

ST. FRANCIS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

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Father Andrew Koterba, Pastor

Lillian Zaradich, Council Chair

Sunday, December 21, 2008



**FOURTH
SUNDAY
OF
Advent**

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

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

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

OPENING PRAYER: (please say with Celebrant)

O Father, as we approach the yearly remembrance of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, may 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 fourth candle, may we be prepared more thoroughly in making the way for your son, especially in the depths of our joyful hearts. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH CANDLE: (Reader): O Lord, we beg you, incline your ear to our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Your visitation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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

READING I - 2 Samuel 7, 1-5, 8-11, 16

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 89, 2-3, 4-5, 27, 29

R/: Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

The favors of the Lord I will sing forever; through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness. For you have said, "My kindness is established forever"; in heaven you have confirmed you faithfulness.

R/: Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant: Forever will I confirm your posterity and establish your throne for all generations."

R/: Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

"He shall say of me, ' You are my father, my God, the Rock, my savior.' Forever, I will maintain my kindness toward him, and my covenant with him stands firm."

R/: Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

READING II - Romans 16: 25-27

ALLELUIA. I am the servant of the Lord; may his will for me be done. ALLELUIA.

GOSPEL - Luke 1, 26-38

A reading from the holy gospel according to St. Luke: **R/: Glory be to you, O Lord.**

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. Upon arriving, the angel said to her: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women." She was deeply troubled by his words, and wondered what his greeting meant. The angel went on to say to her: "Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus. Great will be his dignity and he will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over the house of Jacob forever and his reign will be without end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be since I do not know man?" The angel answered her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; hence, the holy offspring to be born will be called Son of God. Know that Elizabeth your kinswoman has conceived a son in her old age; she who was thought to be sterile is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible with God."

Mary said: "I am the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say." With that the angel left her.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **R/: Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

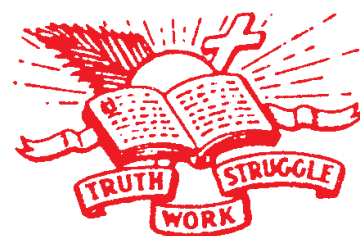
GENERAL CONCESSIONS: **God, Hear Us!**

OFFERTORY HYMN - *"A Voice Cries Out"*

OUR FATHER - page 95

COMMUNION HYMNS - *"Let The Valleys Be Raised" and "Patience People"*

RECESSIONAL HYMN - *"Every Valley"*



St. Francis Weekly "Kompositions"

ADVENT...

"PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD!"

The four weeks of Advent prepare us to celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation; God became human to bring us out of the darkness into His eternal light. During Advent, liturgy stresses not only penance, but also hope, light, joy and surrender.

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT - SURRENDER

Spiritual surrender is the act of turning your life and your will over to the Lord. When the Angel Gabriel told Mary that God wanted her to be the mother of His Son, she consented willingly saying, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

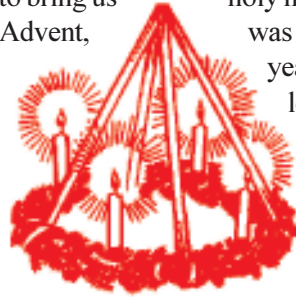
On the fourth Sunday of Advent, the liturgy brings us to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus. The readings remind us of the ancient Jewish prophecies about the coming of the Messiah. In Mary, the joy of ancient Israel reaches its fullness. In Mary, the happiness of the messianic times bursts forth... the faithful are invited to take the Virgin Mary as a model ... becoming vigilant in prayer and joyful praise.

Joy and surrender are two facets of the same jewel. Like Mary, we are called to accept God's will, thus becoming instruments of His love. Like Mary, we can bring Jesus into the world and share Him with others. Be a cheerful giver. Lift up your heart and have new confidence. Reach out to others in a spirit of love.

BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY ... Henri Nouwen AN EXPERIENCE OFFERED TO ALL

Some people say, "I never had an experience of the fullness of time I am just an ordinary person, not a mystic." Although some people have unique experiences of God's presence and, therefore, have unique missions to announce God's presence to the world, all of us whether learned or uneducated, rich or poor, visible or hidden - can receive the grace of seeing God in the fullness of time. This mystical experience is not reserved for a few exceptional people. God wants to offer that gift in one way or another to all God's children.

But we must desire it. We must be attentive and interiorly alert. For some people the experience of the fullness of time comes in a spectacular way, as it did to St. Paul when he fell to the ground on his way to Damascus (see Acts 9:3-4). But for some of us it comes like a murmuring sound or a gentle breeze touching our backs (see 1 Kings 19:13). God loves us all and wants us all to know this in a most personal way.



ST. JOHN OF KANTI (1390-1473) December 23

ST. JOHN OF KANTI, also known as St. John Cantius, was born at Kanti, Poland, on June 23, 1390. A learned, holy man, he studied at the University of Cracow and was ordained to the priesthood. He taught for many years at the University of Cracow, where his colleagues and students admired his scholarly integrity and simple faith.

His success as a preacher and teacher caused his associates to become jealous of him. As a result, he served for a time as a parish priest in the city of Olkusz. Because of problems in the parish, he would soon return to Cracow to teach Sacred Scripture at the university for the remainder of his life.

John endured envy and misunderstanding from some colleagues who resented his holy life and intellectual gifts, but he remained faithful to his teaching and pastoral work. Unconcerned for his own needs, he gave all he had to others, especially the poor. Desiring to become a martyr, John made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to preach amongst the Turks. During his lifetime, he made four pilgrimages to Rome on foot.

Pope Clement XIII praised his holy teacher after his death, "He gave a wonderful example to university professors, an inspiration of complete dedication to duty and to teaching... With his humility went a rare and childlike simplicity. Every day after his teaching he would go straight from the lecture hall to the church and spend hours in prayer before Christ in the Eucharist. The God in his heart and the God on his lips were one and the same God."

John died at Cracow on Christmas Eve, 1473.

ONE MINUTE DEVOTIONS...

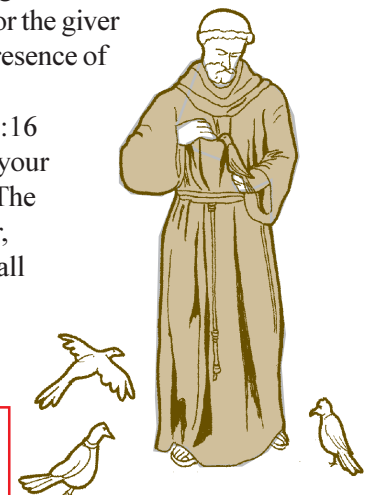
Helen Steiner Rice - GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

The gifts that we give have no purpose unless God is part of the giving, and unless we make Christmas a pattern to be followed in everyday living.

"A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great."

—Proverbs 18:16

Today share a gift with your feathered, flying friends. The birds will appreciate water, suet and seed. God made all creatures!



Congratulations to Fr. Andrew for last week's Newsday article in Faith Section.

Please Note: Christmas Eve Mass is at 9:00 p.m. Merry Christmas!