Let the Light Enter—Advent Reflections 2019

Week 3 Dec. 15—"Here Is Your God"

The feast of Christmas invites us to remember how Christ the Light has entered into our world, to celebrate the ways in which we experience his presence among us now, and to anticipate his final coming which will banish darkness and fear for all time.

• Listen – "Tell what you see and hear," Jesus says. "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor hear good news."
• Remember – how I and my loved ones have experienced the Light: A relationship restored? An illness cured? A worry relieved? An addiction broken?
• Anticipate – how the Light of the World desires to heal my brokenness, absolve my weakness, and expel my fears. How can I be a Light that heals and restores the poor?
Wednesday-Friday 11:30-11:50 am
7:00 pm Evening Prayer for the World
Saturday 4:00 pm
Sunday 8:30 am, Sunday 11:30 am

**Readings for the week of December 15, 2019**

**Wednesday:** Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25

**Thursday:** Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 [cf. 8]/Lk 1:5-25

**Friday:** Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 7c and 10b]/Lk 1:26-38

**Saturday:** Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45

**Next Sunday:** Is 7:10-14/ Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24

**©LPi**
This Coming Week

Sunday, December 15
6:00 pm Marriage Encounter Community Mtg.—call the church office for location

Monday, December 16
6:30 pm Buds & Blossoms Garden Club Mtg.—Scallon Hall

Tuesday, December 17
8:00 am Quilting Club & Social Grace Rm.
1:00 pm Legion of Mary Mtg. Scallon Hall
1:30 pm Bible Sharing Meet at Bridges Senior Living
4:30-6 pm Community Meals Scallon Hall
5:15 pm Finance Com. Mtg. Rectory
5:30 pm Church cleaning Church
6:30 pm Parish Pastoral Council Mtg. Scallon Hall
6:30 pm Angels’ Choir practice Church

Wednesday, December 18
6:30 pm Voices for God Choir practice Church
7:00 pm Evening Prayer for the World Scallon Hall

Thursday, December 19
6:30 pm Learning English Class Grace Rm.

Friday, December 20
6:00 pm All Choirs practice Church
6:00 pm Decorating of Church for Christmas Church
6:30 pm Learning English Class Grace Rm.

Saturday, December 21
6:00 pm Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day Scallon Hall

Sunday, December 22
Food Collection Sunday for Community Meals

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 17
12:05 pm +Margaret Gomes

Wednesday, December 18
12:05 pm +Margaret Gomes

Thursday, December 19
12:05 pm +Mary Frances Anderson

Friday, December 20
12:05 pm +Carol Kress

Saturday, December 21
4:00 pm +Ev Kruth

Sunday, December 22
9:00 am +Werner & Frances Even
12:00 pm +Florentina Ramirez and Francisco Vazquez
4:00 pm +Mark Wellner
Un saludo muy fraternal hermanos y hermanas en Cristo.

Celebramos, hoy el tercer domingo de Adviento. Notarán que se enciende la vela de color de rosa en nuestra corona de Adviento. Este domingo se conoce tradicionalmente como el domingo "Gaudete" que significa "alégrese" y da un tono de expectativa gloriosa al nacimiento y a la segunda venida del Señor.

En esta preparación de este tiempo especial de Adviento, me gustaría compartir, el peligro que representa para fines de reflexión el tiempo de navidad mercantil.

Y, me gustaría, hacer una pequeña reflexión acerca de esto. Debemos de estar conscientes de lo que es la navidad en realidad. La navidad es un tiempo de dar, es verdad, pero es tiempo de dar amor, de regalar el perdón con quienes estemos molestos, dar tiempo de reconciliación, de unión, de fraternidad. No debemos de perder de vista esto, amados hermanos. Hoy en día, con el capitalismo, el mercantilismo, la ley de oferta y demanda... la navidad se reduce a comprar, endeudarse, y estresarse porque no damos, y a enojarnos porque no nos dan...

Es muy bueno dar cosas a las personas que queremos, pero, ¿Hay alguna razón por la que sea solo en navidad?, es decir, ¿Por qué no regalamos cosas en cualquier día normal?

Santa Claus es un viejito "chonchito" vestido con los colores de un santo católico, el cual se celebra el 6 de diciembre... preguntó: ¿Tiene algo del espíritu navideño ese señor? ¡No! Todo, y yo diría que, casi nada es verdad en la publicidad y en la mercadotecnia. Promocionan, por ejemplo, una hamburguesa deliciosa, grande, apetecible y... vas a comprarla y resulta que no era tan grande y apetecible como se veía, ni tan sabrosa como lo daba a entender el que la comía, ni tan barata como decían... ¿Entonces?

Me aventaría comentarles esto, pero, en mi país, generalmente, cada negocio o fábrica hacen posadas para sus empleados... posadas donde nunca se reza el rosario, ni se pide posada, no se invita a los de afuera, sólo a sus empleados, con la excusa de dar un beneficio. Santa Claus, en una de estas posadas, fue robado, se lo llevaron y se lo donaron a otra posada... posada donde nunca se reza el rosario, ni se pide posada, ni se invita a los de afuera y sólo roban en posadas.

La navidad es un tiempo de dar, es verdad, pero es tiempo de partícipe, de fraternidad. No debe ser un tiempo de hacer eso, sino de formar parte de ello. Sin embargo, esto es lo que hace hoy en día, y ni se habla de dar y ni se habla de parte de Dios por ninguna parte y, eso es algo de espíritu navideño? Y sin comentar el incremento de los accidentes, heridos y muertos que dejan esas "posadas".

¿Hay alguna razón por la que sea solo en navidad?, es decir, ¿Por qué no celebramos en navidad el nacimiento de Jesús...junto a Jesús? ¿Qué estás dispuesto a entregarle?

Creo yo que la pregunta que les propongo a todos ustedes que leen esto es: ¿Qué celebramos, realmente, en navidad? Si se celebra el nacimiento de Jesús... ¿Por qué? ¿Por qué no celebramos en navidad el nacimiento de Jesús...junto a Jesús? ¿Qué estás dispuesto a entregarle?

¿Por qué no celebramos en nacimiento de Jesús...junto a Jesús precisamente? Eso es, precisamente, a lo que me refiero cuando les he pedido hacer la diferencia ante las tendencias de nuestra sociedad. Yo me niego, rotundamente, a ir donde va Vicente... ¿A qué nos vamos a mover, a qué nos vamos a orientar?

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Hagamos la diferencia en esta Navidad festejando al Niño que nace, regalándole la promesa de ser buenos cristianos. Sigamos profundizando en este Adviento... Con cariño... diacono Real
Fr. Pierre’s message from the 2nd Sunday of Advent

Last Sunday we said that Advent calls us to slow down in order to make room for God in our lives. Advent calls us to seek directions from the angels, the Holy Spirit, and people like John the Baptist, Isaiah, and Mary, who call us to conversion. One of these people we focus on today is John the Baptist. John was the “man,” when it comes to the Gospel, this prophet was not afraid of anyone. He knew that he had a mission and would fulfill it no matter what. And he didn’t try to gain the favor of anyone by smoothing his words or trying to be “nice” for the sake of likability. When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.” To the king he said: “it is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” He was tough! But, you know, this unshakable man will say later on: “I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals.” This is humility. He recognizes that in front of God the only attitude is to bow and to be humble as a child. There is much to learn from JB today, but I would like to point out three things for the sake of precision and conciseness.

First, it is unacceptable for us to let people who don’t have anything to say speak louder than us who have the good news of the Gospel. There are all sorts of people out there hammering propagandas while we Christians keep quiet. Knowing the good news of Jesus, we cannot keep quiet. Remember it is said in the Bible, “If you are ashamed of me and my message, Jesus will be ashamed of you when he comes in his glory.”

Second, say what you mean and mean what you say. It is not enough to only point out what should be done from outside, but come and do something. John didn’t preach a message he didn’t live. John wore clothing made of camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. Advent is not a matter of waiting only, but of changing your life.

Third: recognize your imperfections make an effort to change them by conforming yourself to our Lord Jesus. That was the big problem of the Pharisees and the Sadducees who came to JB. These guys were perfect; the problem was always the others. These guys clearly forgot that there is no place for the arrogant in heaven. The arrogant one – Satan – and his followers were cast out of heaven. So it’s important to let go of old mindsets, false certitudes, and unhealthy habits that keep us in slavery. Don’t miss the occasion in this Advent to ask Jesus to change in you all that is not of him so that you may become all God has created you to be. Let us follow the good shepherd by following the paths he has set before us. May Jesus help us all! Our Lady Queen of Peace... pray for us! - Fr. Pierre

Parish Happenings

Christmas Church Cleaning
Please mark your calendars to come and help make our church clean and beautiful for the Holiday Season! The event will be on Tuesday, December 17 starting at 5:30 pm. We need many volunteers to help this job be completed quickly as this is a busy time of year for everyone. Please bring cleaning rags & towels, dust cloths...even a extra few vacuums would be very helpful. Cleaning solutions and sprays will be provided. Many hands will make light work and will be so very appreciated! For questions contact Treese Pilkington.

Help Needed to Help Decorate the Church for Christmas
Please come Friday, December 20 at 6:00 pm to the church to help with the decorating of the church. Your help is very much needed and appreciated!

Area Communual Penances
St. Mary Parish, Waverly
Sunday, December 15, 4:00pm.
Blessed Sacrament Parish, Waterloo
Sunday, December 22, 4:00pm.

2020 Catholic Church Calendars
Calendars are available for you or your family on the tables at the entrances to the church. We’d like to thank Hagarty-Waychoff-Grarup Funeral Home for their generous purchase of calendars for our parish.

Christmas Altar Flowers and Environment
If you would like to make a donation toward Christmas decorations you can do this by placing your donation in an envelope and placing it in the collection basket on Sunday. Special envelopes are included in your bulletin this week and can also be found on the tables at each entrance to the church. Donations may also be mailed in to the church office. If you would like your donation in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving of a blessing, please remember to write your intentions on the envelope. Thank you.

Queen of Peace Parish Christmas & New Year Masses

December 24 - Christmas Eve 5:30 PM (bi-lingual)

December 25 – Christmas Day 9:00 AM & 12:00 Noon (Spanish)
December 31 – New Year’s Eve 5:30 PM Vigil Mass (bi-lingual)
January 1 – New Year’s Day HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION Mass at 9:00 AM
HIGH SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Faith formation is offering a high school religious education class second semester at Sacred Heart. The class is for 9th and 10th grade students and the focus will be the life of Jesus, scripture and prayer. Class begins on January 8th. Registration can be done online at: www.waterloocatholics.org by clicking the registration button on the homepage. Cost is $45/student and the registration deadline is January 3rd. Please call the faith formation office if you have any questions: 319-233-0498

RELIGIOUS GIVE THANKS
“Thank you’ hardly seems adequate to convey what it means to us,” says a Catholic sister of the financial assistance her community received from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Prayer-filled thanks for your donation to last week’s collection.

TITHING INFORMATION
Collections received by Sunday, December 29, or Monday, December 30, 2019 will be included in calendar year 2019. Collections received on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 will be included in calendar year 2020. Additionally, any donations received in the mail must be postmarked by December 30, 2019 to be included in the 2019 calendar year. Tax statements will be available in January.

Adult Formation

CATHOLIC INFORMATION MEETING – Sunday, January 5. 9:15-10:15am. Rectory Classroom, Sacred Heart Parish. This meeting is for any adult or young adult who is interested in learning more about or joining the Catholic Church. For information contact Dave Cushing at 319-233-0498 (email dbqwcaf@dbqarch.org)

RITE OF CHRISTIAN RECEPTION – Starts Sunday, January 12. 9:15-10:30am. Rectory Classroom, Sacred Heart Parish. The Rite of Reception is an eight-week program for adults and young adults who have been baptized in another Christian church and wish to join the Catholic Church. For information contact Dave Cushing at 319-233-0498 (email dbqwcaf@dbqarch.org)

WINTER MINI-RETREAT – Sunday, January 26, 1:00-4:00pm. COR at 220 E. 4th St. Dr. John Waldmeir, professor of Religious Studies at Loras College, will present an overview of the Gospel of Matthew, which is the source of Sunday Gospel readings during ordinary time in 2020. $10/person; $5/students. Learn more at: https://waterloocatholics.org/winter-mini-retreats

ARCHDIOCESAN WOMEN’S CONFERENCE
Keep Christ in Christmas by purchasing a day of prayer, laughter, conversation, Mass with Archbishop Jackels for your wife, mother, sister, daughter, friend at the 2020 Archdiocesan Women’s Conference, Beauty in Christ: Fearless! Faithful! On Fire! Super dynamic speakers Hallie Lord and Katie Prejean will set your loved ones on fire for faith on Saturday, January 25, 2020 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Cedar Rapids, IA, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM (doors open at 7:00 AM). Discount rates apply until Monday, January 6, 2020. To register go to: https://archwomensconference.org/registration/. (Financial assistance is available.)

COME HOME -
Looking for a way to work on your relationship with God? Here is a wonderful opportunity to do just that! A Christian Experience Weekend (CEW) will be held at the Riverview Conference Center in Cedar Falls. The weekend will be held on March 27-29, 2020. The weekend is coed and registration is required. Brochures are available and for more information contact Mike Dudley (319)350-6764.

SPIRITUAL SEEKERS
Wednesday, December 18. 7:00pm, COR at 220 E. 4th St. The Catholic Parishes in Waterloo host this discussion for Catholics who feel disconnected from the faith community, who feel "spiritual" but not "religious," or are searching for a deeper sense of faith in their lives. This is an opportunity to discuss your past, present or future relationship to organized religion in a safe, nonjudgmental environment.
• For information, contact Dave Cushing at 319-234-9912 (email: dbqwcaf@dbqarch.org)
• Learn more online at waterloocatholics.org/faith-losing-my-faith

LETTER TO A SUFFERING CHURCH
Are you interested in discussing Bishop Robert Barron’s book, “Letter to a Suffering Church”? If you have read the book and would like to discuss it, please register for a discussion group now. Groups will meet after the holidays for one time, on a day and time chosen by participants.
> Register for a discussion group here: http://bit.do/suffering-church

Learn More
More information about opportunities for adults is available online at: waterloocatholics.org/bulletin-board
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