

THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD

2Sam. 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps. 89:2-5, 27, 29; Rom. 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-28

The context of today's first reading is about David who had grown mighty as king after many bloody battles with his enemies. Finally there is peace in his kingdom and as a symbol of his strength and might, he built a palace for himself. Later it occurred to David that God also needed a symbol of power, thus he proposed to build a Temple for God. To David's disappointment, the Lord rejected his proposal: "Go, tell My servant David, Thus says the Lord: Should you build Me a house to dwell in? It was I Who took you from the pasture and from the care of the flock to be commander of My people Israel. I have been with you wherever you went...I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth..." God's power is not found in magnificent structures, but rather through His works among His people. God was not going to live in a house made of mortar and bricks, but He was going to establish His abode with you and me. That is why, "Forever (you and) I will sing the goodness of the Lord," because in a week's time, at Christmas, Emmanuel – "God with us" – is coming to dwell within us. While we wait, you and I must build Him a house to dwell in our hearts through our sanctity and sacrifices.

It is the fourth Sunday of Advent! The time for our waiting is almost over! The real Santa, Jesus is almost here to bring you and me the real gift of joy and happiness. Yes, there is joy in waiting for a beautiful event to happen. At this time, most children are expectantly waiting to receive gifts from Santa Claus. A child in the eighth grade anticipates and expects to finish and go into high school – a child in high school anticipates and expects to go to college. They do their homework thoroughly and study very hard in order to pass their tests and exams. There is also the anxiety and excitement for one who is waiting for a job offer. There is excitement for a couple that is waiting to get married. There is excitement and anticipation for an impending honeymoon or a vacation with an entirely new experience. As Christians, the excitement and the anticipation of Christmas goes beyond that of a little child expecting to receive a material gift or that of an adult anticipating a vacation of a lifetime. We are expecting the birth of Christ and God's reign in our lives: Emmanuel – "God with us!"

The gift of life is precious, thus, when a mother expects a baby, the entire family expects with her. The couples and other relatives are often excited that a new baby is coming into the family. Mary is expecting a Child – The entire human race expects with her! She is going to give birth to Jesus, the Light and Savior of the world. She is going to give birth to Peace and Love. We are waiting in hope! Today's gospel tells us of the Angel's visit and exhortation to Mary: "Do not be afraid, Mary...you have found favor with God." The time for your waiting is almost over. Christmas is almost here! It's the time for God to reveal *the mystery hidden for many years.*

My dear friends, let me echo the words of the Angel and say to you, "Do not be afraid!" Do not be afraid, because the long reign of sin and darkness is almost over. You, who are weighed down by the guilt of sin – put down by the pain of illness – do not be afraid to take your troubles to Jesus in prayer. When you are overwhelmed by life's demands – depression – broken relationship – addiction – joblessness – you must heed the Lord's exhortation: *Do not be afraid.* Jesus is coming to share in your pains – lighten your burden and take away your pains; *for nothing is impossible for God!* Let expectation of Christ's Coming bring you lasting peace, authentic joy, true healing and fulfilling hope!

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP

PARISH NEWS

The CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE for the SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is as follows:

- Mon., Dec 19 3:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Confessions **will not be heard** on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th.



Throughout the Archdiocese of New York, Advent Reconciliation Monday (Dec 19th) gives Catholics the opportunity to go to any parish for confession between the hours of 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.



CHRISTMAS MASSES

- Sat., Dec. 24 5 p.m. Christmas Vigil Mass
- Sat., Dec. 24 11:30 p.m. Christmas carols, followed by Midnight Mass.
- Sun., Dec. 25 8:30, 10, and 11:30 a.m.
- There will not be a 5 p.m. Mass on Christmas Day

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) will meet this Monday, December 19th, at 7:00 p.m. in the school. All members are encouraged to attend.



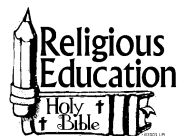
The **ALTAR BREAD & WINE** for this week is donated in loving memory of the deceased members of the Magzag and DiPaolo families by Dolores and Tony DiPaolo.

The **SANCTUARY LAMP** for this week will be lit in loving memory of Leonard Revellese.



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.

Religious Education Classes will be held as usual this week on Tuesday, December 20th, & Wednesday, December 21st. No classes will be held on Tuesday, December 27th, and Wednesday, December 28th. Classes resume on Tuesday, January 3rd.



All Catholic children attending public schools should enroll in a religious education program. Please call (476-6676) for more information.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



By the PASTOR

Some of you may have noticed that the Church's sidewalk by Roosevelt Street has just been repaved. Over the years, the condition of the sidewalk has been deteriorating, and we needed to fix it in order to avoid any consequential liability to our Church. More importantly, it had to be fixed in order to add beauty and dignity to the exterior of our place of worship.

As you know we recently completed the installation of new light fixtures and exit signs in the Church. New lighting fixtures have also been installed in the Monsignor McManus Parish Center. All these projects have been done now to further beautify our church as we celebrate Christmas as a family, welcoming Christ Who brings lasting joy, peace and happiness.

You all should be proud of what we have been to do, because, absolutely, without your sacrifices, prayers and support we would not have been able to achieve all that we have accomplished this year. I thank God for you and pray that He blesses you and your family during this Christmas season and always. Thank you very much!

**DONATE YOUR OLD CAR – HELP THOSE IN NEED
RECEIVE TAX DEDUCTION OF \$500+**

Cars for Help, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, is working to strengthen individual churches and various Catholic charities through vehicle donations. The process is fast, easy, and requires just a phone call (630 595-9272) or visit to their website at www.carsforhelp.com. You can donate a vehicle in any condition, even severely broken or crashed. **With mention of this bulletin, 25% of your vehicle donation proceeds will go directly to St. Bartholomew's Church.**

The **CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** will meet this **Wednesday, December 21st, 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.

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.



Because the first Sunday of the month falls on New Year's Day, the Youth Group will meet on Sunday, January 8th, at 6 p.m.

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.



LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

- The **budgeted** Collection for last Sunday was **\$6400.00.**
- The **actual** Collection for last Sunday was **\$5554.40.**
- **Collection in support for Retired Religious** was **\$1705.75.**
- **The Collection for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception** was **\$1830.35.**

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

YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE PARISH: Please as you consider donating to your parish this Christmas, I sincerely request that you try to donate as generously as possible. I plead that you try to increase your gift from what you donated last year; but if that is not possible, please make an effort to donate just as much as last year. Your Christmas donation helps us to take care of the poor and the general needs of the parish. Thank you!

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, 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, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Mary Ann Berengur, Gene DelBene, Angelina Brusco, Mary Romanchik, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petruolo, Cynthia Swiatowicz, Rose Botcheller, Silvia Georgi, and Angelo Capobianco.

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, **Mon. – Fri., 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.** to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.

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

DECEMBER 18, 2011

Mass  for the
Intentions Week

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 17 (Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM Robert Tolli +

Sunday, December 18

8:30 AM Ethel Castagnozzi +

10:00 AM Michael E. Albanese, Sr. +

11:30 AM For All the People of Our Parish

5:00 PM Henry Bergmann +

Monday, December 19

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Roberto & Pasqua Capuano & Family +

9:00 AM Joseph Leggerio +

Tuesday, December 20

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM John O'Donnell +

Wednesday, December 21

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Luigi & Maria Loreta Lucchetti +

9:00 AM Thomas & Ita Keane +

Thursday, December 22

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Marcello Barcello +

9:00 AM Lucas Vazquez +

Friday, December 23

Advent Weekday

7:00 AM Carmela & Frank Gerace +

9:00 AM Leonard Revellese +

Saturday, December 24

Late Advent Weekday

9:00 AM Gloria Brusco Flanagan +

Sat., December 24 (Christmas Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM Elizabeth & Carl Laredo +

Sunday, December 25

Nativity of the Lord - Christmas

12 Midnight For All the People of Our Parish

8:30 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +

10:00 AM Brusco & Nanoia Families

11:30 AM Deceased Members of Zucconi Family +

GIVING GIFTS

At the Savior's birth,
Magi from the East presented gifts
Of gold, frankincense and myrrh,
Reflecting Christ's kingship, divine
nature,
And human nature subject to death.



Though the magi once worshiped the gods of their land,
They knew before them was a king greater than all kings
And a God greater than all gods they'd known.
As we buy or make gifts for one another this Christmas,
May we remember amid the hustle, bustle and commotion
That Christmas gift giving honors our Savior and Lord,
Who came to dwell among us as one like ourselves.
May we remember that the giving of gifts
Was a sign of love
Begun in response to the greatest gift of all from God:
The only-begotten Son.

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CHRISTMAS WREATH DONATIONS

Thank you to the parishioners who have
donated the Christmas wreathes that
adorn our church walls:

- Fran Caruso in memory of Frank & Regina Bartolomeo and Frank Bartomomeo III
- Janet Gregorio & Family in memory of Albert Gregorio
- Ann Hoy in memory of Anne Shefler
- Anne McShane in memory of Edna & George McShane
- Kristen Pires in memory of Anthony Inrieri
- Maureen Scarpelli in memory of Sharon & Eddie Siravakian, the Wyda Family, and in honor of the living and deceased members of the McElmeel & Scarpelli Families.

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JOY TO THE WORLD

The *Dictionary of North American Hymnology* lists "Joy to the World" as the most published Christmas carol in North America. Written by the great English hymn composer Isaac Watts, "Joy to the World" is his setting of Psalm 98:4-9. It first appeared in 1719, and is a good example of Watts' reinterpretation of the psalms into a Christian context. The tune we use today for this familiar carol came a century later. It first showed up in 1833 in the Collections of Tunes by Thomas Hawkes with an annotation "From Handel." The carol is easy to sing with a repetitive refrain in each verse. With the first verse proceeding straight down the scale, the melody is a comfortable reach for most voices making it a rousing carol for Christmas. Sing it joyfully this Christmas!

