

LIGHT A CANDLE FOR PEACE

Over the past four years there have been various commemorations of the hundredth anniversary of the First World War, concluding with the celebration of the armistice at 11:00 am on November 11, 1918.

During all of the celebrations, we have been encouraged to reflect on war—on the horrors of it, the tremendous loss of life, the ongoing effects in the lives of the citizens of the various nations involved.

Various groups within our Church community have made efforts to focus on building peace during these past four years. Their point was not to downplay the sacrifices made to ensure continued freedom in our world but to help us focus on the notion of being peace-builders.

This Advent, in response to the call of Jesus in the Beatitudes to be peacemakers, we are invited to light a candle in a window as a sign of our commitment to pray for peace and to work to build a world of peace. A simple candle in a window (probably electric for safety sake!) can be a reminder to us to pray and work for peace as well as a catalyst to share that idea with others when they ask about the candle.

*Light a candle
for peace
in the world*



A new heart I will give you, and a

NEW SPIRIT

I will put within you. Ez. 36:26a

December 2, 2018

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DECEMBER HAPPENINGS

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Are you wondering what happened to the Sacrament of Reconciliation? How do we understand and celebrate it? Come to a formation session to learn and reflect.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12

7:00 P.M.—8:30 PM

Main Floor Meeting Room, Parish Office

RECONCILIATION SERVICES

December 17

12:00 Noon

7:00 pm

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CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

December 24

5:00 p.m. Family Celebration

9:00 p.m. Mass at Night

12:00 Midnight Mass at Night

December 25

11:00 a.m. Mass during the Day

FEAST OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

December 31

5:00 p.m.

January 1

11:00 a.m.



THEMES OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

There are several great themes that pervade this Gospel.

First, it is the **Gospel of Great Pardons** and this is unique to Luke. This is evident in the story of the sinful woman who anoints the feet of Jesus in 7: 36 – 50. It is also evident in the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son in chapter 15 as well as the story of Zacchaeus in chapter 19.

Second, Luke's Gospel is the **Gospel of Universal Salvation** fulfilling the vision of Isaiah: "Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low..." (Isaiah 40: 4 – 5). The genealogy of Jesus in Luke is not back to David (as in Matthew) but back to Adam: "And all flesh will see the salvation of God" (3: 6). Not everyone heeds the message: "Jesus has come to call sinners, not the righteous" (5: 32). Furthermore, "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine sinners who have no need of repentance" (15: 7). And Jesus breaks the stereotype of outcasts: it is the Samaritan who cares for the wounded man on the side of the road (10: 33) and it is the Samaritan leper who returns to give thanks to God (17: 11).

Third, Luke's Gospel is the **Gospel of the Poor**. We see this in the simple circumstances of the birth of Jesus in Luke's infancy narrative. While Matthew speaks about the poor in spirit in his list of beatitudes (5: 3), Luke speaks about the poor (6: 20). He warns about the danger of riches (6: 24). He tells the story of the rich man and Lazarus and their reversed fortunes in the bosom of Abraham (16: 19 – 31). Luke refers to the poor and the rich more than any other Gospel: "How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (18: 22). It is in Luke's Gospel that we find Jesus commend the poor widow who puts her last coins in the treasury (21: 1 – 4). Finally, Jesus has come to bring good news to the poor (4: 18).

Fourth, Luke's Gospel is the **Gospel of Absolute Renunciation**. The disciples must leave all things: "When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed Him" (5: 11). Jesus asked of them total dedication: "If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother... and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (14: 25 – 27). Where Matthew says simply to "store up your treasure in heaven" (6: 20), Luke says: "Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven..." (12: 33). Jesus is an example of absolute renunciation through His suffering "But He must first suffer greatly and be rejected by this generation" (17: 25).

Fifth, Luke's Gospel is the **Gospel of Prayer and the Holy Spirit**. There are many examples of this. Luke portrays Jesus at prayer before every important event: at His Baptism (3: 21), in choosing the 12 apostles (6: 12), at Peter's profession of faith (9: 18), at the Transfiguration (9: 28), in teaching the Our Father (11: 1), and, most poignantly, in the Garden of Gethsemane (22: 41). Luke constantly refers to the Holy Spirit: (1: 15, 35, 41, 67; 2: 25-27; 3: 16, 22; 4: 1, 14, 18; 10: 21; 11: 13; 12: 10,12). It is not a bad idea to look these passages up and use them for prayer.

Sixth, the Gospel of Luke is the **Gospel of Messianic Joy**. The Spirit, possessed by Jesus, spreads joy and peace among those who listen to Him. While Matthew's Gospel has a serious, almost majestic, setting and Mark has the more relaxed candor of a diary, Luke rebounds with joy after one has had the time to ponder the wonder of what has taken place. Luke tells of the admiration of the crowds for Jesus (5: 26) and that Jesus' followers will be happy and fortunate (6:20-22; 7:23; 10:23; 11:2f; 14:14f; 23:29).

Rev. James M. McNamara



ADVENT REFLECTIONS

First Sunday of Advent

[Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36](#)

In today's Gospel, Christ challenges us to look up and see, as there are signs of his coming everywhere – **and they are beautiful**.

The Lord was born into the world to be a great sign of God's love **for each one of us**, and through His ministry, relationships with others and ultimate sacrifice on the cross, He embodied God's perfect love.

One place where we **see God alive in our world** is in the scriptures. The Word of God is active and important to our lives as Christian believers – it is a sign of God's continued care for His people.

In the Transfiguration the apostles are in awe of the Lord. Advent is a season of beauty and magic. Snow is falling, lights are twinkling, and Christ's light is being born into the world.

Where do you see Christ illuminated in this season of light? Where can you keep watch for the Lord and his coming as we prepare for Christmas?

Second Sunday of Advent

[Luke 3:1-6](#)

In today's Gospel, we hear about St. John the Baptist and his important role in preparing **the way of the Lord**.

John the Baptist was a **good news story**. God sent him to share with anyone who would listen that Jesus was on his way and to prepare for his coming. He announced the coming of the Messiah loudly, with **courage and joy!**

St. John the Baptist doesn't have the trendiest outfit, he seems kind of lonely and certainly not what we would imagine a leader to look like. And yet, he had a willing and open heart to **say yes to God's calling** for his life. He used his voice to change the world.

What have you been called to say that matters? What Good News can you share this Advent season to bring hope to others?

Third Sunday of Advent

[Luke 3: 10-18](#)

In today's Gospel, St. John the Baptist challenges us to think of the less fortunate, serve them in love, and to do it all with joy for the Lord. What a perfect time of the year to reflect on a message that speaks to **who we are** as Christian believers.

One of the best ways that we can share the joy of our faith is through acts of service to those in need. Remember, Jesus ate with sinners, healed those that suffered and took time for those who were forgotten. So, too, are we called to share in His ministry by **saying yes** to the opportunity to serve one another in love.

Remember the crucified Lord on Good Friday. God so loved the world that he gave of his only Son - **there is true beauty in sacrifice**. In this season of giving, perhaps the very best gift we can give is that of ourselves.

This Advent, consider how you can share God's love by being at service to another person. **Who in your community needs your help?** How can you step up and make a difference?

Fourth Sunday of Advent

[Luke 3: 26-38](#)

In today's Gospel we hear about the **real M.V.P.** of the Christmas Story; Mary, our Mother. Mary is the perfect example of trusting God's plan and following His will. Mary was a teenager, who had no idea what God had in store for her, but through her willing heart, she brought **SALVATION** into the world. If there is one thing to be learned this Advent, it is that **anyone can change the world!** All we need to do is say yes to God and follow him. We are called to use what we have seen, heard and shared with others to courageously say yes, just like Mary, for "nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1: 37-38).

What blessings have come to your life from trusting God's will? What do you feel God calling you to do that requires your 'yes'?

