

November 22, 2016

Dear Members and Friends of St. Joseph Church,

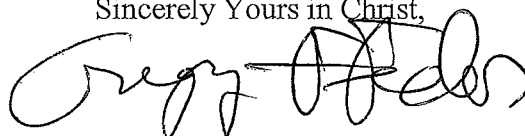
I hope that your Thanksgiving Day feasting will prepare you well for the Season of Advent. We have a tendency to overlook the Church's liturgical season in the face of our culture's emphasis on Christmas as an economic event. We are constantly bombarded with messages that urge us to buy, buy, and buy! The Season of Advent offers a different and ultimately much more important message. Through the readings and prayers of Advent we are reminded to prepare, prepare, prepare! This preparation focuses on the return of Christ in triumph in the first part of the season, and only after Dec. 16 does our attention turn to the Nativity, or birth, of our Lord Jesus.

To help with our preparation for what is ultimately important, there are a number of activities I will highlight.

- The Advent Sunday Scripture Readings Class will meet on Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and 13. During these sessions, we will take an in-depth look at the upcoming Sunday Readings for Advent. Tuesday, Dec. 20 we will take an in-depth look at the Christmas readings. These sessions are open to all interested persons. I encourage our Readers to attend as well.
- Wednesday, November 30, Carol Craven will lead an Advent Reflection following the 9:00 am Mass in the Blue Room. This program will be repeated at 6:30 pm in the Social Hall.
- The Knights of Columbus will have the annual display of Nativity Sets after the Masses on the weekend of December 3 and 4. The CCD classes will display Religious Symbols of Christmas after the Masses the weekend of December 10 and 11.
- All parishioners will have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance at a communal celebration held in conjunction with our neighboring parishes at St. Christine Church on Sunday, December 4, at 2:00 pm. In preparing for the return of Christ and the celebration of Christmas, Confession is literally good for the soul. There will also be a Penance Service at St. James Church in North Jackson on Thursday, December 15, at 7:00 pm.
- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>) is a holy day of obligation. The Eucharist will be celebrated at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, Dec. 7 and at 9:00 am on Dec. 8.
- The Eucharist will be celebrated at 4:30 pm on Christmas Eve. The choir will sing at the 4:30 pm Mass. We will have Mass at 8:30 am and 11:00 am on Christmas Day.
- Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God will be at 4:30 pm on New Year's Eve and at 8:30 am and 11:00 am on January 1, 2017.

I am eager to celebrate the holidays with all of you this year. Praying that God continues to bless and keep you, I remain

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the printed text "Sincerely Yours in Christ,".