

+++ *From the Pastor* +++

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21, 2014*

Christmas Day is the great day of our salvation. *Our salvation*. That is the whole reason that God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, became Man. The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us so that He might suffer, die and rise to new life to save us from our sins. Jesus Christ does save us from our sins, but only if we desire this salvation. Jesus Christ longs to put right what we have done. Jesus Christ yearns for our broken lives to be healed; our relationships with ourselves, our brothers and sisters and with God to be mended.

This is exactly why, on the very morning of His Resurrection, Christ Jesus gave to His Church the Sacrament of Penance. In making a good and holy confession we experience the joy, the freedom, the true meaning and purpose of Christmas as Christ reaches deep into our souls and forgives all of our wrong-doing, our sins, and once again saves us from the powers of darkness.

If we want to truly rejoice as we sing the glad tidings of our Savior's Birth, if we really want to know what it means to be free, if we really want to experience the reason for this glorious season here's a thought: go to confession. Jesus Christ waits for you in the Sacrament of Penance as the Father waited for his prodigal son. The mercy of Jesus is free. There are no strings attached.

So let Jesus make your heart merry and light. Allow Jesus to make your soul pure and bright. Come to the Stable on Christmas and present to our Savior the only gift He seeks from us: a soul cleansed and purified of sin. The schedule for the Sacrament of Penance in our parish is found on the inside front cover of our bulletin.

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In these final days before Christmas we may look to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph to be our companions as once again we anticipate the joy of the birth of our Savior and King, Christ the Lord.

Our Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph were Chosen by God from all of the women and men of the world to be the mother and foster-father of His Only-Begotten Son. Now they constantly intercede for us, asking their Son to show us His mercy and love. Perhaps we might take some time this week, before Christmas, to ask Mary and Joseph to help us prepare a quiet place in our hearts for the Son of God to be born anew in us.

May this final week of Advent find us waiting and watching with the joy and wonder that filled the hearts and minds and souls of our Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph as we look forward to the power of God's grace breaking into our world on Christmas.