

A NEW BEGINNING

Is. 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; Ps. 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; 1Cor. 1: 3-9; Mark. 13:33-37

Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the lord of the house is coming! A young lady who had been searching for a job for months finally got a baby-sitting job to look after two boys – four and five years old. About two hours after their parents left home for work, the baby-sitter who was exhausted after doing the chores, fell asleep and the children ran around the house, throwing stuff all over the floor. Unfortunately, their mother returned unannounced and found the baby-sitter still asleep and the house in a terrible mess. The baby-sitter was instantly rebuked and fired from the job.

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent has its etymology from the Latin word, *Adventus*, which means, *coming* or *arrival*. The term connotes not only *arrival*, but also *a new beginning*. Opportunely, today we celebrate the *arrival* and the *new beginning* of the New Roman Missal. Over the past few months we have been preparing by reading and speaking about the new Missal. We have attended workshops and seminars to learn about the new words. Starting today, you and every English-speaking Catholic and I will be praying these words. Like I said last week, it is my hope that the introduction of the new translation of the Roman Missal will bring a new beginning into our understanding and appreciation of the Mass – God's love for you and me.

The lamentation that we hear in today's first reading has its historical context in the fact that the Jewish exiles had returned from Babylon with high hopes enkindled by the Second Isaiah's prophecy. On returning to Judah, they were confronted with the daunting task of rebuilding their city that laid in ruin after the invasion. Its reconstruction did not go smoothly as they had hoped – they did not know how or where to begin. In their frustration, they concluded that God had abandoned them due to their sins: "Behold, You (Lord) are angry, and we are sinful..." They longed for God's forgiveness and intervention, thus, they lamented: "Return for the sake of Your servants...Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down..." This is the theme of Advent: "Lord, rend the heavens and come down" to save us because *You are our Father, and we, Your children, are in distress. You are the Potter and we are the clay, the work of Your hands.* Wars, diseases, poverty, terrorism, natural and man-made disasters have ravaged our world. Healthcare cost – unemployment – taxes – gas price – mortgages – cost of living are ever on the rise. Lord, *rend the heavens and come down* to sooth our pains! Come to save us!

Advent is a time to be filled with a renewed hope that God will intervene to save His people, because He cannot abandon the *work of His hands*. During Advent, you and I are invited to pray and to hope that Christ will rain down His peace, justice and love amongst us. As we prepare for Christmas, we must prepare, not just for a day of fun – surprises, exchanging of gifts and cards, but as an event that will help you and me to truly welcome Christ sincerely into our lives. Our four weeks of preparation should help us know that Christmas is not just a memorial or a commemoration, but a living event that you and I must assent to and celebrate with humility. Therefore, we must make sure that "you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is a time to acknowledge and appreciate the new life you and I share in God, through Christ our Lord and Savior. As a result, "I give thanks to my God always ... for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus."

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP


PARISH NEWS


OUR FAMILY MASS: Next Sunday, December 4th, we will celebrate our Family Mass at 10 a.m. Every family is encouraged to attend and to sit together during Mass. "Family Breakfast" will take place at the McManus Parish Center after the Mass. Come and celebrate the Eucharist as a family.



ST. BART'S SHARING COMMUNITY MEAL: This Thursday, December 1st, we will be preparing our Sharing Community Meal. Please bring your ziti or dessert to the Rectory. Doors will open at 6:45 a.m. For information on participating in this important effort, please call the Rectory Office.

Besides those of you who contribute throughout the year, the Social Ministry Committee would like to thank all the parishioners who contributed to the Food Pantry for our Thanksgiving Drive. Twenty-five very thankful families received Thanksgiving Baskets. May God continue to bless the very special people of St. Bartholomew's Parish!

HOLY HOUR: This Friday, December 2nd, is First Friday. We will have our monthly Holy Hour at 1 p.m. On Saturday, December 3rd, the Divine Mercy Holy Hour will begin at 3 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these wonderful devotions.



WE WELCOME OUR NEWEST CHRISTIAN



We welcome and congratulate our newest Christian, baby **Grace Ann Brogan**, who was baptized into the Catholic family of St. Bartholomew on Saturday, November 19th. We thank her parents and godparents for presenting her for baptism, and we pray God to bless and keep the child and her parents in their journey of faith.

The members of the **Rosary Altar Society** will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, December 4th.



The **ALTAR BREAD & WINE, ALTAR CANDLES** and **SANCTUARY LAMP** for the week have been donated in loving memory of Frank G. Naoia by Louis & Angela Brusco.

REMEMBRANCE TREE OF LIFE: We would like to remind all our parishioners of our *Tree of Life* located at the rear of the church. Many individuals and families have already memorialized their loved ones on the Tree, but there are still many vacant leaves left on the Tree. Thus we invite you to call the Rectory Office to inquire on how you can memorialize your loved ones on the *Tree of Life*.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



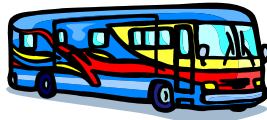
OUR PARISH GIVING TREE

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, Rosalie Hall in the Bronx, 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 Sunday, December 18th. Thank you for your continued support in this very special season of giving.

All women of the Parish are invited to attend the **Rosary Altar Christmas Party**, to be held on Monday evening, **December 5th**. Cost of the buffet is \$20 per person, and if you are able, a small gift for a cancer patient at Rosary Hill. There will be an optional "grab bag" for \$15. For information & reservations, call Carolyn Mesler (963-2622) or Maryanne Romano (963-8885).

Rosary Altar Society's Bus Trip Radio City for the Christmas Show Wednesday, December 7th

The package includes the bus, lunch & an almost all new show. For information and reservations, please call Nancy on 376-2025.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES: Strengthening Families and Resolving Crisis: Each year more than 3,000 families are helped to stay together through services that prevent children from being placed in foster care; 4,000 families are given financial assistance in a crisis and 26,000 helped with social services and counseling - all by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York. To learn more visit www.catholiccharitiesny.org.

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.



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

EUCHARISTIC DEVOTION: Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us for this most efficacious prayer.

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.



LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

- The **budgeted** Collection for last Sunday was \$6400.00.
- The **actual** Collection for last Sunday was \$6396.85.
- The Collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development totaled \$1906.30.

May God bless and reward all your sacrifices for the Parish!

PARISH SUPPORT: Next Sunday, December 4th, we will take up a second collection in support of our Parish buildings and grounds. Please, endeavor to donate generously.

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, Alejandra Santander, Amadeu Amorim, Grace Raguso, Andy DeFabritis, Maryann Tolli, Maria Marte, Ed Carpenter, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Dolores Santamarena, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Francis Farrell, Mark Baum, Frank Marra, Christine Bellino, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Dan Seratto, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Eve Gammino, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Mary Ann Berengur, Gene DelBene, Angelina Brusco, Mary Romanchik, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petrulo, Lawrence Girsch, and Cynthia Swiatowicz.

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES, LIVING AND DEAD

Consider giving a loved one or someone who has a special place in your life the graces associated with having a Mass offered on their behalf. You may have a thanksgiving Mass offered for your loved ones or for yourself on such occasions as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc.

Also, you may consider offering the Altar flowers, Altar bread and wine, Altar candles, or lighting the Sanctuary lamp for a week for your intention. Come to the Rectory Office, **Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.** to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.

Saints Peter & Paul Men's Club is sponsoring a **Winter Coat Drive** from November 16th through December 20th, to benefit those in need in the Mount Vernon community. They need new and gently used adult and children's coats. Donation boxes are located in the hallway near the coat rack in the church vestibule or Parish Office, located at 129 Birch Street, Mount Vernon. For information or to schedule a pick up of your donation, call the Parish Office (914 668-9815)

NOVEMBER 27, 2011

Mass Intentions for the Week

First Sunday of Advent

Saturday, November 26 (Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM Frank Nania +

Sunday, November 27

8:30 AM Robert Liddell +

10:00 AM Charles & Stefana Barba +

11:30 AM Anthony DiVenuto +

5:00 PM All the People of Our Parish

Monday, November 28

Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Joseph Frischman +

Tuesday, November 29

Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Michael Petnuch +

Wednesday, November 30

Saint Andrew, apostle

7:00 AM Carolina M. Barbieri +

9:00 AM Lenore Baran +

Thursday, December 1

Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Raymond Shannon, Jr. & Sr. +

Friday, December 2

Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Stephen Hickey +

Saturday, December 3

Saint Francis Xavier, priest

9:00 AM Edythe Lutomski +

Saturday, December 3 (Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM Josephine Giuriceo +

Sunday, December 4

Second Sunday of Advent

8:30 AM Oscar Starckenberg +

10:00 AM All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Frank & Carmela Legio +

5:00 PM Gloria Payne +

PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Dear God,
As an Advent candle is lit
In joyous anticipation of Your Son's nativity,
Remind us always of the reason for our joy.
As the purple of the candles stands for both penance
And atonement for sin,
Give us the grace to do penance for our wrongs,
And to love Christ,
Whose sacrifice atoned for the sins of the whole world.
But just as the rose candle stands
For joy in the midst of suffering and expectation,
Give us the joy of Your Son, Jesus Christ,
Who came into a world that had so longed for its Savior,
And made the angels themselves sing with joy at His birth.
Amen.



ADVENT: A TIME OF PREPARATION

It can be difficult to prepare our lives for Christ
Amidst the busy preparations
Of a material Christmas.
The four weeks before Christmas
Are a time to prepare our families
To celebrate Christ' birth:
To prepare our minds to accept
That God's Son became a baby
And lived and died for us;
To prepare our hearts to accept God's forgiveness,
And to change our ways;
To prepare our souls to receive
God's healing grace through the celebration of Mass;
To take part in not only the work of preparation
But also the hope and joy in the midst of our work.

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SANTA'S WORKSHOP RETURNS

As a fundraiser, St. Bartholomew's Youth Group will be running Santa's Workshop after all the Masses next Sunday morning, December 4th, in the McManus Parish Center. Some of the highlights are:

- Stories and songs with Santa's Elves
- Bring your own camera for photo ops with Santa
- Bring your presents to be wrapped at the Gift Wrap Corner
- Bake Sale opportunity

Stop by with your children, grandchildren, cousins, nieces and nephews - Come and enjoy the fun!

