

Greetings!

“What should we do?”

It often occurs to me that I'm not who I should be. No, I'm not suggesting that I'm harboring some dark side (*though wearing black as often as I do, one might wonder*) or that I'm just pretending to be someone I'm not (*though my siblings remind me occasionally that I've changed so much*). I just realize now and then that (*just like you*) being a child of God must come with certain expectations greater than I'm often displaying. For example, does my speech match up to what it *should be*? Am I as patient and kind with *everyone* as I need to be? Do I look for the best in others *all the time*? (*And, yes, these are just questions!*) But, why do I ask?

We can often let the *Advent Season* become sterile (*and some might think four weeks is too long*) because we've let it become mere exterior window dressing (*like the first snow that covers up a multitude of nature's sins*) and misleads us to think that everyone is happy because it's almost Christmas. Yet, we all know that's not true and it's certainly no fun *pretending* to be happy if you're not.

The *Third Sunday of Advent* is traditionally called *Gaudete Sunday* when the Catholic Church proclaims: *rejoice!* Now, not the false sense of rejoice that the world tells us can be achieved if we spend, spend, spend and wrap, wrap, wrap every possible gift under the moon (*with the hope that one will get something in return*). Even with people cutting back, this exercise can become quite draining if deep down inside we know we're not any happier for all the work. But, might the Church not rather have a better way of obtaining real joy?

In the Gospel account today, John the Baptist reminds his disciples of the transformation that can take place in us for our hearts to be set on fire. We must “*share with the person who has none, stop collecting more than is prescribed, not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages.*” True joy comes not from “*taking care of self*” but genuinely caring for others with a renewed heart, seeking ways of reconciling with those we've troubled, accepting graciously all that we have without wanting more. And, if just a little of this ‘*rings*’ true for you as it does for me, then the next two weeks will give us just enough time to help us ‘*prepare the way*’ for the Christ Child to come into our hearts on Christmas Day.

If you find it helpful, there are a few opportunities you might take advantage of in our own parish that will help others and you. We have our annual Men's Clothing Drive this weekend, our Annual Giving Tree, and a Collection Box for items packaged for overseas military personnel (*being organized by one of our great young teens*). You will also notice a new St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Box now in our parking lot for your year-round convenience to help others. Likewise, I hope you will take advantage of the additional times of confession during Advent: Saturday morning in the Convent, 9:30am-10:00am; Saturday afternoon & evening in

the Church, 3:00-4:00pm & 5:00-6:00pm; and Sunday morning in the Church, 10:30-11:30am. Just a few good ways to set our hearts on fire and fill them with joy!
God bless!

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, December 12th

4:00PM Nancy Hurley Memorial Mass

Sunday, December 13th

7:30AM Donald Swanton 1st Anniversary
9:30AM John Flaherty 6th Anniversary
11:30AM Richard Tobin 9th Anniversary

Monday, December 14th

9:00AM Joseph Sullivan 12th Anniversary

Wednesday, December 16th

9:00AM Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish

Saturday, December 19th

4:00PM Dick Tobin 10th Anniversary

Sunday, December 20th

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish
9:30AM Ellen Dorney and Celia Casey
11:30AM Paul E. Norman and John C. Hawe
Memorial Mass
1st Anniversary
26th Anniversary

RESPECT FOR LIFE ROSARY
(with Scripture Based Narration)

Wed. Dec. 16, 2009 at 7pm
in the CONVENT CHAPEL
We Sing!!and We Pray!!

Please join us, no experience required.
EVERY VOICE COUNTS!

Wedding  Banns

I. John Murphy and Heather MacDougall

Congratulations! And let us joyfully pray for all our engaged-couples as they prepare for their marriage in Christ!

Giving Tree

The gifts for the Giving Tree are due back **next** weekend.

Men's Clothing Drive

Donations for the Men's Clothing Drive are due **this** weekend.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O Antiphons

The *O Antiphons* may be as old as the 3rd century, and come from the first part of the antiphon recited or chanted before the *Magnificat* of Evening Prayer of the Church. They are beautiful prayers, and you can find more simply by googling 'O Antiphon'.

O Sapientia: "O Wisdom, O holy Word of God,

O Adonai: "O sacred Lord of ancient Israel,

O Radix Jesse: "O Flower of Jesse's stem,

O Clavis David: "O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel,

O Oriens: "O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice,

O Rex Gentium: "O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man,

O Emmanuel: "O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Savior of all people,

And always remember "*Emmanuel*" means "*God is with us.*"

COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM

The Ski trip planned for Monday December 28th is cancelled since not enough students signed up. There will be a middle school dance on Tuesday December 29th. We are looking to host another social event for our young people during vacation week. Some folks have suggested a movie night, a game night or a New Year's Eve party after the 4:00 Mass until about 8pm. If you are interested in organizing any of these events, please contact Fr Ed or Maura Burke at 781 767 – 0563 ASAP.

WE HAVE A WISH LIST!!! Do you have (or know someone who does) an LCD projector or plasma TV that can be donated to our youth group? We also find ourselves in need of a multi passenger van or bus. There are many times we take trips and the cost of renting transportation is quite high. We would like to partner with someone who can help lower the cost of our transportation needs. Please contact Fr. Ed or Maura Burke at 781 767 0563 if you are able to help.

Pro Life Rally: The Pro Life Rally in Washington DC is scheduled for January 20-22nd and we will be traveling by bus with other parishes in the Archdiocese. If anyone - teenager or up is interested in attending, please let Fr. Ed know ASAP.

Advent

This Sunday is the *Third Sunday of Advent*! You may wish to look for more concrete ways to celebrate the Season! You can get some great ideas for you and your families and children, by going to the Bishops website for Advent: www.usccb.org/advent/.

♪♪ *Sing to the Lord for Christmas!* ♪♪

Please join the Adult Choir this year for Christmas!

There only 2 more rehearsals:

7pm Friday December 18 and 7pm Wednesday December 23

All in preparation for the Christmas Eve 6pm Mass,

Thursday December 24!

Contact Choir Director Steve Williams with questions.

and

We are looking for some musical teens interested in enhancing the Midnight Liturgy on Christmas Eve.

We need singers and instrumentalists to participate before Mass at 11:30pm and also for singing during Mass.

Rehearsals will be held in December.

Please contact Mrs. Laura Grant 781-767-1469 or Stephen Williams 781-767-2763 or talk to us at church if interested.

Parish Giving

I am very thankful for every gift that helps us do all that we do here, and I am grateful that some parishioners are able to help by increasing their weekly giving knowing a good number of families in our parish have been greatly affected by the loss of jobs and income. The first collection for last week was **\$3,446**. Next weekend's second collection is for the Capital Improvement Fund. Thank you for your financial commitment to our parish life!

Parish Grand Annual Collection

Thank you! We look to complete this collection, and if you can help us reach our goal of \$38,000, I would be very grateful. We are now at \$30,472. Certainly, your pledge may be paid over any period of time you wish. Whatever offering each individual or family might make will be used to renovate the lower and upper Church this year to provide more space for our adult and youth activities.

Tax Laws for Contributions

Just a reminder that due to changes in the federal tax laws for charitable contributions beginning in 2007, parishioners who itemize deductions on Schedule A of their tax returns will no longer be able to deduct contributions to the parish unless they maintain a bank record or receive a written contribution statement from the parish. Cash contributions that are not in a parish envelope **cannot** be tracked by the parish and will not be included in the year-end contribution statement. To ensure tax deductibility the following payments are recommended: use of parish envelopes or written check made payable to the parish.

Young Adults

There is still space to register for the Washington, DC Pilgrimage for Life! Deposits are due by December 15th. If you are planning on coming and have not yet registered, please email Lauren Hardegen at youngadults@rcab.org to let us know for our planning purposes.

DECEMBER 13, 2009

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

Christmas Pageant & Christmas Concert

Mark your calendar! Saint Joseph School students in grades kindergarten through grade eight will participate in the annual Christmas Concert on Wednesday, December 16th in the church. Students in Mrs. Karol McCarthy's piano class will perform at the concert. Traditional as well as contemporary Christmas Carols will be sung setting the mood of the season. Please join us for the festivities!

Virtue of the Month

The virtue for the month of December is *respect*. Students will study the lives of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John the Baptist.

Make a Book Donation the Gift of the Season

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Saint Joseph School library. All donations are used to improve the reading and research opportunities for our students. Each \$15 donation purchases a hardcover book with a commemorative bookplate that notes the name of the honoree and the donor. What a wonderful gift an honorary book at Christmas would make. Thank you for making a lasting educational gift to the school for our students. We appreciate your donation!

MSPCA – Angell

Please donate a blanket to keep animals warm this upcoming winter. Blankets must be clean and not have any holes. Both new and used blankets (no larger than 6x8 ft.) are being collected in the school lobby until December 18th. Thank you for your support!

Coats for Kids

Once again Saint Joseph School students are collecting coats for Anton Cleaner's, Coats for Kids. We appreciate your donation of quality winter coats for kids, adults and babies. No tears, rips, missing buttons or zippers please. Donation boxes are set up in the school lobby. The coats are distributed by community agencies to those in need. Your generosity will keep a family or family member warm this winter!

Cursillo

The Cursillo experience begins with a weekend course in basic Christianity. The three-day course gives the participant practical insights into the everyday life of faith and service. The weekend is a back-to-basics experience which often deepens and rounds out what one has learned about Christ earlier in life.

The next men's Cursillo at The Holy Cross Retreat House in Easton (www.retreathouse.org) is on: January 28-31, 2010 and the following one is March 25-28, 2010.

DECEMBER 13, 2009

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The 6th grade will be hosting the 9:30 Family Mass on Sunday.

There is still time to return your donated toy for My Brother's Keeper. Thanks you to the many students who have already donated so much!

There will be NO CCD classes the week of December 20 and 27th due to the Christmas Vacation.

TENTH GRADE CONFIRMATION CLASS: The second part of our two year Confirmation class begins on Sunday, January 3, 2010. This class is a Prayer Service with St. Michael's Parish and will be held at 2pm at St. Michael's in Avon. Most other classes will be at 5pm.

Tax Law Change, Can Help our Parish

Between now and December 31, 2009, you can make the gift of a lifetime to St. Joseph Parish by giving from your IRA without federal tax penalty. All of your gift will go to our parish, and Archdiocesan staff can help you make this happen. For assistance, contact Richard Ely by phone 617-779-3702 or email Richard.Ely@rcab.org or visit www.CatholicLegacySociety.org

Caregiver Homes

What do you do when a parent or other elderly relative can no longer live alone? Call Caregiver Homes – we pay you to care. Caregiver Homes is a MA state licensed, Adult Foster Care provider, a community based alternative to nursing home placement. We pay family members (not spouses) or non-family members up to \$18,000 per year, tax free, non-reportable income, to care for frail elders or disabled (16+) at home. Ideal candidates need 24-hour supervision and need daily physical help with personal care. The caregiver will receive professional nursing support, care management, and training in their home. Please let us help you by calling Sister Maureen Kane, intake coordinator at 781-223-6291.

Advertiser of the Week

Thank you for patronizing the services of our bulletin advertisers! This week we thank **Hurley Funeral Homes** for advertising with us!