

REJOICE! HAVE NO ANXIETY!!*Zephaniah 3:14-18; Psalm (Isaiah) 12:2-6; Phil. 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18*

Today's first reading from the Prophet Zephaniah was written about 700 years before the birth of Christ. At that time the Assyrians were the dominant force in the Middle East politically and militarily. They overran and wiped out the northern part of Israel. They brought severe suffering and pain to the southern part of Israel that was later conquered by the Babylonians. After the devastation, Israel was faced with the daunting task of recovery and reconstruction. Overwhelmed with these and other challenges, many Israelites including their leaders, wandered away from God. Idolatry and immorality became rampant among the people. Prophet Zephaniah's mission was to correct those abuses and also to bring hope to those who were faithful to the One and true God.

In my regular Communion/sick calls, I often encountered people who are filled with faith, and are always hoping that Jesus, through the Sacraments of Anointing and the Holy Eucharist, will heal them and bring them comfort. When one pays a visit to the doctor's office, and/or the emergency room of a hospital, you notice the anxiety on the faces of loved ones waiting with their sick relatives or friends. On most of my visits, I have found parents and other relatives sharing their anxiety with strangers like me, and others whom they have never met. On the other hand, the patients and their loved ones are waiting anxiously for the arrival of the doctor and for their turn to see him/her. Upon their consultation with the doctor, they will instinctively tell him/her almost everything about their condition. Their hope is that they will get help and the doctor will be able to bring them some comfort and healing. They hope that he/she can take away their fear and anxiety.

On this Third Sunday of Advent, as the pink (rose) candle is lit, we are reminded of the joy and happiness that comes with God becoming Man in Christ. The season of Advent urges us to know that life is like a doctor's waiting room - we are filled with anxieties and fear, but at the same time, there is the underlying hope that things are going to get better. Thus, Prophet Zephaniah exhorts you and me, to "Shout for joy...! Sing joyfully, O Israel! Be glad and exult with all your heart..." Shout and sing for joy because Christ, Who baptized "you with the Holy Spirit and fire" is coming. He brings glad tidings and joy to the lowly and humble of heart. He is coming to heal the broken hearted. Christ is coming to set us free from sin and self-indulgence - to heal our sicknesses - to comfort us in our sorrow. He is coming so that we may "have no further misfortune to fear." While we wait for His revelation, St. Paul urges us to "Rejoice in the Lord always." This is a joy that cannot be obtained by the acquisition and accumulation of material wealth for oneself, therefore, "Whoever has two cloaks and/or food should share with those who have none." It is a joy that cannot be realized by the greedy, therefore, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed." It is a joy that can only be achieved by the simple, the humble of heart, the peacemakers and not by the powerful and the mighty. Therefore, "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages." This is a joy that can only be achieved by our total and absolute submission to God's will and our dependence on Him. Therefore, "have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God" and trust that Christ's coming will bring you true joy, peace and happiness.

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP

PARISH NEWS


The **CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE** for the **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

is as follows:

- **Mon., Dec 17** 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- **Sat., Dec 22** 4:00 – 4:45 p.m.



Throughout the Archdiocese of New York, Advent Reconciliation this Monday (Dec 17th) gives Catholics the opportunity to go to any parish for confession between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS MASSES**

- **Mon., Dec. 24** 4:30 p.m. Christmas Carols/ Vigil Mass
 - **Mon., Dec. 24** 11:30 p.m. Christmas carols, followed by Midnight Mass
 - **Tues., Dec. 25** 8:30, 10, and 11:30 a.m.
 - There will not be a 5 p.m. Mass on Christmas Day.
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CHILDREN'S MASS: Please make it a point to bring your child to our Children's Mass next Sunday. The 10 a.m. Mass will focus on our children. The Parish Children's Choir will sing the Mass. The children are encouraged to sit together as a group during the Mass.



The **CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** will meet this **Wednesday, December 19th, at 7 p.m.** in Room 111 of St. John's Riverside Hospital, 967 North Broadway, Yonkers, for education & support to help cope with cancer. Call (914) 964-4441 for information.



If you or someone you know needs information on the Catholic Faith or have not been confirmed, please call the Religious Education Office for information on the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.) in our parish.

EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION: Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us when you are able.

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION: Held the First Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

RECITATION OF THE ROSARY: Join your fellow parishioners in praying the Rosary after the 9 a.m. Mass on weekdays and Saturdays.

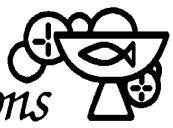
MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA: Held after the 9 a.m. Mass on Mondays.

The preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.

~ H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

DECEMBER 16, 2012

Mass Intentions for the Week



Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 15 (Anticipated Mass)

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

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 +

Monday, December 17

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Deceased Members of Father Anthony's Family

9:00 AM Patty Brown +

Tuesday, December 18

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Tom & Kathleen Kearney +

Wednesday, December 19

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Deceased Members of Bolduc & Savard Families

9:00 AM Anthony Chiarilli, Jr. +

Thursday, December 20

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Viola Paulsen +

9:00 AM Alessandrina & Bonifacio Marchetti +

Friday, December 21

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Lucas Vazquez +

Saturday, December 22

Late Advent Weekday

9:00 AM Mary Ann Berenguer +

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 22 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Leonard Revellese +

Sunday, December 23

8:30 AM Caroline Klee +

10:00 AM Carmella & Frank Gerace +

11:30 AM Carl Dietze, Robert & Chester Rodesky +

5:00 PM Debbie DiCaprio +

YEAR-END GIVING REMINDER

Did You Know ?



A few weeks ago we celebrated Thanksgiving, which is a holiday set aside for reflecting on our many blessings and celebrating our gratitude by sharing with family and friends. During Advent and Christmas many share the joy of Jesus' birth by sharing their blessings through gift giving to family, friends and loved ones. These final weeks of the year are also traditionally when people make special charitable contributions.

Thinking carefully about what to give – and when to give – can help magnify the impact of your gifts. With careful planning, you may discover that your gifts have more charitable impact than you thought possible, and can reduce your overall tax bill.

What to Give:

Cash – While all gifts mailed or otherwise completed by December 31st, qualify as tax deductible for 2012, gifts of cash, by check or through electronic transfer, are the most popular ways to give. When itemizing your tax deductions, it is possible to eliminate or reduce income tax on up to one-half of your adjusted gross income. Depending upon where you live, you may also enjoy state income tax savings.

Securities – A gift of stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares may yield additional tax savings if they are worth more at the time of transfer than their original cost. Gifts of securities are usually deductible from income tax at their full present-day value as long as you have owned them longer than one year.

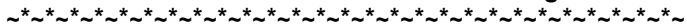
Devalued Investments – If you purchased investments that are now worth less than what you paid, you can sell them and make a charitable gift with the proceeds. This creates a loss that you may be able to deduct from other taxable income and then again as a charitable gift. These combined deductions could total more than the current value of your investment.

Gifts From Retirement Plans – Gifting assets accumulated through retirement plans can be a practical way to support a charity. If you are over age 70 ½ you are required to make withdrawals from your IRA or other qualified plan. You can consider a charitable gift using all or a portion of your mandatory withdrawal amount.

Life Insurance Gifts – If you own a life insurance policy that is no longer needed, you may be able to donate the cash value and claim a deduction as well, such gifts may also provide future estate tax savings.



In the light of this information, I hope that you would seriously consider making a generous donation to your beloved Church of St. Bartholomew this coming Christmas.



YOUTH GROUP: The first Sunday evening of each month immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass, our **Youth Group** meets in the McManus Parish Center. All youths age 13 and up are invited.

