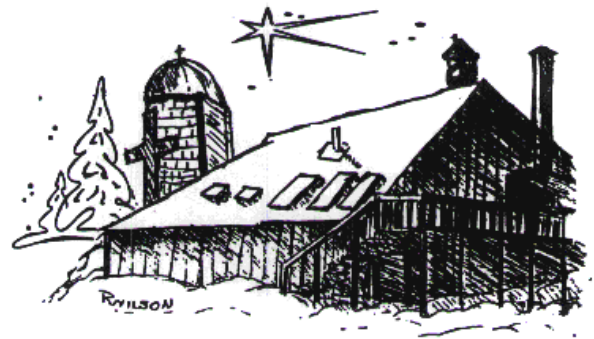


Bethany Charismatic Catholic Church

December 2024 Vol. 28, Issue 12



Chapel of Mercy

Bishop: THE MOST REV. RAYMOND CONTOIS
Assistant Pastor: FATHER JUDE PAIYAGALA BADUGE DON
Deacon: REV. MR. PAUL LAFLAMME

“At Bethany there is no Past, only the Present and Future Hope !”

This year Advent begins with two very positive readings, followed by a stern warning. The first reading is from the prophet *Jeremiah*. “The days are coming when the promise will be fulfilled,” Jeremiah wrote to people who were decimated by their enemies. The Babylonians had captured many of them and sent them in chains to Babylon. The Hebrews knew that they had sinned against God. The exile was a result of their sins. But had God totally deserted them? “No,” Jeremiah said. God had not given up on them. The time was coming when a righteous shoot of David would lead them. And Jerusalem would be a place of justice, a place of union with God.

In the second reading St. Paul writes the people of Thessalonica. These people expected the Lord to come soon. Many were nervous and frantic. Paul tells them that all they have to do is abound in love for one another. This will strengthen them so they will be blameless in holiness before God at the coming of the Lord Jesus and his holy ones.

These are comforting words, particularly in light of Jesus’ warnings in the Gospel. He speaks about horrible signs in the sun and the moon and the stars, and people dying of fright. But he also says that when we see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory, we should stand straight and raise our heads because our redemption is near.

Waiting for the Lord to come again is the focus of Advent. This waiting for the Lord is different than the usual way we wait. It is not like the waiting we experience when we go to the doctor’s office and sit in the lobby reading old magazines or playing on our phones. Nor is waiting for the Lord like waiting in line at Disney World. We go through that endless maze, and keep walking and walking and going nowhere, but at least we know that when the wait is over we will get to the front of the line. But waiting for the Lord is not like those long lines because when we are in those lines we are not doing much, at least nothing all that constructive. Waiting for the Lord demands that we make the best use of the time we have before He comes.

How do we use our time? How do we wait for Him? So much of our time is wasted. We sit in front of a screen, computer or TV, for hours. Now, there is nothing wrong with relaxing, and there are great programs out there, but we need to accomplish more with our lives than watch TV, or play video games. When the Lord comes, we will have to show Him how we used the time He gave us. Hopefully, we will have accomplishments greater than achieving level 8 or watching the entire “Once Upon a Time,” series.

The wait for Christmas is just a glimpse of the real waiting we have as we wait for the Lord to come again. So we are told to stay awake, and wait for the Lord. When the wait is over, what will we have to show for our lives? Will we stand before the Lord and say, “I was planning to come closer to you Lord and spend time every day talking to you in prayer, but I just didn’t get it into my schedule.” Will we say, “I had always wanted to do things for others without seeking something in return, but I was too busy doing other things.”

Or will we say, “Lord, you know that while I waited I tried my best to serve you in others. You know that while I waited I talked to you every day.” If our wait is one of action, one of service, and one of prayer, then when the Lord comes again at the end of our time or the end of the world, we will be found, as St. Paul says, blameless and holy before God at the coming of the Lord Jesus and His Holy Ones.

In His Light,

May our lives be lives of actively waiting for the Lord.

Bishop Raymond Contois

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Just 1 mile off route 20

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WEEKLY MASSES

Saturday - Cancelled

Sunday - 9:00 AM *

Wednesday* - Cancelled

RECONCILIATION & PASTORAL MEETINGS

By Appointment (413) 324-1164



December Schedule

Eucharistic Ministers

Ministers of the Word

1st Ron, Paula Anne
8th Ron, Paula Anne
15th Ron, Paula Anne
22nd Ron, Paula Anne
29th Ron, Paula Anne



Beth, Ron
Catherine, Jayne
Paula Anne, Ron
Beth, Paula Anne
Stash, Ron



Bethany Food Drive

We will continue collecting non-perishable food items for area food pantries. Please drop off your donations of canned goods and dry goods, and leave them in the foyer.

Thank You for your constant generosity.



“Hunger never takes a vacation.”



Bethany will begin its tradition of using the “Warming Tree” to collect scarves, mittens, and hats for children who, due to personal circumstances, live in group children’s homes. Please join us in our effort to provide warmth-giving clothing to children in need by decorating our “Warming Tree” with your gifts of Winter apparel. Thanks to your generosity last year, many children were blessed with your gifts or warmth.



Through the month of December, we will continue collecting donations for the poinsettias used to decorate the Chapel of Mercy for Christmas. Please help us prepare the chapel to joyfully receive the infant Jesus on Christmas Day.

Dates to Remember

- Sunday, December 1st, Advent Begins (Advent Wreath)
- Sunday, December 8th, Immaculate Conception of Mary 9:00am. (2nd Sunday of Advent)
- Sunday, December 15th 3rd Sunday of Advent (Decorating Tree)
- Sunday, December 22nd, 4th Sunday of Advent (Poinsettia Sunday)
- Tuesday, December 24th, Midnight Mass celebrated at 10:30pm
- Wednesday, December 25th, there will be a 9:30am Lord’s Day Mass.
- Please join us in celebrating Jesus’ birthday.
- January 1st, there will be a 9:30am Mary, Mother of God mass



**Dates to Remember
December 2024**

1st: SUN. 9:00 AM Advent Begins



8th: SUN. 9:00 AM Immaculate Conception of Mary

2nd Sunday of Advent



15th: SUN. 9:00 AM Lord’s Day Mass

3rd Sunday of Advent



22nd: SUN. 9:00 AM Lord’s Day Mass

4th Sunday of Advent / Poinsettia Sunday

24th: Tue. 10:30 PM Midnight Mass

25th: Wed. 9:30 AM “Christmas Day” Mass

29th: SUN. 9:00 AM Lord’s Day Mass



Jan. 1st: Wed. 9:30 AM Mary Mother of God



In the event of bad weather, please check cancellations on WWLP Channel 22. This is the only station that will list Bethany closings due to foul weather.

