

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Fr. Ken's "Korner"



Greetings and blessings of the week,

I hope the week has been a good one for you. Here we are in the month of December already! It is hard to believe that the new year will begin in less than a month. However, the remaining days, as we are all aware, lead up to and focus on Christmas. It will be for many, due to the current economic situation, different than it has in past years. It behooves us to stop and ponder the spirit of the season (I wish it could be as low key as Thanksgiving where the focus is not on "Spend! Buy! Spend!" as it is due to the

misplaced commercialistic thrust of the Christmas season.) We are now in our second week of the Advent season that reminds us that we are to prepare our hearts in order to allow the presence of Jesus to bring His gifts to life in our lives. As is part of the tradition here in our parish, the "Giving Tree" program is once again underway. There are trees with names on the "ornaments" near the piano in the church, also at the main entrance to the Church, as well as the foyer entrance to the Parish Center. You may return the gifts that you donate either to the church or to Terry in the office at the Parish Center. Please remember to attach the "ornament" to the gift so that it can be appropriately channeled to the correct people. This effort has shown the generosity of our parishioners as they reach out to help others as a manifestation of kindness and love in imitation of Jesus' outreach to the less fortunate. We thank you for helping to bring a smile to a young person during this holy day season. We are grateful for the involvement of Denise Noyes and our religious education students who made the hundreds of "ornaments" that adorned the trees. While speaking of gratitude, we extend a gracious "merci beaucoup" to all those who provided food, as well as those who prepared and served it, at our parish soup kitchen on Thanksgiving Day. I know that it enabled people to have a great meal and share a food and conversation with others, rather than having to eat alone, or not having a meal to eat at all.

Today, December 7th, has been referred to as a "day that will go down in infamy". It is one of those touchstone moments of history for those who are old enough to remember what they were doing on December 7th, 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked. As we find ourselves once again embroiled in a war during this season where we will hear the words "peace on earth" sung, let us pray that one day it will become a reality and that our loved ones be kept out of "harm's way" until they safely return home to their loved ones,

December 8th, is the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. It *is a holyday of obligation* since Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception is patroness of the United States of

America. Pope Clement XI established this feast for the entire Church in 1708. In addition to being Patroness of the USA as the Immaculate Conception, Mary is also the patroness of Spain, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Masses for the holyday will be on Monday at 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Towards the end of the week is a major feast of Mary for the people of Mexico. Friday, December 12th, is the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This feast "recalls the apparitions of Mary at the hill of Tepeyac from 9-12 December 1531 to the native convert, Juan Diego (9 Dec.) ..."



Juan Diego was a member of the Chichimeca people. He was declared a saint by Pope John Paul II on July 31, 2002. Guadalupe is the Spanish word for the Aztec word, *Tecoatlaxope*, which translated means "shw will crush the serpent of stone." Pope Pius XII declared her Patroness of the Americas. Saturday, on the calendar of saints is the feast day of the martyr, St. Lucy. It is believed that she died probably in Sicily around 304 AD during the reign of the Roman Emperor, Diocletian. She is the patroness of those who are afflicted with diseases of the eye. She is "...associated with festivals of light, especially in Scandanavia. She is the patroness of Syracuse (Sicily-Siragusa) as well as all Sicily.

Please remember in your prayers B. Joseph Webb for whom we prayed a Mass of Christian Burial on Wednesday, December 3. Thursday, December 4th, a funeral Mass was prayed for the repose of the soul of Katherine Stokes. December 5th, Friday, a funeral Mass was prayed for Blair Belsito. Please also pray for their families as well. It is difficult to lose someone that we love. The impact of their loss is more poignantly felt when it occurs around the time of two "family" holidays as people gather for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The parish trip to the Boston Pops is this Friday evening, December 12. We will gather and leave from the church parking lot at 6:00 PM to go to Symphony Hall. The concert begins at 8:00 PM. This builds in a little time in case of traffic complications (as we did last year). ETA back at the church parking lot should be sometime between 11:15 PM and 11:30 (give or take a few minutes). The trip has been sold out for a couple of weeks – and there is a waiting list in the event that someone has to cancel before the 12th.



Several people in our parish have, or will, celebrate milestones. Steve Donegan celebrated his birthday that fell on December 1st. Likewise, Jim LeBlanc (Lina's husband, Jim) observed December 1st as his birthday. Suzanne Calvino's birthday falls on today, December 7th. The feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8th, is Emma Cate Rapose's eleventh birthday. Amanda Brisbois' celebrates her milestone of birth on Friday, December 12th, as she marks her eighteenth birthday. She, along with Stephanie Feeny, teach a religious education class of younger students at the Parish Center. We are grateful to the both of them for their time and dedication to passing on our faith tradition to our younger parishioners. December 13th is Jim LeBlanc's birthday (Jim's son and the husband of Karen LeBlanc).

May the Lord's blessings smile kindly upon you and your loved ones in the coming week. Your brother in faith, Fr. Ken.

