

# ST. FRANCIS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace! —St. Francis

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Sunday, December 12, 2010

## THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT

Niech Bedze pochwalony Jezus Chrystus. R/. Na wieki, wiekow.

Praised be the Lord, Jesus Christ. R/. Now and forever.

9:00 AM - "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord"

OPENING PRAYER: (please say with Celebrant) O Father, our hearts respond with joy as we approach the yearly remembrance of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem. As we sense within ourselves His coming, may there be restored within us the image and likeness of our Creator, who gave us the Christ of Christmas. Amen

PRAYER: (celebrant) O God, as we look upon this wreath, the symbol of eternity, and as we light a third candle, may we be prepared more thoroughly in making the way for your son, especially in the depths of our hearts. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD CANDLE: (Reader): O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may indeed prepare for Your only begotten Son, that through his coming, we may be made worthy to observe you with pure minds. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

CONTEMPORARY RITE - Mass Book pg. 63  
(please note: No "Gloria" during Advent)

READING I - Is 35:1-6a, 10

The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

The LORD God keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets captives free.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

The LORD gives sight to the blind; the LORD raises up those who were bowed down.

The LORD loves the just; the LORD protects strangers.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

The fatherless and the widow he sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts.

The LORD shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

READING II - Jas 5:7-10

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, be-

ing patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates. Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers and sisters, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Priest/Lector: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. R./ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Verse. R./ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL - Mt 11:2-11

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you. Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

INTERCESSIONS - RESPONSE - GOD, HEAR US!

OFFERTORY HYMN - "A Voice Cries Out" -  
OUR FATHER - page 95

COMMUNION & POST COMMUNION HYMNS -  
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

RECESSIONAL HYMN - "Every Valley"



# St. Francis Weekly "Kompositions"

## ST. LUCY (d. 304) December 13

Many times in the gospels we find sight (and also light) used as a metaphor for spiritual breakthrough, while blindness (or darkness) becomes a metaphor for spiritual ignorance. Therefore, when we read the stories of the gospels, it's always good to see if deeper meaning can be fathomed from interpreting them on two levels: outward and inward. Sight and light call to mind one of Christianity's most adored saints—St. Lucy, whose main attributes derive from the Latin word for light, lux.

References to St. Lucy can be found in some of the oldest Roman religious records. She was born into a wealthy Sicilian family in Syracuse, Sicily in the year A.D. 285. As was the norm for that era, her family arranged for her to be married.

Inspired by the martyred St. Agatha, Lucy instead promised her body and mind to Christ. Much to her consternation of her betrothed, she desired that the items of her dowry be given to the poor and needy. Lucy pledged to live a chaste life devoted to prayer. In those days of Diocletian persecutions, someone had only to report to the authorities that a person was a Christian, and punishment in the form of torture and death would be duly meted out. Christian women were routinely tortured by being sent to serve in a brothel.

Lucy's spurned suitor reported her, and when she was called before the Roman consul Paschasius to answer the charges that she refused to sacrifice to the Roman idols. She spoke of sacrifice as more important for the poor than for idols. This angered the official, and he ordered her sent to a brothel.

When the soldiers came to escort her to the brothel, they found that she had become immobile, and they could not move her. Reinforcements were sent, along with oxen, but still Lucy could not be budged. Paschasius had his men build a funeral pyre around her and torch it. Still, Lucy was immovable. She said she wanted nonbelievers to have the opportunity to curse and insult her and believers to have their fears of suffering and death assuaged. Enraged, Paschasius ordered one of his men to thrust his sword across Lucy's neck, cutting her throat. Reputedly, before she died, her eyes were cut out but were miraculously restored. As news of Lucy's martyrdom spread, her cult swelled in numbers, as did stories of miraculous healing. In art, Lucy is often depicted holding her eyes on a tray.

## PRAYER TO ST. LUCY

O Saint Lucy, who stood firm in your convictions even as unwelcome advances from an unwanted suitor threatened your hope for a peaceful, prayer life in Christ, pray for us whose faith needs deepening that we may not be uprooted from our convictions. Pray to our Lord with us and for us that we may walk in light and understanding on the path of Christian living and not be buffeted by the angry emotions or dark intentions of others who would try to dissuade us. Blessed virgin and martyr, mercifully grant that we who venerate your sacrifice may receive your intercession. Amen.



## BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY ...

Henri Nouwen

### ENERGIZING VISIONS

Are the great visions of the ultimate peace among all people and the ultimate harmony of all creation just utopian fairy tales? No, they are not! They correspond to the deepest longings of the human heart and point to the truth waiting to be revealed beyond all lies and deceptions. These visions nurture our souls and strengthen our hearts. They offer us hope when we are close to despair, courage when we are tempted to give up on life, and trust when suspicion seems the more logical attitude. Without these visions our deepest aspiration, which give us the energy to overcome great obstacles and painful setbacks, will be dulled and our lives will become flat, boring and finally destructive. Our visions enable us to live the full life.

## ONE MINUTE DEVOTIONS ... Helen Steiner Rice THE PROMISE OF GLORY

Make us aware that the Christmas story is everyone's promise of eternal glory.

'Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.' - Psalm 115:1

Today send some of your own love into the world. You don't have to buy it, box it, wrap it, tie it - just give love away!

## ST. FRANCIS NOTES ...

**CHRISTMAS EVE** - (Shepherd's Mass) will be held on Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 p.m. Come Rejoice! **OUR CHRISTMAS TRADITION**...please join us in the parish Hall, after Shepherd's Mass for our special time to share a meal together, listen and care for one another. Blessed Christmas to all!

**OPŁATEK (CHRISTMAS WAFER)** This thin plain white wafer with nativity scenes stamped thereon, remains one of our important traditions. Sometimes referred to as "chleb anielski (angel bread), it is shared with family and friends at Christmas Eve supper and extended in our greeting cards to those distant from us. In this breaking of bread we extend our greetings and good wishes for all the blessings and happiness of the gift of Christmas. Please ask Fr. Andrew for your 'oplatek'

**'THANK YOU'...**To all Parishioners and dear Friends of St. Francis, for your hard work, time, talent and contributions Again making last Sunday's, St. Nicholas Celebration, a "GREAT" success! God's blessings continue in so many ways! Thank you!

