. Juan Diego**
 12/9 **Reading:** Isaiah 40:25-31
Gospel: Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday **Advent Weekday**
 12/10 **Reading:** Isaiah 41:13-20
Gospel: Matthew 11:11-15

Friday **Pope Damasus I**
 12/11 **Reading:** Isaiah 48:17-19
Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday **Our Lady of Guadalupe**
 12/12 **Read:** Rev. 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
Gospel: Luke 1:39-47

FLOWERS – Flowers on the Holy Family Altar are in loving memory of John Blinke on his birthday, requested by his family. To donate fresh flowers, please call Doris Mellendick at 410-747-2751.

ST. AGNES SCHOOL NEWS!

Congratulations to our 8th grade Confirmandi who received this beautiful Sacrament from Bishop Madden on Friday evening. Please continue to keep these young men and women in your prayers as they continue their faith journey.

Thank you to Mrs. Herwig and Mrs. Barrick and the Religious Ed. Catechists for their dedicated preparation of our students. Thank you also to the 7th grade parents and students for the lovely reception for our Confirmandi.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception: This beautiful feast day in honor of Our Lady is the feast day of our Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We are grateful to them for their many years of dedication and service to our school community! School is closed for the holyday, Tuesday, December 8, 2009.

A special thanks to all who supported our Breakfast with Santa on Saturday and the Santa's Workshop throughout the week. The faculty and students appreciate your support, and we are also grateful to our enthusiastic parent volunteers who planned and helped out at the events.

Dates to Remember

- 12/8** Feast of the Immaculate Conception
St. Agnes School closed
- 12/12** High School Placement Test – 8:30 a.m.
Tests will be given at the following high schools: Archbishop Curley, I.N.D., John Carroll, Loyola, Maryvale, Mercy, Mount de Sales, Seton-Keough, St. John's Catholic Prep, St. Maria Goretti
- 12/15** Geography Bee at St. Agnes
- 12/18** Christmas Concert 7:00pm Activity Center

**FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
DECEMBER 12TH.** Join us to pray on this



special Feast Day of the Patroness of the Unborn. We will have Mass at 8 am followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary Procession to the Abortion Facility at Hillcrest, Holy Hour for Life and Benediction, concluding at 11 am.

For those who are unable to walk, you may stay and pray during the Holy Hour. For more information, please call Joe Healy at 410-788-4325 or email st.piusx@gmail.com.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following St. Agnes parishioners who received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Madden on Friday, Dec. 4th.



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|--------------------|--------------------|
| Christy Bissally | Brendan Kaczynski |
| Kensey Bowen | Matthew King |
| Andrew Brown | Courtney Lewis |
| Logan Brown | Kirsten Loeb |
| Joseph Butler | Edward Lowry |
| Geoffrey Calderone | Eve Lukowski |
| Samantha Cimino | Teresa Majerowicz |
| Jack Clifford | Kyle Masemore |
| Ean Coe | Kelsey Meehan |
| Kelly Cusick | Lydia Navarrete |
| Tyler Deppe | Bridget Nilsen |
| Jessie Dubyoski | Caitlyn Ogden |
| Alison Farmer | Claudia Pierson |
| Amanda Farmer | Elizabeth Reynolds |
| Anthony Gage | Christy Schultz |
| Hunter Geary | Allisun Sipes |
| Julia Giermek | Victoria Stauts |



OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT will be held Friday, Dec. 18th, at 7:00 pm in the Activity Center. Please set aside this evening and plan to attend.



CONFESSIONS:

Monday, December 21st 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

MASSES:

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24th

- 4:00 p.m. Upper Church
- 4:00 p.m. Lower Church
- 6:00 p.m.
- 8:00 p.m.
- Midnight

Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th

- 9:00 a.m.
- 10:30 a.m.

CONGRATULATIONS to Doris Mellendick, a Silver Circle winner for November.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHRISTMAS PARTY sponsored by the St. Agnes Council Knights of Columbus will be held December 19th at the council home, 2021 Frederick Road from 6 -11 p.m. Cost is \$20 per person for sit down dinner and music by Ken Jackson. For tickets call Lou Carper at 410-747-6435.

ST. AGNES YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday, Dec. 6 – Movie Outing

Registration for this event has closed. Please join us next week!

Sunday, Dec. 13 – Advent Prayer Service and Open Gym Night

Please meet in the church tonight. We will head over to the gym after our prayer service.

Monday, Dec. 14 – Caroling at Village Oak

Join us as we sing Christmas Carols to residents at Village Oak Retirement Apartments from 6-7pm. All participants must bring signed permission forms with them. Visit www.StAgnesCatholicChurch.org.

ST. AGNES CHRISTMAS CARDS: Christmas cards may be purchased in the parish office. This year we have an assortment of our previous, best-selling cards. Proceeds from the sale will go to our Building Fund.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: Christmas flower envelopes were included in your December mailing. To make a donation for Christmas flowers for our Altars in loving memory or for a special occasion, please include the name of the person(s) to be remembered and place the envelope in the collection basket or drop off at the parish office by Dec 14th to be included in the Dec. 20th bulletin. The suggested donation is \$15.00.



TUESDAY ADORATION: Adorers are needed for the 2-3 p.m. hour for our weekly Tuesday Adoration. Please email Jan Vidmar at janvid23@verizon.net or call her at 410.744.4106. Thank You!

RESPECT LIFE CORNER

National Night of Prayer for Life – Dec. 8th:

This year marks the 20th annual National Night of Prayer for Life which takes place 9 PM, Tuesday, Dec. 8th to 1 AM Wednesday, Dec. 9th. Please join us and others throughout our country as we pray for a respect for all life and an end to abortion. To download prayers, please visit www.nationalnightofprayersforlife.org

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 12th:

Mass & Procession: Come and pray with others throughout the Archdiocese on this special Feast Day of our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Americas as well as the patroness of the unborn. Mass begins at 8 am at St. Agnes Catholic Church, 5422 Old Frederick Rd., Baltimore, MD 21229, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary Procession to the Abortion Facility at Hillcrest, Holy Hour for Life and Benediction, concluding at 11 am. For those who are unable to walk, you may stay and pray during the Holy Hour.



Pregnant, Need Help?

Call the Gabriel Network: 1-800-ANGEL-OK

Suffering Post-Abortion Stress?

Call Project Rachel: 1-800-286-4224

FOOD CERTIFICATES – Consider a practical Christmas gift for friends and neighbors. Giant, Shoppers, Panera or Dunkin Donuts gift cards purchased from St. Agnes are practical, appreciated, and benefit our school! Certificates are available in the school and parish offices.

RETROUVAILLE – Are you feeling helpless because you think your marriage is heading downhill? Don't despair. There is a Catholic Program that can help. Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery) is a proven and effective program that is helping hurting couples rebuild their trust and renew their communication. Our next weekend is January 15-17, 2010. All calls and inquires are confidential. For more information please call 410-647-0350 or visit the website www.HelpOurMarriage.com.





THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

By Paul Turner

“The Immaculate Conception” is a title for Mary, the mother of Jesus. The expression means that Mary was conceived without sin. The conviction that Jesus was born of a virgin is a distinct belief, even though many Catholics erroneously think that the Immaculate Conception refers to Jesus.

Contributing to the confusion is the celebration of the Immaculate Conception during the season of Advent. While the faithful are preparing to honor the birth of Jesus, we commemorate the conception of Mary. The choice of Dec. 8 for the Immaculate Conception does not directly relate to Advent; it corresponds more to the traditional date for the feast of the birth of Mary, Sept. 8, which coincides with the dedication of a Jerusalem church in honor of the mother of Mary. The feast for the conception of Mary is backed up from that day nine months. In a similar way we celebrate the Annunciation on March 25, nine months before the birth of Jesus.

Belief in the Immaculate Conception asserts that God preserved Mary from all sin from the moment of her conception, thus preparing a pure vessel for the incarnation of the Son. This belief is not expressly contained in the Scriptures, but it enjoys a widespread following in the church’s tradition. Although the Immaculate Conception of Mary has been affirmed since the earliest centuries of Christianity, it was not formally proclaimed a dogma of the church until 1854. Dec. 8 is now a holy day of obligation in the United States, which is placed under Mary’s patronage with this title.

When Mary is depicted as the Immaculate Conception, she is often shown wearing a crown of stars as the woman in Revelation 12 and standing on a snake, reversing the temptation of Eve. Mary, the Immaculate Conception, is the exalted queen of heaven who manifests God’s power over sin.

“IN HIS LIKENESS”

ST. NICHOLAS, BISHOP
Feast Day – December 6

Honored in both the Eastern and Western Churches, we know only that St. Nicholas was Bishop of Myra in Lycia (now part of Turkey). In the East he is called the Wonderworker, and legends abound. Two beautiful prayers in the Byzantine Liturgy for this commemoration express an appreciation of this saint. “O Father and Pontiff Nicholas, the holiness of your life was set before your flock as a rule of faith, an example of meekness and a teaching of temperance; wherefore you acquired greatness through humility and spiritual wealth through poverty. Pray to Christ God that he may save our souls.” “In Myra, you proved yourself to be a priest, a servant of divine things, O Saint, for you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ, O Holy One; you gave up your life for your people and saved the innocent from death. You have been sanctified, for you were a great guide towards the things of God.” These indicate the popularity of the veneration of St. Nicholas.

The Eastern liturgy speaks of him as a model bishop. The II Vatican Council in the *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* teaches: “In exercising his office of father and pastor the bishop should be with his people as one who serves, as a good shepherd who knows his sheep and whose sheep know him, as a true father who excels in his love and solitude for all...He should so unite and mold his flock into one family that all, conscious of their duties, may live and act in the communion of charity.”

St. Nicholas was such a model bishop, and now a saint.

MEMORY VERSE

LUKE 3:4

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.