

CHRIST THE KING

BENTON, PENNSYLVANIA

DECEMBER 17, 2023

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*Joy
Alegria*



Advent Adviento

A TIME OF JOY THAT NO SUFFERING CAN DRIVE AWAY

Advent is not only the time of the presence and the awaiting of the Eternal God; since it is both of these, it is in a unique manner also a time of joy, a joy that dwells within us and cannot be driven away by suffering.

Perhaps the easiest way to understand this is to look at the inner meaning of our Advent customs. Almost all of these are rooted in passages of Scripture that the Church employs in this time as words of her prayer. Here, the faithful people have, as it were, translated Scripture into visible signs.

For example, we read in Psalm 96: "Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord, for he comes." The liturgy has expanded this, drawing on other texts in the Psalms, to form the following affirmation: "The mountains and hills will sing praise before God, and all the trees of the wood will clap their hands, for the Lord, the ruler, is coming to rule for ever."

The Christmas trees we decorate are simply an attempt to make these words visible. The Lord is here—our ancestors believed this and knew this, and so the trees had to go out to meet him, they had to bow down before him, the trees themselves had to become a song of praise to their Lord. The same certainty of faith led them to make the words about the singing mountains and hills a reality. They gave a voice to the mountains, and their singing resounds down through the centuries into our own days, letting us sense something of the nearness of the Lord—for it is only he who could give men such melodies.

Even a custom like Christmas baking, apparently such an external activity, has its roots in the Church's Advent liturgy, which makes its own the glorious words of the Old Testament in these days of the declining year: "In that day, the mountains will drip sweetness, and the rivers will flow with milk and honey." People of old found in such words the embodiment of their hopes for a world redeemed. And once again, our ancestors celebrated Christmas as the day on which God truly came.

When he comes at Christmas, he distributes his honey (so to speak). Truly, the earth must flow with this honey on that day: where he is present, all bitterness disappears, and there is harmony between heaven and earth, between God and man. The honey and the sweets are a sign of this peace, of concord and of joy.

This is why Christmas has become the feast when we give presents, when we imitate the God who has given his own self and has thereby given us once again that life which truly becomes a gift only when the "milk" of our existence is sweetened by the "honey" of being loved. And this love is not threatened by any death, any infidelity, or any meaninglessness.

Ultimately, all this finds its unity in the joy that God has become a child who encourages us to trust as children trust and to give and receive gifts.

It may be difficult for us to accept this joyful music when we are tormented by questions, when we are afflicted both by bodily illness and psychological problems, and these would tend to make us rebel against the God whom we cannot understand. But this child is a sign of hope precisely for those who are oppressed. And this is why he has awakened an echo so pure that its consoling power can touch the hearts even of unbelievers.

Perhaps the right way to celebrate Advent is to let the signs of God's love that we receive in this period penetrate our soul, without resistance, without questions and quibbling. Warmed by these signs, we can then receive in full confidence the immeasurable kindness of this child who alone had the power to make the mountains sing and to transform the trees of the wood into a praise of God.

ADVENT SCHEDULE

Sunday December 17th:

- CYE Christmas Program after 9am Mass
- Brunch after Program

Sunday December 24th

- 9am Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent
(Saturday Vigil December 23 at 4pm)

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday December 24th:

**4pm at
Christ the King**

**5pm & 7:30pm
at St. Columba**

Monday December 25th:

**9am at
St. Columba**

STEWARDSHIP
DECEMBER 10

Offering	\$1680.00
Christmas	\$100.00
Flowers	\$100.00
Immaculate Conception	\$345.00
Rainy Day	\$125.00
Retirement Religious	\$563.00
Total	\$2913.00



JESSE TREE

We are buying gifts for the Benton Head Start and the Veterans that live at the Orangeville Manor.

Gifts are due back the weekend of December 16th & 17th.

Thank you for your generosity

HALLOW APP

We are excited to share with you a very special gift from the Knights of Columbus that will help you incorporate prayer into your daily lives. We have partnered with Hallow, a Catholic prayer and meditation app that helps people deepen their relationship with God through audio-guided prayer sessions. The app is the #1 Prayer app in the world and has over 10,000 sessions to choose from.

Specifically for Advent, Hallow has created a Pray25 Challenge. You'll even have access to a prayer companion to follow along and jot down your reflections each day, as well as beautiful Advent and Christmas music collections.

This Advent we have partnered with the Hallow team to provide Hallow access to all parishioners for FREE through Easter.

If you still need help with the Hallow App, Ken Houck will be available after Mass on Sunday, December 17th, or you can call him at 570-951-2608.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION AT ST. MARTHA'S CHURCH

260 Bonnaville Rd. Stillwater, PA

every Tuesday following the 8:30 a.m. Mass until 9:00 p.m.

Looking for Adorers to spend one hour in the afternoon.

Call Rebecca Micca at 570-256-7329

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 16

Joyce & Vincent Nardo by Mary Ellen Neal

Sunday, December 17

Adam Capriola (Birthday Blessings) by Mark & Patricia Sullivan

Sister Angela Pikus, OCD by 3rd Order Carmelites

Monday, December 18

Betty Hnylanski (Birthday Blessings) by Justa Sabo

Saturday, December 23

Marilyn LaBonte by Joe LaBonte

Sunday, December 24

(A.M.) People of the Parish

(P.M.) Deceased members of the Bauman & Boiwka Families by Lee Ann & Joe Boiwka

Mass intentions are available in memory of, or in honor of a loved one. The donation for having a Mass said for a personal request is \$10.00. You can drop your request in the collection or contact the parish office.

LITURGICAL ROLES

Lector

Dec 17 - Paul Haden
Dec 24 - (a.m.) Anne Eustice
(p.m.) Pete Yastishock

Extraordinary Minister

Dec 17 - Patricia Sullivan
Dec 24(a.m.) Meg Geffken
(p.m.) Tamara Lindner

Collection Stewards

Dec 17 - Joe & Lee Ann Boiwka
December 24 - Lee Ann & Joe Boiwka

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

In today's readings Isaiah, Paul, and John the Baptist rejoice because they have Good News. God is with them and working through them. They are anointed, blessed, and sent to do God's will. On this Gaudete Sunday, we, too, find reason to rejoice. Let us rejoice in sharing the Good News of Christ.

In the first reading, Isaiah is anointed by the Lord and sent to announce a day of vindication by our God. In the second reading, Paul encourages the Thessalonians to always rejoice, pray, and give thanks. In the Gospel, John the Baptist testifies to the light and says he is the voice of one crying out in the desert, "make straight the way of the Lord."

POINSETTIAS

If you are interested in having a flower on the Altar in Memory of, or In Honor of a loved one, please pick up an order form on the back table. You can drop it in the collection or bring to the Parish Office. The donation is \$10.00 per flower.



Christmas Wafers: Oplatky (“angel bread”)

Christmas wafers are available on the back counter for a \$5.00 suggested donation.

2024 Calendars

Pick up on the table as you walk in the Church.
Thank you to our sponsor Bruce McMichael
/McMichael Funeral Home.

THIRD ORDER CARMELITES OF DANVILLE

On Sunday, December 17th, at 1:00 p.m. you are cordially invited to attend the Carmelite Ritual and Mass at Christ the King. Father Andrew will be celebrating the Mass.

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Our women and men religious offer gratitude. A sister shares, “I thank the Lord for all who give. I don’t think we would make it without them.” Thank you for giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious last week. Your donation makes a difference in the lives of elderly women and men religious. To learn more about how your gift helps, visit retiredreligious.org.

UNBORN CANDLE DONATIONS

\$3.00/ week,
\$5.00/ 2 weeks or
\$10.00/ month
Month of December - Memory of Nick Sabo

BENTON FOOD BANK

For the month of December we will be collecting Microwave Popcorn due to the Food Bank by December 17th. The Food Bank at the N4C’s is the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

2023 DIOCESAN ANNUAL CAMPAIGN AS OF NOVEMBER 2023

Parish Goal for 2023:	\$8,509.74
Total Paid:	\$12,290.00
Outstanding Pledges:	\$150.00
Total Committed:	\$12,440.00
Over/(under)goal in cash:	\$3,780.26
Number of Donors:	31
Registered Households:	120
Percentage of Participation:	25.83%

CYE NEWS

December Updates

December 17 - Kelsey family greeters at Mass and Presentation of the gifts

December 17 - Christmas program - All grades
Parish Christmas brunch

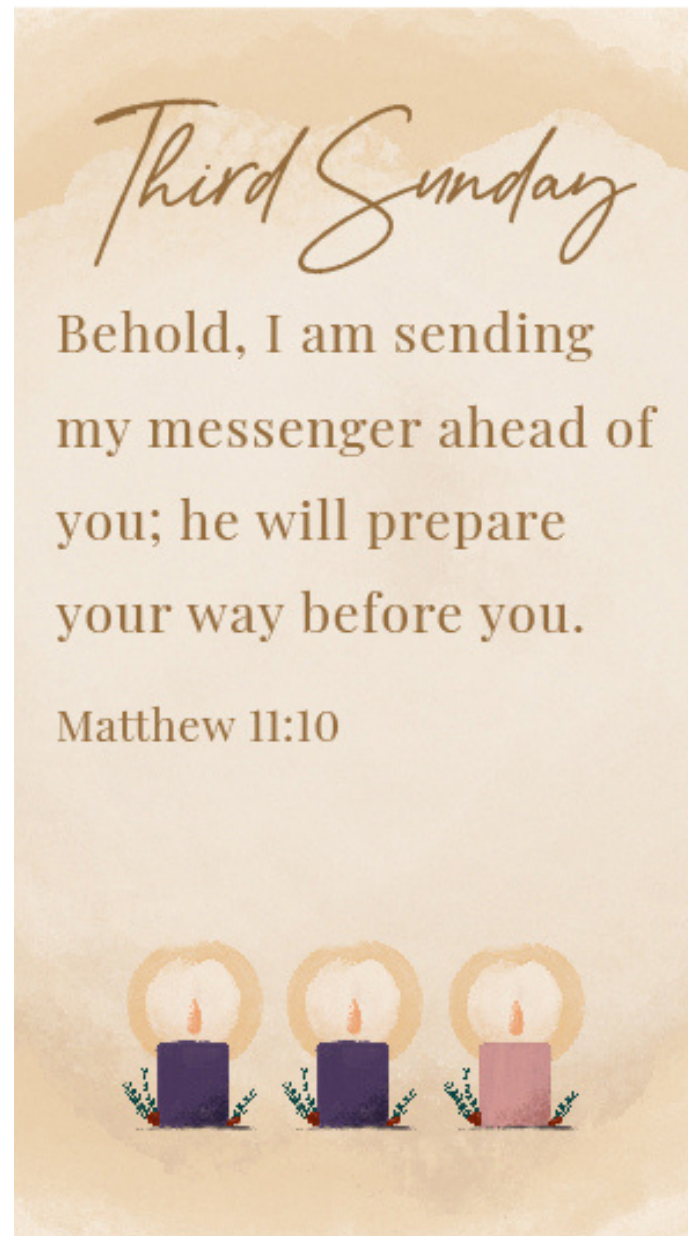
Many blessings to all during this Advent/Christmas season

MONASTERY PANTRY

The sisters at Holy Annunciation Monastery are so grateful for your orders. All items will be available to be picked up at Christ the King on December 16th before the 4 p.m. Mass.

**IN YOUR PRAYERS, PLEASE
REMEMBER:**

- INTENTIONS OF THE HOLY FATHER,
- ALL PRIESTS INCLUDING:
 - FR. MOWERY
 - FR. ST. HILAIRE
 - FR. SOLA
- LISA BAHRE
- MICHAEL BARDI
- MAUREEN BECK
- LORENA BENNET
- CANDICE BERGER
- CHRISTINA CAPRIOLA
- RUSSELL CASTROGIOVANNI
- COBERT FAMILY
- HONOR DELL
- RYAN DELL
- CHRIS ERTWINE
- FARWELL FAMILY
- VIVIAN WHITENIGHT HYNICK
- BOB KALIE
- MARGARET KALIE
- AUSTIN KELSEY
- JOSEPH LABONTE
- MARY ANN LEVAN
- DOROTHY O'HANDLEY
- NANCY OMAN
- RICH SCAVONE
- JACKIE SCHERER
- JUDY SERRA
- MARK & PATRICIA SULLIVAN
- LENA TUNAITIS
- MIKE VERTUCCI
- MARISA WHITENIGHT
- JOSEPHINE WILSON
- NANCY WISBAR
- SONNY WOMELSDORF
- MARY ANN ZEVENY



**OUR LADY OF EXPECTATION
DECEMBER 18**

Devotion to Mary under this title is observed in Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy, and elsewhere one week before Christmas. The Blessed Virgin, about to give birth, awaits with joy the arrival of her divine Son, the Prince of Peace.