

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 16, 2007



Matthew 11:2-11

There is real comfort in this story. John the Baptist, the powerful, austere man who held such a sway among the Jews, still had his moments of darkness. Imprisoned in Herod's dungeon, he wondered: Am I a fool? Is this all there is? Was I wrong about Jesus?

John does not just brood on the question. He acts; he sends messengers to Jesus. And Jesus does not send back reassurances; he just asks the messengers to open their eyes and see the evidence of Jesus' life.

Lord, in my moments of doubt and darkness, may I fill my eyes with you.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17TH

Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	Janina Nowak by Cathy Nolan & Philippe Davis
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Marlies Sloat by Shirley Robert
Saturday	7:00 p.m.	Gerry Lance by Mary & Family
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Margaret Rutter by Bob and Family
		Walter Morin by Joan & Family
	11:00 a.m.	Coleman MConnell by Gloria Henderson

LAST WEEKEND'S COLLECTIONS: \$3,024.75 Thank You.



HERE'S HOW:

The third Sunday of Advent is a "**Rejoice**" Sunday. We light the pink candle in the wreath; things are really looking up! Why? Because we can actually see the flowers on this shoot from the stock of Jesse: the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, justice for the oppressed, bread for the hungry, protection for the stranger,... to John the Baptist's question, "**have we got to wait for someone else?**", Jesus replies **here's how** salvation is seen, heard and touched, right now, in the flesh. If, after last Sunday's Scripture descriptions, we still wondered, "yes, but **how** is Jesus acting here now?" we need but to look around at the many people and organizations that are patiently, slowly and surely making life gentler for "those who are bowed down". The **logos** of many of them are on the bulletin board. Each one might be just a drop in the ocean, but as a whole, it makes the wilderness exult!

'Look, your God is coming!'

WE ARE GETTING CLOSE TO THE PURPOSE OF ADVENT:

Advent is a difficult season. As Christians we are encouraged not to jump the gun on Christmas. And yet, all around us we hear Christmas carols, Christmas decorations are up, we can have the nativity scene out already.

The Church is not in such a hurry. With the help of Scripture readings, especially from the Old Testament prophets, we are encouraged to reflect on the purpose for which Christ has come and, in many ways, still

needs to come: the realization of God's dream with our world. The Advent season invites us to re-visit our dependence on God, to re-visit our desire for God and to discover through the night of waiting what it is to hope for that faith-certainty that God does indeed come. And what a way for God to come: as one of our own! It is hoped that what we do in "these weeks of Advent" makes us ready to touch base again with the awesome mystery from which we are privileged to live.

ADVENT PENITENTIAL / RECONCILIATION SERVICE: THURSDAY, DEC 20, 7:00 P.M.

It is entirely in line with Advent to come together as a parish community and to celebrate that we stand in need of what God offers us in Jesus Christ: forgiveness of sins. Yes, we are a sinful people. That is not a put-down. It is an acknowledgment that there are dark corners of various kinds in ourselves and in our community where the true God and his Reign are not altogether welcome, where we do not live the holy and godly lives that God summons us to. And only a gracious and forgiving God can handle these dark corners of ours, this "being out of joint", this "missing the mark". God does so by extending his mercy, his forgiveness to us. Surely, we want to yield to and give ourselves over to such a God. We do so with a contrite heart.

That is what this Thursday's service is all about. It is a good way of preparing for Christmas. It is one of the best ways in which we can grow in holiness. That is what God wants for us. Deep down, we also want that for ourselves and for each other.



Individual Confessions

What we celebrate in the communal service mentioned above can also be celebrated in a more personal way in "individual confession". One form does not cancel out the other. Having God's forgiveness spoken over us in a more personal way can complement significantly the more general and communal way of celebrating the same forgiveness. In fact, in some instances it may even be of a greater benefit.

A few specific time slots are set aside for that in the hope that everyone can be accommodated who wants to celebrate God's forgiveness in the individual confession.

Thursday, December 20: *after* Penitential Service

Friday, December 21, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 22, 11:00-12:00 noon

ARCHBISHOP ROGER EBACHER SENDS HIS CHRISTMAS GREETINGS:

"You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children – which is what we are! (1John 3,1)

That this astonishment which filled the hearts of Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi with gratitude and joy also move our hearts and be a source of joy and peace for us all.

Merry Christmas 2007! Holy Year 2008!

Roger Ebacher,

Archbishop of Gatineau

A QUOTE FROM HENRI NOUWEN:

"The crisis of the prayer life of many Christians today is that, while our minds may be filled with ideas of God, our hearts remain far from him. Real prayer comes from the heart."

POINSETTIAS FOR OUR CHURCH'S CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

The Christmas Season is a time when the deceased who have been part of our lives are on our mind and especially in our heart. We may want to give tangible expression to that in the form of bringing a poinsettia to the church for Christmas, the Feast of God's



Love for all, the living and the dead. In that light, the poinsettia serves as a sign of our continued affection for those who have died and an expression of faith that the dead are embraced by God's love.

Come to think of it, that gesture is also a tangible expression of what we say in the Creed "*I believe in the communion of the saints*". Death cannot undo the bond or the communion that Christ has established among us, something that is particularly in focus around the Table of the Eucharist.

Bring in your poinsettias, starting Wednesday December 19th and over the weekend. Please leave them in the church. Thank you. Decorating will be Dec. 23rd after 11:00 a.m. Mass.

MASS SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS



That is a tough one to handle. We discussed it at the Liturgy Committee meeting. With the introduction of Christmas Eve Masses the actual Midnight Mass has come under some pressure. Of all the Christmas Masses it is the least attended. When you ask around "Should we have Midnight Mass?" the answer from most is "Yes." But then when you ask "Do you go to Midnight Mass?" the answer from most is "We go to an earlier Mass or on Christmas morning."

In light of that we have decided on the following Christmas Mass schedule:

Christmas Eve, December 24: 7:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

Christmas Day, December 25: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

While this may inconvenience some, we hope all will find a place in the four Christmas Masses we have.

NET RETREAT: Host families are needed to house **Net Retreat Team one night only**, January 10th. Contact Lynne LeGuerrier 819 684-4882.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SATURDAY, JANUARY 12:

The Ottawa Diocese is holding a formation session for all the baptized on the theme: ***Why do we celebrate Sunday Eucharist?*** It is an excellent way to prepare for the Eucharistic Congress. Leaders for the session are Fr. Roy Roberts and Fr. Bill Burke.

Saturday, January 12, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m at the Ottawa Diocesan Centre (1247 Kilborn in Ottawa). **Cost:** \$15 (bring your own lunch) **Registration deadline:** Monday, January 7 (613 738-5025, ext. 217. Contact: abrown@ecclesia-ottawa.org)

49th INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS, JUNE 15-22, 2008 (QUEBEC CITY):

Those interested in attending this event must register with the Gatineau diocese. There are approx. 60 places left for our diocese. Please contact Gerald Baril 819 771-8391. There is a \$30 rebate for registration taken before January: <http://www.cei2008.ca>

AYLMER ARMS APARTMENTS - NEEDS MEMBERS ON ITS BOARD OF ADVISORS: Aylmer Arms Apartments has an advisory group to its Board of Directors. It is a group of 7 members from the community representing the diversity of religious groups and community persons within Aylmer. They are looking for 3 new members to sit on the Advisory group. Please phone the Parish Office, if you are interested.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Kindly remember Wandaw Bobrowski, Hilda Preslawski, Odette Gratton, Bruce Hahn, and their families in your prayers.

