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PRAYER LINE

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 Sisters of St. Clare srsclare.com/prayer

BEFIENDER

Mary Ellyn Gushow662-6745

COMMUNION FOR HOMEBOUND

Pam Graul-Gwizdala513-3027

**SCHOOL ENDOWMENT
 SPREADING THE SPIRIT FUND**

Clark Switalski, School Principal662-6431

MASSES

Saturday 4:30 PM Wednesday 8:00 AM (Not July)
 Sunday 9:30 AM Thursday 8:00 AM (Not July)

WORD & COMMUNION SERVICE

Tuesday 8:00 AM (Labor Day through Memorial Day)

NEW PARISHIONERS

Contact Parish Office for appointment to register.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Celebrated the 2nd weekend each month. (Please check with parish office for current schedule) Must be active, registered member of parish family. Contact the Parish Office.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Arrangements should be made by contacting Parish Office at least six months in advance. Must be active, registered member of parish family.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Notify Parish Office of parishioners experiencing serious illness, injury, or hospitalization. Communal Anointing of the Sick is celebrated annually in the Fall.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Available 1st Saturday each month at 11:00 AM in the Sacristy at St. Gabriel Parish *Please call Parish Office for appointment.

AUBURN AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOL
114 W. Midland Rd., Auburn, MI 48611
 Ph.: 662-6431.....Fax: 662-3391.....www.auburnacschool.org
 Clark Switalski, Principal..... cswitalski@auburnac.org
 School Office.....schooloffice@auburnac.org

WEATHER POLICY

If Bay City Public Schools close due to inclement weather, daytime (8:00 AM – 4:00 PM), parish activities are canceled. Cancellation of evening activities will be announced by 3:00 PM. Closures will be posted on TV: NBC 25, ABC 12, CBS 5.

WEEK OF DECEMBER 14, 2020

MONDAY

187: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a Mt 21:23-27

TUESDAY 8 am Word and Communion

188: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13 Mt 21:28-32

WEDNESDAY 8 am Mass

189: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25 Lk 7:18b-23

THURSDAY 8 am Mass

193: Gn 49:2, 8-10 Mt 1:1-17

FRIDAY

194: Jer 23:5-8 Mt 1:18-25

SATURDAY 4:30 pm Mass

195: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a Lk 1:5-25

SUNDAY 9:30 am Mass

11:2 Sm7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16 Ps 89:2-5,27,29 Rom16:25-27 Lk1:26-38



EDUCATION / FORMATION

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

Christmas is getting closer. Why is Jesus described as the light?

Reflecting on the Word:

Today is Gaudete Sunday. We are so close to the birth of Jesus; we begin to rejoice! We light the third purple candle on the Advent wreath, reminding us of that joy. Once again, we encounter John the Baptism, who acknowledged that he is not the light (the Messiah), but that he came to testify to the light so that many would believe through him. We are also called to reflect the light of Christ by our words and actions. Though we are unworthy, as John was, we are called to be light to each other in all that we say and do.

Rejoice!

Living the Word:

Help your children carefully and safely place a lit candle in front of mirror. Notice and discuss the differences between the actual light and the light in the reflection. Write a list of Jesus' qualities and actions. Then make a list of how you could reflect those same qualities and imitate those actions. Near the end of the week, have your children draw a side profile of themselves facing Jesus. How can we reflect and follow Jesus in our lives?

Keeping Advent



With all the business this time of year brings it is easy to be lured away from preparing ourselves to welcome Jesus. Consider choosing one of the following activities to keep the attention on celebrating the coming of the Lord.

- ✚ If you receive Christmas cards, consider putting them out and pray for the person or family who sent them to you.
- ✚ Read the Christmas story from the Bible: Matthew 1:18-25.
- ✚ Ask other families to join you and go Christmas caroling either to elderly family members or around your neighborhood. Remember to social distance.
- ✚ The Nativity Scene in your home is another wonderful way to keep your family's focus on Christ. It has several names; a crib, creche, and manger scene. All referring to the birthplace of Jesus. The Nativity scene tradition originated with St. Francis of Assisi in the year 1223 on Christmas Eve. Traditionally, the figures in the nativity set are added gradually to recount the historical Christmas story. On December 24th the Baby Jesus is placed in the manger, and the following days the shepherds are added. On Three Kings day the magi are also added near the scene. You might consider leaving your Nativity up long into January as a way to reinforce the Christmas message that does not end when the last present has been opened. There is more to the story!

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES

Cancellation Reminder-No Penance Service 12/13 or 12/16
Thursday, Dec. 17th -Blood Drive -1:30-6:30 pm-Social Hall

STEWARDSHIP

Weekly Target: \$10,962 **Offering:** \$19,171.26

Food Pantry: \$150 **Diocesan Collection:** \$755

Christmas Flowers: \$35

We want to acknowledge your generous support of our Parish.

Thank-you so much!

Children Good Deed

...I helped clean the living room... Helped shop for the giving tree

... Helped with groceries...Helping my Mom set the table...

...Helped pick up my room...Helped sort gloves with my Mom...

...Carried in groceries...



Celebration of Christmas



I am concerned about attendance at Christmas. We have directives given that we must observe, such as wearing a face mask, social distancing and operating at 25% capacity.

If the people now attending are the bulk of those who assemble for Christmas, we will be fine. However, if large numbers of people who have not been attending decide to come to church because it is Christmas, we are going to have a problem.

We are still in a surge of Covid-19 and we do not yet know the results of Thanksgiving celebrations. Some dioceses in Michigan have extended the dispensation from Mass attendance till February.

Our celebration will be scaled back. No choirs are allowed, no group of instrumentalists. For those who decide it is still best to avoid crowds, Sandy, our DRE, has put together a prayer service to mark a nativity celebration at home, whether alone or with other family members. That service can be found on the parish website or hard copies will be available at the parish office.

These continue to be trying times, we ask that you continue to make the sacrifice necessary to keep yourself and your fellow parishioners safe. We hope that the New Year will eventually bring the changes we all long for.

~ Fr. Tom ~

AUBURN AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Clark Switalski, Principal

We are now into the third week of preparation for Jesus' birth and very close to one of the more exciting times of our liturgical year. In school we are also entering a time where students begin to get a little more excited, the final week before Christmas break. As we enter the final week of school, I am reminded of how blessed we are and have been. The parish, parents, students, and staff have been doing a wonderful job in the face of trying times. There is no doubt that this is wearing on many of us, myself included, but I want to thank you for all your efforts in helping our school to continue in person.

The Gospel this week is focusing on John the Baptist, He is the voice heard from the desert calling for our Lord, Jesus Christ, to come and save us from our sins. Jesus will baptize us in the Holy Spirit and help us whenever we need support. Understanding that he is my rock to rely upon has helped me strengthen my faith as well as alleviate stress. Mind you, I still stress about certain things in my life, but the strength I gain from having a relationship with God does make those instances much easier to handle and get through.

✚ **God Bless**



**FROM
FR. TOM'S
DESK**

Third Sunday of Advent

Patricia Sanchez, *Celebration*

John the Baptizer is featured in today's Johannine Gospel. His identity, his role, his mission and the character of his baptism are clarified yet again. The fourth evangelist attests that John was a witness to the light who is Jesus. As living light, Jesus dispelled the darkness of the human condition in order to empower humanity to find joy in God.

As we celebrate the God of our joy who comes into our lives, our liturgy might seem out of touch with a world so darkened by war, poverty, famine, injustice and natural calamities of every kind. As we come to this holy place and join this holy gathering, our hearts might be cynical, jaded, and devoid of a sense of eager expectancy. It might seem heartless and unsympathetic to give ourselves over to joyous celebration when as many have no reason to smile, let alone rejoice. Perhaps some of us are looking for "sugar-coated pill" we swallow during this celebratory time to make us feel better and the world look better. But the church has a different cure for this condition. We call it hope.

By virtue of the gift of hope, we are able to see and move beyond present difficulties because we are grounded in the reality that Jesus, who came once in the form of humble humanity, will come again in glory and power. In the meantime, we press forward to the future by anticipating here and now the gifts we have been promised. We hope and rejoice and deal courageously with the present because we know that the future does not simply consist in more of the same, but is an eternal communion with "One whom we have heard, whom we have seen with our eyes... and touched with our hands... the Word of Life, Jesus" (1 John 1:1).

Sent by God: (Isaiah 61)

Celebration

The opening verse of this selection from Third Isaiah imitates the Servant Songs of Second Isaiah and will, in turn, be quoted by Jesus and be used to refer to John the Baptist. Scholars tell us that the Book of Isaiah is a compilation from at least three different authors who lived in three different eras. That shows us a little of how our scriptural tradition builds on itself. Key stories and passages are reworked from one age to the next to shed light on how God is active in any given moment of history. Today's selection from Isaiah 61 sheds a particular light on the other two readings and invites us to take a discerning look at our communal and personal life.

When the prophet says that the spirit of the Lord has come upon him and anointed him, he's using two distinct and complementary images, images we might take as contemplative and active. By saying that the spirit of the Lord has come upon him, Isaiah is talking about the state of his heart and soul. For Isaiah, God's command is not simply an outside authority demanding obedience; the love of God has inhabited him. This is similar to what Paul talks about in his letter to the Romans: God's very spirit is alive in him to pray, to cry out. That's the interior dimension of prophecy, it is the experience available to any beloved lover of God.

The second thing Isaiah says about himself is that God has anointed him. This refers to the traditional way of commissioning a king and to what we do in baptism, confirmation and ordination. This type of anointing signifies a vocation in the sense of being given a commission. To be anointed is to be sent in God's name.

Rejoice Always: (1 Thessalonians 5)

Celebration

Anyone who thinks of Paul as a dour rule-giver has never meditated on this reading. Paul's first injunction is "Rejoice always." Paul says "always." That indicates that rejoicing is not a mood or a fiesta activity, it's not a prayer after communion, but an attitude. We can't engender

our own rejoicing, but we can cultivate it. Joy is not the same as pleasure. Pleasure is a fleeting sensation of liking something that generally "pleases" us. Pleasure is rooted in our senses: We can relish or appreciate what we hear, taste, smell, see or touch. Joy is a state of the soul. Joy is deeper than happiness or contentment. Happiness is always vulnerable to sorrow, loss, even pain. Contentment speaks of satisfaction with what is, Joy can coexist with sorrow and discontent.

The joy of which Paul speaks is a fruit of faith in Christ and God's great love. Joy is an attitude that knows that no matter the circumstances of the moment, God's love is the one constant. If we want to think about joy, we might think about the way the Gospel of John presents Jesus' understanding of the events of his passion. Jesus speaks of his cross as "being lifted up," of death as the fullness of his vocation (12:32-33). What carried Jesus through the horror of those events was his inner awareness of God's faithfulness and profound delight in knowing God's love. That's what engenders the sort of joy Paul is talking about. We can "rejoice always" to extent that we are aware of the power of God's love to give meaning to everything in our life.

Personal Identity: (John 1)

Celebration

With the exception of Luke, the evangelists tell us nothing of John's background, and the purpose of Luke's information about Zachary and Elizabeth and John is designed much more to situate John in relation to Jesus than to give us genealogical facts. For all of the evangelists, the point is that John, the well-known and immensely popular prophet-martyr, was not equal to Jesus. They can't tell the Gospel story without John, but they avoid letting him become the center of it.

As is typical in John's Gospel, the story can be as deep as we are willing to allow it to be. On one level this presentation of John the Baptist presents the historical prophet as a man uniquely aware of who he was as a person called by God, not the Messiah. When we take it further, it invites us into the questions John had to answer for himself. How did God's spirit burn within him? For what had he been sent? And ultimately, how much was he willing to risk in carrying out his vocation? All of those implications came into play with the simple question the Jerusalem delegates put to John: "Who are you?"

Extra/Ordinary Time:

Karen Johnson, *Celebration*

This is no ordinary time in the church year—there are 34 Sundays reserved for that. Advent is an extraordinary time, a time when the church asks us to pray, repent and wait with joyful anticipation. Take some time this coming week and prayerfully reflect on the gift of your own life. Remember the miracle of your own birth. Your vocation, your *raison d'être*, is written on your heart. Have the courage to ask close friends and family members what they most appreciate about you. Often what is written on our hearts remains hidden to us, but it is clearly visible to others. In this Advent season, recognize your gifts, and even more importantly, recognize from where these gifts flow. You are a beloved child of God, a person with a unique and essential purpose.

His Time Has Come:

Deacon Dick Folger, *Celebration*

Victor Hugo was the 19th-century French author of *Les Misérables*. His book resulted in the subsequent theatrical production about the French revolution and the many people who dared to start it. Hugo once observed: "An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come."

In today's Gospel, Jesus' time has come. He steps forth in full ministry, and there can be no turning back. In last Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist said that he only baptized with water. He foretold that one was coming who would baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit. This week, John's message becomes more urgent. Jesus is at hand, and John commands us: "Make straight the way of the Lord."



"Lord, may I follow your way"



Giving Trees Update :

The tags from the Giving Trees have been accounted for and for the most part delivered to the recipients. As expected, there were more tags than last year. However, the St Gabriel family stepped up and fulfilled the wishes of so many needy, including a couple of families who lost everything in the historic Sanford flooding.

Thank-you for your generosity, your donations will make for a Merry Christmas for so many!

**A Prayer for
the Third Sunday of
ADVENT**

Jesus, you will come among us once again to give us your very life. May your life's gift inspire us to make our lives a gift to you, over and over again. Amen.

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St. Anthony Cemetery
4485 S. Eleven Mile Rd., Auburn

COLUMBARIUM	Parishioner	Non-Parishioner
Single (1 Urn)	\$1,000	\$1,500
Double (2 Urns)	\$1,400	\$1,750
Inurnment	\$ 250 per niche	\$ 300 per niche
CEMETERY	Parishioner	Non-Parishioner
Plot	\$ 500	\$1,200
Burial	\$ 650	\$ 850
Burial of Cremains	\$ 150	\$ 175
Saturday Burial	\$ 200 additional	\$ 200 additional
Foundation	\$ 0.40 per sq. inch	\$ 0.40 per sq. inch

Contact St. Gabriel Parish Office at 989-662-6861

Prices Effective July 1, 2019

BLOOD DRIVE

Season
of giving



Thursday
December

17

1:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Helpful tip:
Make sure to eat a healthy meal
and drink plenty of water before
donating.

St. Gabriel Parish

Auburn Community Blood Drive

Social Hall
84 W. Midland Rd.
Midland, MI

APPOINTMENTS PREFERRED to assist with social distancing.
Call 866-642-5663 or visit versiti.org/MI

THANK YOU for being a donor! Your generosity of
spirit saves lives right in our community!

*** Covid-19 Antibody Testing is now being performed on
every successful blood donation!

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