

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

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THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

Children who are poor make toys out of the unlikeliest things: milk cartons, nails, bottle caps, sticks, plastic bags, corn cobs, clothespins. Folks who have plenty consider these things trash—in fact, some poor children literally make their toys out of trash. Their abject need gives them a different perspective, seeing blessing where the rich see only waste.

Material poverty is a scourge on our planet, and we must never make excuses for it. We must work tirelessly for decent conditions for every human person. As we work, we can learn from the special perspective of our brothers and sisters who do not have enough to live. We can see how depending on others for resources can transform a rich person's trash into a poor child's treasure.

SPIRITUAL POVERTY

On this "Rejoice!" Sunday in Advent, we can pray in a particular way for an end to material poverty. Today's readings assure us that the kind of poverty God desires for us is spiritual poverty, a radical knowledge that all things come from God. Where material poverty can wound the human spirit, spiritual poverty cultivates boundless joy. John the Baptist provides a startling model for us. In all sincerity, he admits that he is not worthy to touch Jesus' sandals. John says this not to charm the crowds by being coy and self-deprecating. No, John embraces the truth that God is the source of all goodness. We are utterly dependent on God for all good things. We cannot do anything to earn God's favor; God simply provides for us because we need God. This is massively good news! No one could possibly care for us like God does. At our very best, we merely reflect God's brightness into the world. God's brilliant joy is exactly what we are called to. As Saint Paul says, "The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it."

Today's Readings: Isa 61:1-2, 10-11; Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

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EL OJO DEL ESPECTADOR

Hay niños pobres que ingeniosamente crean juguetes de los objetos menos imaginables, como cartones o garrafones de leche, clavos, tapas de botellas de jugo o de refrescos, bolsas de plástico, olores de maíz, pinzas de ropa. Por otro lado, hay algunas personas ricas que consideran esos objetos como basura; de hecho, algunos niños pobres literalmente hacen sus juguetes de la basura. Su necesidad les da una perspectiva diferente, ver una bendición donde los ricos solo ven basura.

La pobreza material es una plaga en el planeta, y nunca debemos hacer excusas sobre ella. Debemos trabajar incansablemente por condiciones decentes para cada persona. Al ir trabajando, podemos aprender desde la perspectiva de nuestros hermanos y hermanas que no tienen lo suficiente para vivir. Podemos ver como dependiendo de otras personas por recursos puede transformar la basura de una persona rica en un tesoro para un niño pobre.

POBREZA ESPIRITUAL

En este Domingo de Adviento de "¡Regocijo!" Podemos rezar en una forma particular para terminar con la pobreza material. Las lecturas de hoy nos aseguran que el tipo de pobreza que Dios desea para nosotros es una pobreza espiritual, un conocimiento radical de que todas las cosas vienen de Dios. En donde la pobreza material pueda herir el espíritu humano, la pobreza espiritual cultiva alegría sin límites. Juan el Bautista nos proporciona un modelo atractivo. Con toda sinceridad, él admite que no es digno de desatar las sandalias de Jesús. Juan dice esto no para encantar a las multitudes siendo tímido y despreciándose a sí mismo. No, Juan abraza la verdad que Dios es el origen de toda la bondad. Dependemos absolutamente de Dios para todas las cosas. No hay algo que podamos hacer para ganar el favor de Dios; Dios simplemente nos provee porque necesitamos a Dios. ¡Esto es una noticia muy abundante! Nadie posiblemente podría cuidar de nosotros como Dios los hace. Lo mejor nuestro, simplemente es reflejar el brillo de Dios en el mundo. La brillante alegría de Dios es exactamente a lo que estamos llamados. Así como san Pablo dice: "el que los ha llamado es fiel y cumplirá su promesa".

Lecturas de hoy: Isa 61:1-2, 10-11; Lc 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1 Tes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28 Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.



Please Pray for the Sick

Prayer List Updates



Jesse Diaz	Frances Ramirez	Susan Perez
Paul and Grace Salinas	Alex Tapia	Guadalupe Huerta
Baby Alexander Gonzalez	Norma Morgan	Arleen Soliz
Alejandro De Leon	Laura Reyes Gutierrez	Alfredo Moreno
Delia Riojas	Mary Garza	Delia Lopez
Petra Chavez	Jose A. Ponce, Jr.	Abigail Rodriguez
Joe & Cecilia Espinosa	Elisa Casanova	Rose Loa Gallegos
Pablo Rodriguez	Alexander Hernandez	Roxanne & Linus Joseph
Dolores Gonzalez	Pedro Caballero	Rocky Aranda
Joe Moreno	Eric Nave	David Colbath
Clara Perez	Sofia Olivarez	Victims of First Baptist
Rick Contreras	Deacon Jesus Rodriguez	Church of Sutherland
Brandon Rivas	Rosalinda Rodriguez	Springs, Texas
Liz Quintero	Connie Cardenas	Lisa Marie Rodriguez
Justin Rey Martinez	Rosalinda Esparza	Linda Davila
Antonio Aguero	Cynthia Sandoval	Ray & Christine Rosales
Elvia Diaz	Ismael Montañez	Yvonne Neilon
M/M Margarito Compean	Estella De La Vega	Ricky Lopez
Roberta Bobbie Garza	Diana Calderon	Yamil Traspeña

We thank God for the healing of so many sick parishioners. Please be courteous and call the Parish Office if your loved one is no longer suffering or sick. Thank you.

CONTRIBUTION REPORT THIS WEEK

DECEMBER 9 - 10, 2017

5:00 PM	-\$ 931.00	(105)
8:00 AM	-\$ 620.50	(089)
10:00 AM	-\$1,578.57	(153)
12:00 NOON	-\$1,422.80	(303)
School Mass	-\$ 66.38	
Children's Basket	-\$ 21.00	
Immaculate Conception Mass	-\$ 434.36	
Religious Retirement	-\$ 581.47	2nd Collection
2017 Gift of Giving	-\$ 215.41	
Mail In	-\$ 373.00	
TOTAL COLLECTED	-\$6,244.49	

12/16 - 17 SECOND COLLECTION: DIKETE FOUNDATION

2017 GIFT OF GIVING

Contributions 12/9 - 10, 2017	\$ 215.41
RUNNING BALANCE TOTAL	\$14,868.47



Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, December 16

5:00 p.m. † Beatrice & Ignacio Gomez - Virginia & Lydia
 † Richard Muñoz - Muñoz Family
 For Health Yvonne Neilon - Jose & Eva Benavidez
 For Health Ricky Lopez - Jose & Eva Benavidez

Sunday, December 17

8:00 a.m. † Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
 † Juan Silva - Family
 † Tomasita Garza - Daughter
 † Romana Gutierrez - Familia Alvarado
 10:00 a.m. † Lucy & Gilbert Valdez, Sr. - Ponce Family
 † Ryan Sanchez - Family
 12:00 p.m. † Luis Duran, Sr. - Wife & Family
 † Arturo F. Salinas - Family
 † Leticia Salinas - Family

Monday, December 18

12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 19

8:15 a.m. For All the Holy Souls in Purgatory

Wednesday, December 20

12:00 p.m. † Crisanta Sanchez

Thursday, December 21

12:00 p.m. Yamil Traspeña

Friday, December 22

12:00 p.m. † Jose Francisco Lara

Saturday, December 23

5:00 p.m. † Eloy Alvarado - Family
 † John Garza - Family
 † Martin C. Molina - Sara M. Olivarri

Sunday, December 24

8:00 a.m. † Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
 † Victor Garcia - Willie Garcia
 † Romana Gutierrez - Familia Alvarado
 † Cesar S. Lopez - Wife & Family
 10:00 a.m. † Eloy & Mary Lou Alvarado - Family
 † Joe Riley - Mom & Dad
 † Aurelia Garai - Family
 † Ryan Sanchez - Family
 † Joe & Cora Castillo - Linda & Dora
 † Juan C. Velasquez - Daughters
 † Yvonne Forde - Tillie Hernandez
 In Thanksgiving Natividad Cruz - Cruz Family
 6:00 p.m. † Candelario & Mercedes Lopez - Olivia Lopez
 † Irene Tello & Mercedes Soto - Olivia Lopez
 † Nieves Barrientes & Mary B. Martinez - Oliva Lopez
 12:00 Midnite For the People of Our Parish Community

In Loving Memory

We pray for the souls of our dearly departed who have passed from our parish community:

† Albert Frank Hinojosa
 † Robert E. Alejandro, Jr.

Sanctuary Light

† Jose Francisco Lara



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners:

Advent continues to challenge us all to prepare for the second coming of the Lord. We have experienced the first coming of the Lord who was born in Bethlehem and are anticipating the second coming as John the Baptist has challenged us to prepare the way for the Lord. Let us challenge each other during this Advent time to seriously prepare for the second coming of our Savior. May our Christmas gifts to each other reflect the love of God.

I congratulate all the men who participated in ACTS retreat held this past weekend. We pray for them and hope this unique experience has impacted them to become disciples of the Lord. I encourage each one of them to get involved in our community. Please serve your God in any capacity. We have been blessed with life, talents, resources and relationships to be used for the glory of God.

Our sanctuary has been greatly improved by the addition of a new wooden crucifix ordered from Italy that is placed in the center of the altar against the wall above the Tabernacle. Two new stands have been added, one standing above the Tabernacle and the other upon which reposes the statute of St. John Berchmans. A special sanctuary lamp has been suspended beside the tabernacle. The crucifix, that previously hung above the altar, has been placed in the chapel. We, as parishioners, are requested to respect and care for our sanctuary especially by handling religious items that inspire us to get close to God with the ultimate of care.

As the year 2017 draws to an end and we prepare to welcome the incoming year 2018, it is time to reflect on what our parish community has accomplished in recent years. As your Pastor, I am most appreciative for the creation of a vision and accomplishing many campaigns with my leaders. You alone have inspired me to dream and to believe that anything is possible. I am extremely proud of our parish community and will always be honored to be your Pastor. Our community has raised more than \$14,868.47 for the purpose of assisting individuals and families in need to receive a Christmas celebration.

I invite all of you to join me in the Best of Greece Pilgrimage to walk "In the Footsteps of St. Paul." We will visit Athens, Corinth, Delphi, Thessaloniki and Philippi. Please sign up for a 9 day pilgrimage to Greece from April 9th to April 17th, 2018 for \$3,229 per person which includes: round trip airfare from San Antonio, first class/select hotels, breakfast and dinner daily, entrance fees, comprehensive sightseeing and much more. Join us for this trip of a lifetime!

May God bless you always,



Father Fidèle Okitembo Dikete, Pastor
 fr.fidele@stjohnberchmans.com

Announcements

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TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading - As a garden makes its growth spring up, so will God make justice spring up before all the nations (Isaiah 61:1-11).

Psalm - My soul rejoices in my God (Luke 1:46-54).

Second Reading - Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good (1 Thes 5:16-24).

Gospel - I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord (John 1:6-8, 19-28). The English translation of the Palm Responses from *Lectonary for Mass* © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25
Tue: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
Wed: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-4ab, 5-6; Lk 1:26-38
Thu: Sg 2:8-14; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
Fri: 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8; Lk 1:46-56
Sat: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66
Sun: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29;
Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

Events of the Week ~ December 17 - 24, 2017

Sunday, December 17 - LAST DAY OF CCD CLASSES

7:30 a.m. Divine Mercy - Church
8:00 a.m. Spanish Mass - Church
10:00 a.m. Mass - Church
12:00 p.m. Mass - Church
1:00 p.m. Youth Ministry - Cafeteria

Monday, December 18

12:00 p.m. Communion Service

Tuesday, December 19

8:15 a.m. School Mass - Church
6:00 p.m. School Christmas Program/ PK3 - 1st - Church
7:00 p.m. Spanish Prayer Group

Wednesday, December 20

9:15 a.m. Rosary Makers - Offsite
12:00 p.m. Mass - Chapel
6:00 p.m. School Christmas Program/2nd-4th - Church

Thursday, December 21

12:00 p.m. Mass - Chapel
6:00 p.m. School Christmas Program/ 5th-8th - Church
6:30 p.m. Ultreya English - School

Friday, December 22

12:00 p.m. Mass - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Posada Ceremony - Church

Saturday, December 23

5:00 p.m. Mass - Church

Sunday, December 24 - NO CCD CLASSES

7:30 a.m. Divine Mercy - Church
8:00 a.m. Spanish Mass - Church
10:00 a.m. Mass - Church
6:00 p.m. English Children's Mass - Church
11:00 p.m. Christmas Carols
12:00 midnite Bilingual Mass



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2017
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Please join us every Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in our Chapel. Exposition of the Holy Eucharist is the REAL presence of our Lord and Savior. Just as you can't be exposed to the sun without receiving it's rays, neither can you come to Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament without receiving the Divine rays of His Grace, Love and Peace.



REMINDER: Due to our Christmas Break there will be no Religious Education classes on **Sunday, December 24** and **Sunday, December 31**st.

Classes will resume on **Sunday, January 7, 2018.**

On behalf of the Religious Education staff we wish you a joyous holiday season!

CHURCH CLEANING MINISTRY

Our parish is always in need of a few good hands every Saturday morning to help us clean our beautiful church. **We are kindly reminding Ministries assigned for cleaning to please show up!** Stella Rico leads our parish in this important ministry and we meet at 8:00 am in the church foyer on Saturday mornings. Thank you!

Cleaning Schedule of Ministries

December 23, 2017 - Religious Education

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Third Sunday of Advent
Thursday: St. Peter Canisius; Winter begins
Saturday: St. John of Kanty

Third Sunday of Advent December 17, 2017

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

— 1 Thessalonians 5:16



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

All requests must be sent by email to osantoyo1104@gmail.com and will be finalized for approval by Father Fidele. We ask that you submit your requests at least two (2) weeks in advance for placement in the bulletin.



NEW TO OUR PARISH AND WANT TO REGISTER AS A NEW PARISHIONER?

If you are interested in registering as a new parishioner at St. John Berchmans Church, please contact our Parish Office at 210434-3247 to fill out a registration form.

Announcements



GAUDETE SUNDAY

Today is called Gaudete Sunday, Gaudete means "Rejoice" in Latin. This time is marked by the third candle of our Advent wreath, which is rose colored, and the rose colored vestments often used in Eucharist.

We are halfway through Advent - so much closer to Christmas. On this Third Sunday of Advent, what do you have to rejoice about? How are your advent preparations for Christmas going? Let us pray today for that extra boost of joy in this season of watchful waiting for the coming of the Lord.

LAS POSADAS

We are providing the addresses of parishioners who will be hosting in their homes all Posadas begin at 7:00 p.m.

DATE	HOST	ADDRESS
December 17	Gilbert & Sylvia Euresti	179 Chesley 78226
December 18	Dora Duran	801 W. Kirk 78226
December 19	George Cisneros Apartments	3003 Weir Avenue 78226
December 20	Angelica Rosas	2403 Barney 78237
December 21	Estefana & Louie Reyes	3103 Hatton 78237
December 22	St. John Berchmans Church	1147 Cupples Road
December 24	Cindy Sandoval	2603 Aiken 78237



Loved One in Jail or Prison?
Let Us Help You
 Criminal Justice Ministry
 Archdiocesan Office
 (210) 734-1980
www.archsa.org/criminal-justice

SJB YOUTH MINISTRY

The Ministry would like to express their **THANKS** for all who donated to retreat costs and who also ordered baked goods which helped us send our teens to retreat. We appreciate everyone's support.

- ◆ Teen ACTS retreat on **December 21 - 24, 2017** to be held at Camp Chrysalis in Kerrville, TX. Space is still available and the last day to register is Wednesday, December 20 2017. Cost \$100 and scholarships are available.

For additional information, please contact Elida Gonzales at 210.683.6279.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

If you would like to order a Christmas Poinsettia in memory of a loved one, please contact the Parish office. The altar will be decorated with the poinsettia's and you may pick them up after Christmas in the office.

The cost per poinsettia is \$10.00 and we will sell only 65 poinsettias. Thank you!



Archdiocese of San Antonio outreach to victims and survivors of sexual abuse by clergy and/or other church personnel.

Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS, and the staff of the archdiocese are committed to assisting in the healing process for victims and survivors of sexual abuse by clergy or church personnel. If you or someone you know has been a victim of such abuse and is in need of services, call the Office of Victims Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE) at 210.734.7786 or toll free 877.700-1888

REJOICE

Isaiah proclaims truly good news to us! God's coming brings not sadness, guilt, fear, wrath, or condemnation. No, God's coming is a source of comfort and joy. Saying it once is not enough, for today's readings are full of joy. Mary's Magnificat substitutes for our psalm today, and our second reading encourages us to rejoice, to give thanks and praise. This is the root meaning of the Greek word for eucharist. We are urged to rejoice and give thanks, because the coming of the Lord brings joy, healing, liberty, release, vindication. It makes the very earth spring up with new life! Good tidings! Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How can I help bring in a "year of favor" to the world, to the community, to those I know?