

Week of December 9, 2018

MONDAY

Is 35:1-10 * Ps 85:9-14 * Lk 5:17-26

TUESDAY 8:00am Word & Communion

Is 40:1-11 * Ps 96:1-3,10-13 * Mt 18:12-14

WEDNESDAY 8:00am Mass

Zec 2:14-17 * Jdt 13:18-19 * Lk 1:26-38

THURSDAY 8:00am Mass

Is 41:13-20 * Ps 145:1,9-13 * Mt 11:11-15

FRIDAY 9:00am School Mass

Is 48:17-19 * Ps 1:1-4,6 * Mt 11:16-19

SATURDAY 4:30pm Mass

Sir 48:1-4,9-11 * Ps 80:2-3,15-16,18-19 * Mt 17:9-13

SUNDAY 9:30am Mass 2nd Sunday of Advent

Children's Liturgy of the Word & Nursery

Zep 3:14-18 * Is 12:2-6 * Phil 4:4-7 * Lk 3:10-18



Parish Activities

Mon., Dec. 10	5:45pm Chimes Practice
	6:30pm Choir Practice
Tues., Dec. 11	10:00am Scripture Study
	6:30pm RCIA
	7:00pm Bible Study-west campus
Thurs., Dec. 13	7:00pm Penance Service
Sun., Dec. 16	10:30am Children's Choir
	10:45am Religious Education
	5:00pm Youth Ministry Movie Night
	6:30pm Adult Scripture Study



COMMUNAL PENANCE

► Our parish celebration will be this **Thurs., Dec. 13 at 7pm.**

Other Penance services available in the area are:

- Assumption BVM, Larkin Dec. 16 2pm
- Blessed Sacrament, Midland Dec. 19 7pm

Café Kiosk: Check out these new Catholic Updates: *The Liturgical Year – How Christians Celebrate Time*; *The Light of Advent – Season of Hope*; and *The Incarnation – Why God Wanted to Become Human*. Also, info about an upcoming scripture workshop at the Diocesan Center for Ministry: *The Psalms* with Fr. Bill Taylor, Sat., Jan. 12.

Blood Drive: Please donate at the Auburn Area Branch Library, Wednesday, December 19, 1:30-6:30pm. Attempt to donate and be entered to win a \$100 Meijer Gift Card! Make an appointment at miblood.org or call 1-866-642-5663.

Stewardship

Weekly Target: \$10,961.54 * Offering: \$17,651.95
 YTD target thru Nov: \$237,500 * YTD actual thru Nov: \$216,947
 Food Pantry: \$100.00 * Campaign for Human Dev.: \$105.00
 Religious Retirement: \$415.00

Children's Good Deeds: My Good Deed was...

- ...doing two sharing giving trees
- ...saying sorry to my brother.
- ...shoveling snow with my sister
- ...I baked cookies.

Education/Formation

Family Talk Time Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee

What is that unfair thing in the world that you would like to correct?

► **Reflecting on the Word:** In the end, all return to God and are made equal in God's sight. Still, we spend most of our lives building up mountains of work, accomplishments and awards that will someday be no higher than the valleys we tower over. During Advent, we might

consider how we can raise up others in our workplace, community and home. As we do this, we will be building up the Kingdom of God and straightening paths.

► **Living the Word:** By the Second Sunday of Advent, family members may feel anxious from the intensity of the preparations for Christmas. After a family member lights the second candle on the Advent wreath, ask each person to sit quietly and focus on his or her breath. Tell them, as they inhale, to slowly breath in peace and with a sense of resting in God. As they slowly exhale, they can breathe out all the anxiety, worries and busyness that may surround them. Direct the family to breathe in and out a few times. End the exercise by praying for peace.

► **Sacrament of 1st Reconciliation** was celebrated this past Tuesday night with our parish children. We offer our congratulations to Luke Abraham, Kaiya Bragiel, Julianna Grzegorzczuk, Sarah Luptowski, Cloie McCann, Austin Pope, Dain Putt, Mylie Reder, Bryce Sarnowski, Alexa Snawder, Jaclyn Suderman, Jenna Tanner, Josh Tanner, Mitchell Warren and Carlie Wright. Reconciliation is a beautiful way to grow in love and to be more deeply inspired by the spirit of Jesus, given to us at baptism.

► **Penance:** Everyone sins. When we do something that we know is wrong, we have ugly feelings. We feel sad, guilty and ashamed for disobeying God. We want to make things right again. So we need God to forgive us. Psalm 51 can help us ask for God's forgiveness. It is a prayer admitting our sins and asking God to give us a clean heart. We can tell God we are sorry for sin any time at all. We also have the sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation especially for the forgiveness of sins. In this Sacrament we confess our sins to the priest. We hear the words of God's forgiveness. We have peace and joy again. You can prepare for the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation by thinking about these questions: When did you fail to follow God's laws? When did you fail to treat other people with love?

► **Our Lady of Guadalupe** feast day is December 12. In 1531 Mary appeared to an Indian named Juan Diego in Tepeyac, Mexico. When asked by the bishop to produce proof of her appearance, he presented his cloak upon which the Virgin had emblazoned her image. Our Lady of Guadalupe is patroness of the Americas. As Mary appeared to Juan Diego as a humble Aztec maiden, consider your own concern for the poor and lowly as you read her Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55).

Auburn Area Catholic School

► **AACS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:** Please join Preschool-5th grade on Tuesday, December 18, 6:30pm for "**Sing a Song of Christmas**". We hope to see you there!

► **4th & 5th Grade Students** went to the Bay-Arenac Skill Center this week to learn about the many programs they have to offer.

► **Student-decorated Christmas Greetings** were sent to St. Gabriel homebound parishioners and to local assisted living facilities. If you know of someone who would like to receive a monthly greeting from an AACS student, contact Mrs. Chris in the school office at 662-6431.



December Wedding Anniversaries

60 years or more.....	Fred & Lois Grew
50 years or more.....	Peter & Lynne Buda
40 years or more.....	Charles & Marcia Allore
	Randy & Lori Lemuel
30 years or more.....	Randall & Pamela Winters
	John & Patty Leuenberger
10 years or more.....	Jonathan & Talisa Brown
Less than 10 years.....	Gary & Marcene Mrozinski
	Joe & Melody Schalk



From Father Tom's Desk

2nd Sunday of Advent

Sr. Mary McGlone, [Celebration](#)

"The word of God came to John ...in the desert." That is what Luke said to introduce the prophet who would prepare the way of the Lord. According to Luke, John's ministry was the pivotal point in salvation history; the new and final era was coming into being.

The desert was Israel's birthplace. God brought the people out of slavery and then led them on a 40-year desert trek to teach them what it meant to be the people of God. They needed that time to get over their servile identity. They lived those 40 years without the distractions of building homes and businesses; that long experience of being on the move taught them to rely on God alone. When they forgot the lessons of the desert, God sent them into exile for 60 years. In both instances, hardship stripped them of everything so that they could figure out what was essential.

We see something similar in the lives of people who suffer. A cancer diagnosis can force people to clarify the purpose of their life. An unexpected death reminds us that relationships are more important than any activity or achievement. A fire or flood often leaves people with a new sense of the relative value of their belongings. An accident often leaves us thinking about how we might have prevented it. All of the above adjust our vision in ways we probably never would have chosen.

So now in December, while everything in the northern hemisphere jingles with excitement about winter and holidays, the church invites us into the desert with John.

Prepare the Way

McGlone, [Celebration](#)

The word of the Lord came to John in the desert and today he tells us to prepare the way of the Lord. We are called to straighten out twisted communications with words of truth and sincere compassion even for our adversaries. To prepare the way of the Lord today, we are called to build bridges across the breaches that have separated us from family or friends, to forget old wounds and bend low enough to say "I am sorry."

To prepare the way of the Lord today, we must reassess the mountains (and rivers) that create uncrossable borders between us as nations, parties, ideologies, genders, orientations, etc. Then, willing to see the beauty of the other side, we can descend from our heights of righteousness and let those mountains be made low. There is a lot of geography to cover if we wish to prepare the way of the Lord. But it is all possible because God is already working on it.

Reason for Joy (Bar 5:1-9)

[Celebration](#)

Baruch was the prophet Jeremiah's secretary. He took dictation and sometimes preached. The book that bears his name was written long after his time, quite likely by a few anonymous writers.

In today's reading, "Baruch" gives his depressed audience a series of orders. He is pretty much telling them, "Take off your widow's weeds and put on your prom clothes! Stand up and act like a people who know who God is!" Baruch isn't playing Pollyanna or ignoring their situation. He knows that the current morale and political situations offer absolutely no rationale for positive thinking or great expectations.

Baruch's people saw nothing that should have given them hope. That was precisely Baruch's point. Their only possibility for a future worth looking forward to would come from God's mercy and grace.

Baruch's promise to Israel is a compact version of the covenant with Noah, the promise and assurance that God desires life for humanity, not destruction. When Baruch tells his people to bear God's glorious name on their head, he is telling them to act like people with faith. He

knows that they can discover only what they are willing to believe. If they choose to live in lament, they will always see reasons for their grief. If they seek the light of God's glory, they will learn to discern it and advance in joy.

Top Priority (Phil 1)

[Celebration](#)

Philippi, a Greek city named for the father of Alexander the Great, was probably the home of the first Christian community in Europe, established by Paul around the year 50 C.E. Paul was a prisoner when he wrote this letter, nearly a decade after first knowing the Philippian community.

We might say that Paul saw his Philippian community fulfilling what Baruch had called for in his writings. Paul saw them living their commitment in joy. He believed they were on the path through which their love, knowledge and perception would continue to grow as the key elements of their communal life.

The end of our passage makes an interesting connection between love and discernment. Paul indicates that love is the basis of discerning what is of value. That means that the good of others is the highest value to which one can aspire and becomes the basis of all other judgments.

Our Time (Luke 3)

[Celebration](#)

The desert was one of the most important places in Israel's history. The Exodus road to freedom went through the desert. The desert was the place where former slaves, a people who did not even own their identity, were formed into a nation. There, they entered a covenant with the very God whose call made them who they were. The desert was where the people learned to fix their hopes on God's future.

When Luke tells us that John preached throughout the entire region of the Jordan, Jews remember that river as the one they crossed at the end of the pilgrimage that they began by crossing the Red Sea. Luke introduces us to John at the heart of Israel and on her edges. His preaching announced a time newer than the one the people had known in the Exodus.

Luke presents John as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy and the end of the first phase of history. Isaiah announced that God would come straight to the people.

This Sunday's readings combine to give us great expectations. The stories of the past remind us that God's plans are always for our good. The appearance of John the Baptist tells us that great things are afoot. It is time for us to take our place in the story.



"Help me, Lord, to
prepare your way!"