Reflection

December 10, 2017 — Second Sunday of Advent

IS 40: 1-5, 9-11; PS 85: 9-14; 2 PT: 3, 8-14; MK 1: 1-8

Our readings from Holy Scripture on this Second Sunday of Advent remind us of what we are supposed to be doing during Advent, in fact throughout our lives. The reading from Isaiah anticipates the coming of Christ and John the Baptist as it proclaims “… prepare the way of the Lord.” This is a time of preparation for us. That message is repeated in our Gospel from St. Mark. Today’s Gospel is the absolute beginning of Mark’s Gospel and it immediately gives us that same signal by declaring, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” Of course, we all realize that the path to the Lord may not always be straight for us, but now is a time to correct that.

God is waiting for us. St. Peter in his Second Letter, from which our Second Reading is drawn, indicates that God, however, “is patient with you.” You might say on this Second Sunday of Advent that the Lord is giving us a second chance to respond to His call. One of the basics of St. John the Baptist’s messages was that we need to get ourselves right with the Lord, perhaps turn our lives in a different direction. We can change; now is the time to do that.

Pope St. John XXIII once stated during a homily in Advent, “We are all part of an immense family. This is proven by what is in our hearts during Advent and Christmas.” Now is the time to put love in our hearts and to truly prepare the way of the Lord.

***Reflection from the Office of Stewardship and Development
This Second Week of Advent, the readings prompt us to ask this necessary question: “Am I clearing or am I blocking the Lord’s way in my heart?”

On the Second Sunday of Advent each year, the Church always ask us to make a pilgrimage into the desert and to listen to the voice of a rugged, fiery and powerful prophet and preacher by the name of St. John the Baptist. We are not only to listen to his message, but have to live it out in our lives. In the gospel, we are told “people of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.”

So what was so captivating about John the Baptist’s personality that drew people away from the city, their work, and their families, just to go and listen to him? First, John lived what he preached. By his lifestyle, his simple dressing and ascetical practices, he reminded the people that the meaning of life does not consist of accumulating material possessions but in cultivating an intimate relationship with God. Simplicity of life, detachment from things and even people who are an obstacle to one’s flourishing, and letting go of unnecessary worries of social life, all these free the heart to possess God as our ultimate good.

Second, John was a physician who knew the secrets of the human heart. His message exposed the vipers, scorpions, and other wild beasts hiding, lurking and causing damage in people’s hearts in the forms of vices or sins. John did not only exposed them with message and lifestyle, but offered a remedy to get rid of what poisons the heart and separates us from the one who came destroy sin and heal our wounds. The main remedy John offered was repentance.

This repentance is from Greek word Metanoia which means a total change of heart. True repentance is a change of attitude towards ourselves, towards our neighbors, and especially towards God. When we orient our lives towards God, then naturally we bring order into our own personal lives and begin to amend our broken relationship with others that have hurt us or those whom we have offended with our words and actions.

Imagine if we strive during this Advent to reorient our lives again to God by way of repentance? This change of attitude will lead to a radical change in society. If all of us are truly converted – spousal and child abuse, sex trade, corruption in the government, abortions, elderly abuse, terrorism, divorce, kidnappings, drug addiction, pornography and other forms of abuses would be eliminated. What a peaceful, humane and beautiful society will be if everybody truly implement John’s program of a change of heart.

St. John is telling us that each of us needs to take the courage to go deep into the inner chamber of our hearts, and find out what is holding us from God’s love, blinding us from God’s beauty and goodness in us, preventing us from opening ourselves to our loved ones and scaring us from confronting our fears, low-self esteem and pains. Jesus is our savior. He came to save us from ourselves and from our sins. So, honor him as your Savior by turning to him with your whole being and giving him the opportunity to clear away all the obstacles and filth in your heart.

~ Fr. Cassian Sama, O.P.
For Your Information

Baptisms

Are normally scheduled during or after the 5:30PM Mass on Saturday, or during or after the 11:00AM Mass on Sunday.

The next baptism preparation sessions will be:

All Classes are 6:00-7:30PM

Tuesday, January 23rd    Tuesday, April 17th
Tuesday, February 13th   Tuesday, May 22nd
Tuesday, March 27th     Tuesday, June 19th

Please contact Eileen Strater in the Parish Office at 765-743-4652 or eileen@boilercatholics.org to register for the baptism class and/or place your child’s baptism on the parish calendar.

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, God’s children are welcomed into the Catholic faith family, which most commonly takes place at a very young age. In this case, it is extremely important for parents to know what they are asking when they ask to have their children baptized. St. Tom’s baptismal preparation program is for first time parents and godparents. Sessions are offered every other month. Please see the parish calendar or call the parish office for upcoming dates and times.

Marriage

Just got engaged? Want to have your wedding here at St. Thomas Aquinas? Please contact Matthew Andrzejewski in the parish office at 765-743-4652 or matthew@boilercatholics.org to start the marriage process and to reserve your date on the parish calendar. Our wedding ceremony guidelines can be found on our website under the Faith Life tab.

Welcome New Parishioners!

We welcome all who wish to join our parish family. You may register by visiting the parish office or by clicking on the link on our homepage at www.boilercatholics.org. We’re glad you are here!

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Are you or someone you know interested in becoming Catholic? The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) process is designed for those who wish to become full members of the Roman Catholic Church. These sessions are also a great way to learn more about the Church. The individuals in the process are involved in a journey of faith and conversion which includes learning about the beliefs, life, liturgy and apostolic work of the Catholic community. The RCIA process at St. Tom’s has two distinctly different tracks, and is geared around the Purdue calendar, with weekly sessions beginning in September. Participants can expect to receive Sacraments of Initiation during the Easter Vigil Mass. To determine which track of the RCIA process will best suit your needs, or for more information, contact Eileen Strater in the parish office at 765-743-4652 or eileen@boilercatholics.org.
Prayers of the Faithful

Father of goodness and love, hear our prayers for the sick members of our community and for all who are in need amid mental and physical suffering, may they find consolation in your healing presence. Show your mercy as you close wounds, cure illness, make broken bodies whole and free downcast spirits. May these special people find lasting health and deliverance, and so join us in thanking you for all your gifts. We ask this through the Lord Jesus who healed those who believed. Amen.

Donald Gray
Melissa Young-Spillers
Mike Moss
Dolores Pope
Eduardo Vogel
Gail Miller
Gina Boyd
George Owens
Reagan Biesemeier
Kathleen O’Connor
Rosa Espinosa
Titis Cordova
Enrique Vaca
Mariana Gonzalez
Ashley Biesemeier
Mary Nichols
Sharon Downey
Ann Templeman
Dolores Houchin
Loan Lypham-Ferry
Elyzabeth Navarre
Philip Funk
Gene Cattarina
Ashley Harrington
Tony Ghaleb
Dionicia Mendoza
Paulina Gajewska
William Pope
Damianus Aditya
Bob Setele
Andrew McAlister
Bella Raffin
Dolores Dilling
Rosa Maria Santos
Joel Rivera
Tom Kendall
Thomas Paul Batz
R.A. DeSutter
Denny Gramman
Maryann Johnson
Mark Struck
Charlotte Droulos
Mike Patty
June Moss
Shelley Strong
Pete Clark
Lauren Weldy
Ed Knoth
Michele Strutz
Theresa, Dee’s Sister
Marybeth Yacovelli
Stanley Seretny
Carol Hobaugh
Judy Ryba
Mike Moss
Sandra Lehner
Bob Dwyer
Evelyn Ricci
Joseph (Jr.) Ricci
James Heinen
Sandra Burke
Denise Walsh
Robert Rolih
Mike Powers
Seth Sullivan
Frank Joseph Bryja
Robert Whicker
Trish O’Connor
Martha Cabrera
Sean Giheaney
Francis Maguire
Roberto Colea
Jeanne Erbacher
Ferril Gibbs
Judy McKinley
Joel Rivera
Betsy Seabert
Susan Slayton
Caroline Walter

St. Tom’s Guest Apartment

We are offering our guest apartment above the offices all year round as sort of an AirBNB (for rent). It’s a fully furnished apartment that sleeps two and even comes with a reserved parking spot. So students, let your parents know that they could stay at the best location on campus for their next visit. Please contact Matthew at matthew@boilercatholics.org.

Shop AmazonSmile!

You can earn money for St. Tom’s on every dollar you spend on Amazon. Simply go to smile.amazon.com and either sign in or create a new user account and search for “St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center”. It’s as easy as that, and now every time you shop at Smile.amazon.com, St. Tom’s will benefit.
Family Promise
We have completed another successful and impactful host week for the Family Promise ministry. Our next host week is Feb 18-24, 2018. If you are not yet familiar with this important ministry, please visit our website at boilercatholics.org/family-promise/.

Jubilee Christmas
To everyone who helped with Jubilee Christmas, whether it was donating a toy, wrapping paper, a coat, a stocking stuffer, money or your time, this a heartfelt thank you for your generosity!! Our shopping day for 40 families was a complete success!! Many of the families expressed great gratitude for the lovely gifts and for feeling so welcomed at our church. The people on the committee want to thank you for making our job so easy. We could not do this without all the support from the wonderful community of St. Thomas Aquinas. A special thank you to the students in 3rd-8th grade classes for the bags of paper goods and cleaning supplies, and also the St. Elizabeth Nursing students for the stocking stuffers. May you all have a blessed Christmas!

HowTo Festival 2018
In Need of Presenters
January 27, 2018 | 10:00AM-3:00PM
Have an interesting talent or skill? St. Thomas Aquinas is putting on their annual HowTo festival on January 27th from 10:00AM-3:00PM in the lower level of the church. The HowTo-festival gives individuals the chance to showcase and teach their skills to the Greater Lafayette. It’s a day full of learning, fellowship, and fun!

We are currently searching for presenters for the 2018 HowTo-festival. So, if you have a talent or skill you would like to present, such as how to use a potters wheel or how to juggle, please contact Nate and Lizzy at howto@boilercatholics.org.

Religious Education
Registration for Religious Education is ongoing! You can still sign-up for the Spring semester. We would love to have you!

John, the Director of Religious Education, Allie, our Special Education Intern, Bess, our Elementary School Intern, Julia, our Middle School Intern, and Hannah, our Confirmation Intern, will all be available if you would like to set up an individual meeting. All children between the ages of three years old and 12th grade are welcome! Please contact John Strong, Director of Religious Education & Youth Ministry, at john@boilercatholics.org for more information.

Christmas is coming - Advent is Shorter This Year!
If you have looked at the calendar, you probably saw that Christmas is on Monday this year. That means, Christmas Eve is on a Sunday. What are we to do? Here are your obligatory choices for the Dec. 23-25 schedule:

**CHOOSE ONE FROM EACH COLUMN TO ATTEND:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4th Sunday of Advent</th>
<th>Christmas Mass</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ SAT DEC 23 - 5:30PM</td>
<td>□ SUN DEC 24 - 5:30PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ SUN DEC 24 - 9:00AM</td>
<td>□ MON DEC 25 - MIDNIGHT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ SUN DEC 24 - 11:00AM</td>
<td>□ MON DEC 25 - 11:00AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**NOTE:** PARISH OFFICES ARE CLOSED DEC. 25TH & 26TH.
Faith-in-Action Photo Contest

Sponsored by the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

Post your photos of faith in action on Facebook as the Diocese of Lafayette or Twitter with the handle DOLComm, or both! Photos can be taken from a religious event, a family ritual, parish activity, discipleship, or an act of faith witnessed. Multiple submissions are welcome. Contest runs Nov. 14 through Dec. 18. The Grand Prize winner will receive a deluxe gift basket of goodies and an item with the new diocesan crest. The first-place and second-place winners will win a smaller basket of surprises. The parish with the highest participation rate will have its photo taken and published on the Diocesan site and in an issue of The Catholic Moment. Contact Jessicah Hollinger, Director of the Office of Communications, for more information jhollinger@dolin.org.

Schoenstatt Holy Hour

All are invited to the Schoenstatt Holy Hour with Father Cassian Sama O.P on Tuesday, December 19th, 2017 at 7:00PM in the Church. It will include adoration, rosary, a homily, and benediction.

First Communion - Rent St. Tom’s

Rent rooms (except for Newman Hall) for your First Communion celebrations! First Communion is here at St. Tom's on Sunday, May 6th. Please contact Mari at mari@boilercatholics.org. Rental rates can be found at boilercatholics.org/rentals.

Dr. Carolyn Woo To Lead St. Tom’s Parish Retreat

Save the dates February 23-24 (Friday and Saturday)

Dr. Woo is a former member of St. Tom's parish, a former vice president of Purdue, the former Dean of the Mendoza College of Business at Notre Dame, and the former president & CEO of Catholic Relief Services, the official overseas humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States.

The parishioners, staff, and priests of Saint Thomas Aquinas
-the Catholic Center at Purdue
Request the honor of your presence
At the Baccalaureate Mass
Honoring the graduates of the Purdue Class of 2017
The liturgy will be held at Five thirty in the evening
On Saturday, December 16, 2017
In the Church of St. Thomas Aquinas

It is requested that you wear your cap and gown.
Family and friends are included in the invitation.
Cake and punch reception will follow in the gathering space.

CC Fullest House Drive

Time to clean out the attic or the closet? Central Catholic Students are having a drive to benefit Lafayette Transitional Housing Center. They are collecting the following gently used and new items: toiletries, kitchen and bathroom supplies and appliances, furniture, bedding and much more. Please drop your items off at Central Catholic HS now through Friday, December 15th.

JOIN OUR TEAM

JOB POSTING
Secretary/Administrative Assistant (part-time)
St. Lawrence Church – Lafayette, IN

We are currently seeking candidates for the position of Administrative Assistant (part-time) at St. Lawrence Church in Lafayette, IN. This person will provide administrative and office support in our parish office.

A high school diploma or equivalent is required with at least 2 years related experience. Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications is required and a working knowledge of Adobe Photo Shop and Google Calendar is preferred. Strong organizational skills and ability to honor and maintain confidentiality is necessary.

Qualified candidates may submit their resume to tr.eunderwood@dolin.org.
PARISH NEWS AND NOTES

Maggie’s Place - YEAR OR SUMMER OF SERVICE

Love Lives Here
Maggie's Place is currently accepting applications for a year of service starting this January or July in Phoenix, AZ or Cleveland, OH. MissionCorps members live in community with pregnant women and newborns, supporting them as they work toward independence. This opportunity is for women searching for a meaningful, challenging, and immersive service experience. Summer commitments also available. Contact Lucy Miller at missioncorps@maggiesplace.org for more information, or visit www.maggiesplace.org/missioncorps.

Caregiver Companion

Offer a helping hand to the elderly, or a caregiver in your community
Make a meaningful difference by coming alongside an elderly or homebound individual who lives near you! Volunteer as often as your schedule allows and make a lasting difference in a neighbor’s life.

There are many ways to assist based on your God-given gifts and interests:
• Drive an elderly man or woman to their doctor’s appointment
• Visit a lonely and homebound individual
• Provide a break for a caregiver to get refreshed
• Grocery shop for an aging veteran
• Perform simple home repairs for a frail woman who lives alone

Contact Volunteer Coordinator, Lauren Weldy at (765) 423-1879 or e-mail caregiver95@gmail.com today to discuss volunteering!

LCSS Job Post

The Lafayette Catholic School System is looking for a Lunch Supervisor to assist with the Central Catholic Jr.-Sr. High School lunch 3 days a week from 11:00 - 1:00. Duties include supervising and maintaining order in the cafeteria during the lunch hour.

Please visit www.lcss.org/about/workforlcss/ to apply.

Reading Resource Teacher

Beginning January 8, 2018 a reading resource teacher position is open for St. Boniface School. The instructor teaches reading/literature to students in grades 4, 5, and 6 who excel in reading and need a challenge. There are three 40 minute classes every afternoon, Monday to Friday, from 12:30-3:00PM. The person should have a teaching degree, love reading and children’s literature, and desire to challenge students. This is a part-time position. The opening is posted until December 18, 2017.

Please email a cover letter, resume and list of references to: Sr. Lenore Schwartz, principal
St. Boniface School
813 North Street
Lafayette, In 47901
School phone: 765-742-7913
Email: srlenore@lcss.org