

November 30, 2017

Dear Members and Friends of St. Joseph Church,

I hope that your Thanksgiving Day feasting prepared you well for the Season of Advent. We tend 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! 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, here are the activities I will highlight.

- The Advent Sunday Scripture Readings Class will meet on Dec. 5, 12, and 19. During these sessions, we will take an in-depth look at the upcoming Sunday Readings for Advent. These sessions are open to all interested persons.
- The Parish Life Committee is sponsoring a Movie Night on Saturday, Dec. 2, at 6:00 pm.
- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8th) is a Holy Day of obligation. The Eucharist will be celebrated at 6:00 pm on Thursday, Dec. 7 and at 9:00 am on Dec. 8. I will also preside at the Noon Mass at IHM on the Holy Day.
- The CCD classes will display Religious Symbols of Christmas after the Masses the weekend of December 9-10.
- Saturday, Dec. 9, IHM will celebrate First Reconciliation at 10:00 am. Here at St. Joseph, our Candidates for Confirmation will celebrate the Rite of Acceptance at Noon.
- 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. Joseph Church on Sunday, December 10, 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. Catherine Church in Lake Milton on Thursday, December 14, at 7:00 pm.
- Sunday, Dec. 24, we will have 8:30 am Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. **There will not be an 11:00 am Mass here at St. Joseph.** I will preside at the 11:00 am Mass at IHM.
- The Eucharist will be celebrated at 4:30 pm on **Christmas Eve**, Sunday Dec. 24. The choir will sing at the 4:30 pm Mass. We will have Mass at 10:00 am on **Christmas Day**.
- Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God will be at 10:00 am on Monday, January 1, 2018.

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,