

## PUT ON THE SPLENDOR OF GOD'S GLORY

*Baruch 5:1-9; Psalm 126:1-6; Phil. 1:4-6, 8-11; Luke 3:1-6*

On the first Sunday of Advent Prophet Jeremiah exhorted the Hebrews who were exiled and oppressed in Babylon not to despair because "The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah." God's promise for us is that of hope for "a better future," not despair. On the other hand, today's readings call us to repentance and new beginnings. Advent is a time of grace that presents us with an opportunity to spiritually 'start over' our lives. It invites us to true conversion.

You and I are often caught up in a web of anxieties. We are often confronted with trepidation and despair when we are faced with challenges or difficult situations. When we are overwhelmed with the demands of daily lives, we sometimes resort to various forms of *escapism*. We often distract ourselves with hobbies that we like and those that we do not like - we go drinking and get drunk - we go shopping needlessly - we take the children to numerous recreational activities - we just float around like a boat in the sea tossed about by the wind. The demands we sometimes make of ourselves in life can often be overwhelming and stressful. They can eventually leave us feeling empty, and tempted to fill in the *vacuum* with unwarranted desires.

The people of Israel were in a similar situation! They were faced with challenges after the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and took many of their people captive. They lost hope that Jerusalem would ever be rebuilt, and were fearful that the exiles would be spending the rest of their lives in a foreign land. They had lost hope of true happiness, which comes from Almighty God alone. Thus, they wandered aimlessly, pursuing other gods in idols and material things. They were inadvertently trying to escape from the challenges they were facing, distancing themselves from God Who had promised to bring to fulfillment the covenant He has made with them through their ancestors. Their trust in God was waning, thus, Prophet Baruch exhorted them to "take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever."

As Christians, you and I must be different - we ought to be people of hope! Advent is a time we are exhorted to wait with greater anticipation for peace, joy and happiness, when the Lord appears. This is not the time to grieve or be sad. It is not the time to doubt or be anxious, but it is time for you to "stand upon the heights...and see your children gathered from the east and the west at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that they are remembered by God." Rather than being anxious and despondent, and wondering whether the Lord will return, and how it will affect you; rather than employing various forms of distractions and means of escapism, you and I must abide by what the scripture urges us to do, if we truly want to receive the Prince of Peace worthily into our hearts and souls. You and I must "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths." With much anticipation and hope for the coming of the Lord, we must ensure "every valley to be filled in, and every mountain and hill to be made low; and the rugged land to be made plain..." This, we must do by minimizing the time we spend fulfilling the demands of our social and corporate life. We need to spend more time with God in prayer, meditations and confessing our sins. Advent urges you and me to trust and believe that "the One Who began a good work in you will continue to complete it" if you sincerely trust in Him. He is coming so that "all flesh (you and me) shall see the salvation of God."

**Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP**

# PARISH NEWS



## OUR PARISH GIVING TREE

In keeping with the true spirit of Christmas, we have the opportunity to share our resources with several charities who serve the disadvantaged (Immaculate Conception's Needy Families, Westchester Living Center, and Richmond Hill). Each of these charities has specifically requested that we focus on gifts that address the practical needs of their clients. Please take an ornament(s) from the tree in the back of the church. **It is important that this ornament, indicating gender and gift specific information, be securely attached to your wrapped package.** Please return all packages to the church by next Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your continued support in this very special season of giving.

Our **SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE** is having a special Food Drive to provide Christmas Baskets to some less fortunate brothers and sisters. What we need to complete this year's baskets is frozen turkeys, hams, candy, cookies, frozen pies, juices and coffee. Due to a lack of refrigerator / freezer storage space, we can only accept the frozen items inside the Church vestibule before each Sunday Masses, December 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>.

**CHILDREN'S MASS:** Please make it a point to bring your child to our Children's Mass next Sunday and the rest of the Sundays in December. The 10 a.m. Mass will focus on our children. The Parish Children's Choir will sing the Mass, and the children are encouraged to sit with other children at a designated place during the Mass.



## ANNUAL LESSONS AND CAROLS

Our parish adult and children choirs are organizing an **Advent Reflection - Lessons and Carols** - for all the parishioners on **Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m.** in the Church. As part of our preparations for Christmas, you and your family are invited to come and be part of *the story of our salvation* as told by the children of our parish.



The **FINANCE COMMITTEE** will meet this Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m. in the Rectory. All members are encouraged to attend.

**MEETING:** This Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Holy Name Society will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the McManus Parish Center. All men of the Parish are welcome.



HOLY NAME SOCIETY

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### WWW.SAINTBARTSPARISH.ORG

Check out recent additions to the St. Bartholomew's Adult Faith Formation website which can be reached through our Parish website, listed above. Through the Adult Faith Formation tab, you can be linked to hear Msgr. John Kennedy's weekly Vatican Radio talk show. During this Year of Faith when we are asked to revisit the Catechism of the Catholic Church, you can register your email address to receive a short section of the Catechism each day. Within a year you will have received the entire Catechism! Contact Cheryl Duda (476-6676) if you have difficulty reaching this site.

### BECOME AN ASSOCIATE MISSIONARY OF ST. PAUL

Next Sunday, we will welcome Father Felix Osasona, MSP, who is a member in the same Religious congregation as our Pastor, Father Anthony Bassey, MSP. Father Felix will be speaking to us about the importance of becoming Associate Missionaries of St. Paul (AMSP). The AMSP are Catholic men and women who actively support the missionary work of the Missionary Society of St. Paul through their prayers, moral support, and financial assistance. Like the holy women and men in the scriptures who assisted Christ and His apostles in their work, AMSP contribute regularly their treasures, time, talent, and prayers to the missions. They help train seminarians, preparing for the priesthood, through monthly or yearly sponsorship. They commit themselves, as do the missionary priests, in love striving to revive and strengthen those parts of the Church that are weak and make them self-reliant. They are also involved in works of charity supporting the people in mission countries.

Father Felix will be available after the Masses to answer any questions you may have regarding enrollment in the AMSP. We are encouraging you to prayerfully consider taking part in this historic and wonderful initiative. There will be an information meeting with prospective members in the school building on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m.

### OUR CHRISTMAS "WISH-LIST"



This is a season of giving and sharing! In the spirit of Thanksgiving and Christmas, last week some of our parishioners requested that I provide an opportunity to the parishioners to donate certain appropriate liturgical items needed for our sacred worship and devotions. In response to that generous and unselfish request, I put out a "Wish List" for 13 items needed for our liturgical worship. I am happy to inform you that within two days all of the items were purchased by some of our parishioners.

I am very much thankful and indebted to these parishioners for their generosity, and I pray God to bless and reward them abundantly.

If you would like to specially donate an item or cash in memory of your deceased loved ones, please do not hesitate to speak to me directly. Thank you for your love of our parish!

### APPRECIATION

I want to sincerely thank Dolores DiPaolo who recently donated the new Advent wreath/candle holder with the accompanying wreath in loving memory of her deceased husband, Anthony Francis DiPaolo.



**"WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OURSELVES ALONE DIES WITH US; WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OTHERS AND THE WORLD REMAINS AND IS IMMORTAL."**

~ Albert Pike

✠ **STEWARDSHIP** ✉  
What shall I render unto the Lord  
for all his benefits to me?

### TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

#### December 4, 2011

Adults' Contribution	\$8285.55
Children's Contribution	\$159.30
<b>Last Year's Total</b>	<b>\$8444.85</b>

#### December 2, 2012

Adults' Contribution	\$7746.90
Children's Contribution	\$144.65
<b>This Year's Total</b>	<b>\$7891.55</b>

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection for the maintenance of our buildings and grounds totaled \$2008.35.**

*"The true purpose of tithing is to secure not the tithe, but the tither; not the gift, but the giver; not your money, but you... for God."*

### REMEMBER YOUR BELOVED PARISH

*Remember, "We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we share." Please remember our Parish in your Will as a lasting and loving gift to your parish family. Thank you!*



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Andy DeFabritis, Maria Marte, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Gene DelBene, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petruolo, Cynthia Swiatkowicz, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, Roseann Mercandetti, Louis Brusco, Josephine Daniele, Jennifer Dorsey, Valerie Riccardi, Fatima Panik, Joanne Moscarello, Marian Fletcher, Anna Bonacci, Minerva Hernandez, Paula Parente, Barbara Olivieri, Carol Swetz, Bridget O'Malley, Anna Brucculeri, Peggy Clevenberg, Gerald Mazzerese, Jr., Patricia Keane, Louis Milone, Joey Bastardi, Carol Stola, Amada Ortiz, and Karin Aprea.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially Dominick Carlucci.

### OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of the Americas. We are going to have prayers and traditional hymns in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the church at 6:15 a.m. on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. The 7 a.m. Mass will follow.



DECEMBER 9, 2012

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*Mass for the  
Intentions  for the  
Week*

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**Second Sunday of Advent**

**Saturday, December 8 (Anticipated Mass)**

5:00 PM Josephine Giuriceo +

**Sunday, December 9**

8:30 AM For All the People of Our Parish

10:00 AM Joseph Prior +

11:30 AM Anna & Anthony Faracco +

5:00 PM Giacomo Bilancia +

**Monday, December 10**

**Advent Weekday**

7:00 AM Corazon & Benjamin Sotto +

9:00 AM Marcello Barcello +

**Tuesday, December 11**

**Advent Weekday**

7:00 AM Rita Bolduc +

9:00 AM Maria Orientale Scipioni +

**Wednesday, December 12**

**Our Lady of Guadalupe**

7:00 AM Gloria Bassey +

9:00 AM Helen & Pete Pietrowski +

**Thursday, December 13**

**Saint Lucy, Virgin & Martyr**

7:00 AM Nilda Navarro +

9:00 AM Frank Lutomski, Jr. +

**Friday, December 14**

**Saint John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church**

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM James Mahoney +

**Saturday, December 15**

**Advent Weekday**

9:00 AM Stephen Hickey +

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**Third Sunday of Advent**

**Saturday, December 15 (Anticipated Mass)**

5:00 PM Intentions of the Pisacreta Family (living)

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**Sunday, December 16**

8:30 AM Robert Liddell +

10:00 AM Ethel Castagnozzi +

11:30 AM For All the People of Our Parish

5:00 PM Regina & Frank Bartolomeo +

## IT'S TIME TO CONFESS YOUR SINS IN THIS YEAR OF FAITH



Once again as we enter into the final period of preparation for Christmas, the Church offers us a unique opportunity to examine our hearts and minds and cleanse our souls in the Sacrament of Penance on Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Almost every parish has set aside that afternoon and evening to welcome all the faithful. Because it is a universal experience in our Archdiocese we can stop by any church and be assured that

there will be a priest present to assist in reconciling oneself to God and to the Church. If you harbor any doubts about its effectiveness in raising our spirit and giving greater meaning to the season I ask you only to return to those days of our youth. As the priest gave us our penance, we recited the Act of Contrition and received absolution, was there not a great weight lifted from us? Did we not experience a joy that we felt at no other time? Before going any further let us put our cards on the table. If it has been some time since receiving the sacrament, then realize the form of the ritual has not changed substantially. The priest will guide you. And yes, if you forgot the Act of Contrition, you can bring a cheat sheet. There might even be one in the confessional itself.

But what should I say? What sins did I commit? I can't remember them all. Let us take each issue. When we sin we can do so by committing or omitting certain actions. We should reflect on both sides of the coin. Did we do something that was wrong that injured our relationship with God or man or was there an opportunity in witness or charity that I failed to fulfill? We are told by the Church that to make a good confession we must admit to all mortal sins and be conscious as well of venial ones. If one has been away for some time, it is very possible that we will miss some of both kinds of sins. We must make a good faith effort to recall those offenses which are more serious. This is where a good examination of conscience is necessary. We must spend some time prior to entering the confessional reflecting on our life and its pitfalls. If one forgets and later remembers a serious or less serious sin, we need not run back to the confessional. It has been forgiven as long as we did not make a conscious attempt not to mention it.

Time and space only permit us to look at the first three commandments to begin an examination of our lives. We are not to have any strange gods before the Lord our God. I think most of us are safe from any golden calf adoration, but what about gold itself? Do we pursue material gain without any reference to the fact that we are denying God a proper place in our lives? Does the dollar in our pocket motivate us more than the divine spark which gives us life? Do we take the name of the Lord in vain? Do we swear to something false asking God to be complicit in our moral failure? Do we let fly with blasphemous tones at the Jets, politicians, our spouses, especially in front of young people? Do we acknowledge that the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday is just one part of maintaining the Lord's Day? Do we on that day and every day praise God for His providential care? Do we offer prayer frequently during our day using the scripture as our touchstone? These are just a few thoughts to start us on the path to the 17<sup>th</sup>. Give your priest a great gift: keep him busy reconciling his people to God.

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**Next week's bulletin will contain a flyer to aid in making a good Examination of Conscience. On Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, confessions will be heard at St. Bartholomew's Church from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

