

Second Sunday of Advent

EDEN, REVISITED

Remember Eden? God created humans and all creatures in love, for love. The failure of humanity recorded in the book of Genesis is that from the beginning people have tended to desire, not to be like God, but to be gods. Instead of seeing the fingerprint of our creator in others, we tend to see them as competition. Where there is abundance, we see scarcity. We seek the things of this world rather than seeking and finding God's life and goodness in our midst. The writer of Isaiah paints a far better picture, which Christians have seen as a foretelling of the Christ, the Anointed One of God, Jesus.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND

Knowing Jesus as the One for whom the people of God have longed helps us to understand John the Baptist's strong words to the Pharisees and Sadducees in today's Gospel passage. They had the responsibility to lead the people toward right relationship with God and others, and instead had failed to produce the fruits of faithful living themselves. John did not prevent them from approaching him for the baptism of repentance, but asked them to turn their lives more faithfully to God and live accordingly. John understood himself as the forerunner of the One for whom the people had been waiting—the one upon whom the spirit of the Lord rests, the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and strength, knowledge and fear of the Lord.

In Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of the Lord. Not that Jesus has not already come, or that the Lord is not already in our midst; rather, we take this season to appreciate in a new and fuller way that God's coming as a child in Bethlehem and Christ's promised return are about the establishment of the kingdom of God—already in our midst and yet not known in its fullness until the Lord returns in glory.

Today's Readings: Is 11:1–10; Ps 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Rom 15:4–9; Mt 3:1–12

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EL EDÉN REVISITADO

¿Recuerdas el Edén? Dios creó a las personas y todas las criaturas con y por amor. La falta de la humanidad registrada en el libro del Génesis es que desde el principio las personas tienden a desear, no a ser como Dios, sino a ser dioses. En lugar de ver la huella de nuestro creador en los demás, tendemos a verlas como la competencia. Donde hay abundancia, vemos escases. Buscamos las cosas de este mundo en lugar de buscar y encontrar la vida de Dios y la bondad en medio de nosotros. El escritor de Isaías describe una mejor escena, la cual los cristianos la han visto como una predicción de Cristo, el Ungido de Dios, Jesús.

EL REINO DE DIOS ESTÁ CERCA

Conociendo a Jesús como Aquél por quien el pueblo de Dios había anhelado, nos ayuda a entender las fuertes palabras que Juan el Bautista les dijo a los fariseos y saduceos en el pasaje del Evangelio de hoy. Ellos tenían la responsabilidad de guiar al pueblo hacia una justa relación con Dios y con los demás, pero habían fallado en lograr producir los frutos de vivir fielmente ellos mismos. Juan no les impidió que se acercaran a él para el bautismo de arrepentimiento, sino que les pidió cambiar sus vidas más fielmente hacia Dios y vivir en este sentido. Juan mismo entendió que el mismo era el precursor de Aquél por quien las personas habían estado esperando, aquél en quien estaría el espíritu del Señor, espíritu de sabiduría, entendimiento, consejo y fortaleza, conocimiento y miedo al Señor.

En Adviento, preparamos nuestros corazones y mentes para la venida del Señor. No porque el Señor no haya venido, o que el Señor no esté en medio de nosotros; al contrario, tomamos este tiempo para apreciar en una nueva forma más llena la venida del Señor como un niño en Belén y el regreso prometido de Cristo está cerca del establecimiento del Reino de Dios, ya en medio de nosotros y todavía sin conocerse en su plenitud hasta el regreso glorioso del Señor.

Lecturas de hoy: Is 11:1–10; Sal 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Rom 15:4–9; Mt 3:1–12

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Please Pray for the Sick

Prayer List Updates



Frances Vasaldua	Maria Langley	Eva Flores
Trini Torres	Irma Urias	Paul Muñoz, Sr.
Martin Ramos	Mary S. Martinez	Joe Espinoza
Daniel Hernandez	Frances Lozano	Virginia & Jose Ponce
Debra Sendejo	Mary Escalera	Victoria Orosco
Michael Sendejo	Maximus James Tobar	Henry Vidal
Ashley Arthur	Suzanne Gutierrez	Hope Esquivel
Annette Vega	Benny Martinez	Victor Cruz
Kevin Ryan Martinez	Edward Martinez	Tomas Johnson
David Ortiz	Terry Moreno	Deacon Jesus Rodriguez
Sammuel Cortez	Sarah Contreras	Rosalinda Esparza
Mary Lou Medina	Donnie Vordenbaum	Daniel Rodriguez
Inez De Los Santos	Gary Stanko	Rosie Flores
Frances Ramirez	Jose Flores	Jessica Diaz
Clara Perez	Ramiro Davila	Robert Campos
Sandra Amaya	Marty Carrera Tobias	Gloria Martinez
Danny Rae Schexnayder, Sr.	Jesse R. Diaz	Carlos Guardiola, III
Sandra Jean Guerra	Celina Herrera	Joe R. Martinez
Kayla Scott	David Santoyo	Baby Sophia

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.

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

NOV. 30 - DEC. 1, 2019

5:00 PM	-\$ 928.00	(105)
8:00 AM	-\$ 546.60	(061)
10:00 AM	-\$1,772.00	(198)
12 NOON	-\$1,470.84	(130)
Thanksgiving Mass	-\$ 538.00	
Capital Improvements	-\$ 714.37	
2019 Gift of Giving	-\$ 264.05	
TOTAL	\$6,233.86	

SECOND COLLECTION

December 8, 2019 - Retirement Fund for Religious
December 15, 2019 - Dikete Foundation

2019 GIFT OF GIVING

Contributions 11//23-24/19	\$ 523.60
RUNNING BALANCE TOTAL	\$18,944.59

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK



Saturday, December 7 - ST. AMBROSE

5:00 p.m. † Aurora Campos - Campos Family
† Alice Palacios - Diaz Family
† Paul G. Salinas - Family
Gift of Life Tomas Diaz - Diaz Family

Sunday, December 8

8:00 a.m. † Librada Cadena - Grace Salinas
† Maria J. Terrazas - Angelita Canales
† Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
† Hilda Torres - Ultreya
† David Medina - Sister

10:00 a.m. † Martin & Margaret Burrell - Daughter
† Edward Moreno - Wife & Family
† Justin Rey Martinez - Virginia Lucio
† Daniel C. Arzola - Family

Gift of Life Ralph Rodriguez - Mom

12:00 p.m. **In Thanksgiving** Karen Araguz - Husband Victor

Monday, December 9 - IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Tuesday, December 10

12:00 p.m. † Susie & Magdalena Meza - Family
† Ramiro Ayala, Jr. - Mom & Family

Wednesday, December 11

12:00 p.m. † Consuelo Saucedo

Thursday, December 12 - OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

8:15 a.m. † Librada Cadena - Grace Salinas
† Eusebia Arocha - Dora Arocha
† David De Los Santos - Maria De Los Santos
7:00 p.m. † Edward Cruz - Cruz Family

Friday, December 13 - MEMORIAL OF ST. LUCY

12:00 p.m. † Wilbert Salazar

Saturday, December 14

5:00 p.m. † Richard Muñoz - Muñoz Family
† Eusebio Rocha - Family

Sunday, December 15



8:00 a.m. † Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
† Guadalupe Lopez - Granddaughter
10:00 a.m. † Martin & Margaret Burrell - Daughter
† Daniel C. Arzola - Family
† Ryan Sanchez - Sanchez Family
For Health Helen Lloyd - Genevieve Perez
12:00 p.m. † Paul G. Salinas - Salinas Family
In Thanksgiving for CCD - DRE

In Loving Memory

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

† Frank Cosme
† Wilbert Salazar

Sanctuary Light
Henry Vidal
Victoria Orosco
Hope Esquivel



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

We thank Father Mike DeGerolami for a powerful and inspiring presentation on Advent which will lead us to the celebration of Christmas: the birthday of our Savior and also the anticipation of the second coming of our Lord. Let us take the following three weeks of Advent to prepare for this unique and exciting opportunity to celebrate our Lord, and shine God's light into our lives.

As of December 3rd, I have collected 24 applications for the **Gift of Giving** for Christmas. Any family in need of assistance asked to request an application, in the foyer, in the parish office, or speak with me directly. I would like to thank each and every one of you for contributing every weekend with a \$1.00 donation in support of the needs of the families during the holidays. We have collected over \$18,000 thanks and completely due to your generosity. I am looking forward to celebrating the birthday of our Lord and anticipate his second coming.

I announce with great excitement that the new floor has been installed and completed! Remember at all times the cost of \$37,000 to complete this project. It has been a great sacrifice to achieve this project, so it is only fitting that we take great care of our floor in order to maintain it for future generations. The cushions for the pews are being fabricated and will be installed within three weeks. Thank you, as always, for your generosity, patience and support.

It is with great excitement that I announce my future pilgrimage to the Holy Land! I will be leading a pilgrimage to The Holy Land for 10 days from June 2nd thru June 11th, 2020. We will explore and meditate in places where Jesus was born, worked, suffered, died and rose from the dead. We will also visit places where Mary, Mother of God, was born, where she raised Jesus and witnessed her son's suffering, death and resurrection. This is an opportunity for us to connect with scriptures and the reality. The trip's cost is \$3,100 per person (double occupancy) which includes round trip airfare from San Antonio, 4 & 5 star hotels, breakfast and dinner included, daily sightseeing, tips, daily Masses, airport taxes, fuel surcharges and the assistance of professional local catholic guides. Invite your family members and friends to join me in this memorable trip. If you intend to walk with me in this journey, please stop by the office for a detailed brochure or speak with me after Mass for more information.

An informal meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 10, 2019, at 7:00 in the evening in the Formation House** for any person interested in this pilgrimage. Please make an effort to attend. It is never too early to plan your summer vacation. Experience the Holy Land in the company of other friendly travel seekers.

May God bless you always,



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

Announcements

www.stjohnberchmans.com

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — He shall bring justice for the afflicted; the earth shall overflow with the knowledge of the LORD (Isa 11:1-10).

Psalm — Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever (Psalm 72).

Second Reading — Glorify God by living in harmony with one another, welcoming each other as Christ welcomed you (Romans 15:4-9).

Gospel — Produce good fruit worthy of your baptism; repent, for the reign of God is near (Matt 3:1-12).
The English translation of the Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38
Tue: Is 40:1-11; Ps 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13; Mt 18:12-14
Wed: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30
Thu: Zec 2:14-17; Jdt 13:18-19; Lk 1:26-38
Fri: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
Sat: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80:2ac, 3b, 15-19; Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Sun: Is 35:1-6a, 10; Ps 146:6-10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

Events of the Week ~ December 8 - 15, 2019

Sunday, December 8

8:00 a.m. Spanish Mass - Church
10:00 a.m. Mass - Church
12:00 p.m. Mass - Church

Monday, December 9

7:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass - Church

Tuesday, December 10

12:00 p.m. Mass - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Pilgrimage Meeting - Formation House

Wednesday, December 11

12:00 p.m. Mass - Chapel
6:30 p.m. ACTS Core - Formation
6:30 p.m. RCIA - Formation House
7:00 p.m. Reconciliation/Confessions - Church

Thursday, December 12

8:15 a.m. School Mass - Church
6:30 p.m. Mañanitas - Church
7:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass - Church

Friday, December 13

12:00 p.m. Mass - Church

Saturday, December 14

5:00 p.m. Mass - Church
6:30 p.m. Christmas Dinner/Dance - Cafeteria

Sunday, December 15

8:00 a.m. Spanish Mass - Church
10:00 a.m. Mass - Church
12:00 p.m. Mass - Church
2:00 p.m. ACTS Toy Bingo - School Cafeteria



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2019
9:00 A.M. - 5 P.M.

Please join us every Thursday from 9am to 5pm 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 its rays, neither can you come to Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament without receiving the divine rays of His Grace, Love and Peace.

SECOND COLLECTION FOR THE WEEKEND OF DECEMBER 7 - 8, 2019

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

"Please give to those who have given a lifetime"

Over 30,000 Senior Catholic Sisters, Brothers, and religious order Priests benefit from this retirement fund.

Service is a way of life for them. Most ministered in Catholic schools, hospitals, parishes, and social service agencies, usually for little or no pay. Today, hundreds of religious communities lack adequate savings for retirement and eldercare. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious offers vital support for necessities, such as medications and nursing care. Please be generous.

For additional information contact:
retiredreligious.org

CHURCH CLEANING MINISTRY

Our parish is always in need of a few good hands every Saturday morning to help us clean our beautiful church. *"A short time devoted to taking care of the Lord's House is a small price to pay for all He does for us each and every day."*

Cleaning Schedule of Ministries

December 14, 2019 - Youth/Young Adults
December 21, 2019 - Knights/Ultreya



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

All requests must be sent by email to osantoyo1104@gmail.com and will be finalized for approval by Father Fidèle. 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 210-434-3247 to fill out a registration form.

Announcements

www.stjohnberchmans.com



SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

We light a second purple candle on the second Sunday of Advent to represent the hope of Christ coming to the world.

This week, we ask Him to move us to action, so that we can prepare ourselves for both His coming at Christmas and His Second coming. He offers Himself freely, but we must freely accept His offer in order to attain salvation.

God's plan for humanity unfolded in the town of Bethlehem, the birthplace of the Messiah, joyously fulfilling a long-awaited promise. Today, we confidently wait for the Messiah's triumphant return.

OVASE TRAINING

For those individuals who were unable to attend our first session, we will have our next OVASE TRAINING on **Saturday, December 21, 2019** at 9:00 a.m. in the Formation House.

Fr. Fidèle cannot stress the importance of completing this training and that you will **NOT BE permitted** to participate in **ANY MINISTRY** if you do not attend this mandatory session. Thank you!

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- ⇒ MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2019
7:00 P.M. - BILINGUAL MASS - IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY - CHURCH
- ⇒ TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019
7:00 P.M. - MEETING FOR SUMMER PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY LAND/FORMATION HOUSE
- ⇒ WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019
7:00 P.M. - RECONCILIATION SERVICE/CONFESSIONS IN THE CHURCH
- ⇒ THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2019 OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
8:15 A.M. - CHILDREN'S MASS
6:30 P.M. - MAÑANITAS
7:00 P.M. - BILINGUAL MASS
- ⇒ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019 - ST. JOHN BERCHMANS ACTS TOY BINGO
2:00 P.M. IN THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA. \$7.00 PER CARD (15 REGULAR GAMES)
Donations for boys are greatly appreciated and you may bring them to the parish office.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It's that time of year again! If you would like to order a Christmas poinsettia in memory of a loved one, please contact the Parish Office at 210.434.3247. The altar will be beautifully decorated with the poinsettias and they may be picked up in the office **after Christmas**.

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

PAYING FOR SENIOR CARE

Our mission at PayingForSeniorCare.com is to help the elderly and their families fully understand the cost of long term care and the programs that can provide financial supports. We have an online database of tools, references, and articles that cover the host of different options. You can review our guides here:

- <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/financial-assistance/teas/san-antonio.html>
- <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/longtermcare/resources.html>

For more information contact: Rebecca Johnson (877) 213-8687

THE LONG-AWAITED ONE

As the Sundays of Advent unfold the scriptures shift focus from the final coming of the Lord to his historical birth. Today's scriptures blend the two. Isaiah's disillusionment with the kings of his own day led him to envision an ideal king who would rule with divine approval and be led by divine wisdom. For centuries the Jewish people anticipated the arrival of that Messiah, who would usher in a blessed age when the whole world would finally dwell in justice and peace.

After centuries of such growing expectation, the preaching of John the Baptist about the imminent arrival of the Messiah could not help but provoke intense interest. The Baptist's message about preparation for "the one who is coming" (Matthew 3:11) makes clear that Jesus is, in fact, the long-awaited one who is ushering in the new age foretold by Isaiah and all the prophets. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What can I do to bring harmony to my family, my neighborhood, the world?