

Third Sunday of Advent
December 13, 2009

Homily Next Week:
Fr. John Whitney, S.J.

Readings for
Sunday, December 20, 2009
FIRST READING: MICAH 5:1-4A
SECOND READING: HEBREWS 10:5-10
GOSPEL: LUKE 1:39-45

Weekend Mass Schedule
Saturday - 5 p.m.
Sunday - 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 5:30 p.m.

Weekday Mass Schedule
Monday - Friday - 7:00 a.m.

Reconciliation
Saturday - 3:30-4:15 p.m. in the Church
or by appointment

Parish Center Hours
Monday-Thursday - 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday - 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Saturday - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

www.stjosephparish.org

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Pastor

Rev. John Whitney, S.J. x107

Senior Priest in Residence

Rev. Jack O'Leary, S.J. x101

Deacon/Pastoral Associate

Steve Wodzanowski x106

Pastoral Staff:

Dottie Farewell, Pre-K to 8th Faith Form. x112
Dennis Gentele, Facilities x110
Renée Leet, Administrative Assistant x100
Bob McCaffery-Lent, Music & Liturgy x109
Marti McGaughey, Bookkeeper x102
Greg McNabb, Administration x108
Anne Moran, Administrative Assistant x116
Randy Novak, High School Youth x114

St. Joseph School

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Main Office x210
George Hofbauer, Principal x213
Rick Boyle, Academic Vice Principal x215
Sheryl Sperry, Student Vice Principal x218

The Sacraments: Reconciliation (Part Two)

As a way of growing in our faith, I will be offering a series of reflections on the sacraments of the Church throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. I begin with the Sacrament of Reconciliation because First Reconciliation was celebrated last Saturday, 5 December, and our Parish Reconciliation Service is this Tuesday, 15 December at 7:00 pm, followed by a dessert social.
~Fr. John, SJ~

“This is the definition of sin: the misuse of powers given us by God for doing good.”

~St. Basil the Great, 4th Century~

Human Nature & Reconciliation

If sin is the separation from God’s love through choices we make—choices not to love or not to be loved—that still does not explain why we need the Rite of Reconciliation to overcome this separation. To answer that, one has to look at our own nature; and perhaps an analogy would help:

Have you ever had a fight with someone, in which you were determined to win, even though you may have known you might not be in the right? Maybe it had to do with asking for directions or being late for an appointment. It could be something foolish or serious, but it ended in a breach with someone you loved. Now, after you cool down and realize your part in the matter, what do you do? One way to approach healing is simply to let it all pass. You both move on and try to ignore that the argument happened. For those who love each other, and who can see that the anger came from frustration or embarrassment, forgiveness can come easily; but there is always a sense of something unfinished about the resolution.

We are not angels, who live in pure spirit, and we need to speak what bothers us and hear forgiveness. We need to name our failures and hear that we are forgiven, not because God (or even other people) will not forgive us until we do; but because we have bodies and ears and mouths, and the fullness of our humanity calls for the Incarnation of forgiveness. The Rite of Reconciliation, then, is not a “magic moment” in which God forgives (God forgives before we can even ask), and even less should it be a court where our case is heard; rather, it is an opportunity to get what separates us out into the open and get rid of it, to hear—with our own ears—that we really are forgiven, and to celebrate that with another person, acting in the role of Christ and the community. Thus, the sacrament is for the penitent and not for God, and it is not about laundry lists carefully kept but about whatever is keeping us from living fully that love God wants to give us. What keeps us, like Adam and Eve after they had eaten the fruit, hiding in the bushes? That’s what we need to say and get out of our heart.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Even knowing that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is intended to free us from a burden we have trouble releasing, is intended to give us support and friendship in living as we most fully desire, we may still find it hard to go and tell a priest—especially one we see each week—what darkness lives in our hearts. I know I find it a challenge myself (and I have to go to men with whom I live my whole life). We live in a culture

Calendar

Monday, December 14	Sacred Silence, Church, 7 PM
Tuesday, December 15	RCIA, 7 PM, Parish Center Parish Reconciliation Service, 7 PM
Wednesday, December 16	Pathfinders, 6 PM, Parish Center Be 4 NOLA, 7 PM, Parish Center
Friday, December 18	Eucharistic Adoration, 7:30-11 AM Loyola Chapel, Parish Center
Sunday, December 20	Come to the Quiet ... 5 PM (before Mass)

Note: Daily masses (Monday-Friday) are celebrated in the Arrupe Room at 7 AM and the Blessed Sacrament will be reserved in the Loyola Room (the old rectory chapel) both located in the Parish Center.

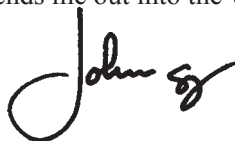
which calls us to deny or disguise every imperfection, every failure, every struggle—and the idea that we are all broken, yet still loved, seems a dangerous thing to admit (though isn't it amazing that this is where every 12-step program for recovery begins?).

I could tell you, first of all, that every priest I know sees in this sacrament one of the great graces of his priesthood. Far from judging a penitent, the men I know—myself included—are humbled by this sacrament and by those who come to celebrate it. While the bond on the confessional is absolute (breaking the seal is one of the few offenses that earns automatic excommunication), more profound is the almost instant forgetfulness that comes in the sacrament. I have never seen anyone outside confession and thought of their sin, only their grace and goodness.

In the end, however, the Sacrament of Reconciliation asks of us, in the most intimate way of all the sacraments, what each of them asks: that we be courageous enough to open ourselves to God, that we be humble enough to receive the Holy Spirit, and that we be generous enough then to give Christ to the world. The first of these occurs when we go to confess—either in private confession or in a penance service; the second comes when we accept absolution; and the third—symbolized by the penance we do—comes when we go from the sacrament and forgive as we have been forgiven, i.e., with joy and love for others. As with all the sacraments, Reconciliation gives us a mission, and it is in living this mission that we might heal the world.

I hope every member of our community will come to confession this Advent—perhaps joining with your neighbors at the service on the evening of 15 December. I invite you as a colleague in sin and a companion in God's love, who can always use someone reminding me that a loving God hears me, heals me, and sends me out into the world that Jesus is already at work redeeming.

Yours in the grace and love of Advent,
John D. Whitney, SJ



St. Joseph Community extends its prayers and hopes for the following intentions:

For a premature, healthy baby girl who needs a loving, permanent home where she can be a daughter . . . For those who are vulnerable in this cold weather, let us do what we can in providing gloves, mufflers, jackets, sox, hats or blankets to St. Francis House or St. Vincent de Paul (social service agencies).

Prayer Tree



“We are truly his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to lead the life of good deeds which God prepared for us in advance.”

Ephesians 2:10

If you are interested in having someone placed on the prayer tree, please contact Renée Leet at 324-2522 or rleet@stjosephparish.org

Christmas Giving Tree Gifts We need your help -- we still have hundreds of tags to be taken from

the tree. *All Giving Tree gifts are due by Wednesday, December 16th.* Please bring your gifts to Mass or drop them off at the Parish Center during the week. Gift Cards – please bring gift cards to Renee at the Parish Center. Thank you for your generosity and kindness in making a difference for others this Christmas season.

FYI

The Parish Center office will be closed on Monday, December 21st for church decorating and a staff day. We will also close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve. If you are in need of assistance, please leave a message at 206-324-2522 and someone will get back to you.

All Souls Picture Pick-up

Those who left pictures for our All Souls Day Mass and remembrance through the month of November may now be picked up in the Parish Center during regular business hours.

A Rosary for longtime parishioner Alice McCullough, who passed away in August, will be Monday, December 14th at 7 pm in the church.

St. Francis House, St. Vincent de Paul and Tent City 3 Needs Assistance

We have received a number of requests from St. Francis House, St. Vincent de Paul and Tent City 3 who are in desperate need of cold weather items. Sleeping bags, blankets, warm throws, hats, gloves, jackets and sweaters all help to keep the cold at bay. Hand warmers have also been requested. (Chemical hand warmers can be purchased at Costco by the case for a very reasonable price.) Please leave your donation in the vestibule or bring by the Parish Center. Also, please continue your gracious donations of food each Sunday.

NEW Altar Server Training in January!

All 4th graders and older are invited to become a member of the Altar Serving team. Our next NEW server training will be on Sunday, January 10th immediately following the 11am mass. Meet in the front of the church between the steps and the piano. Contact Dottie Farewell if you have questions or RSVP at 206-965-1652 or dfarewell@stjosephparish.org

Pathfinders & Faith Formation

The **Pathfinders** youth group will meet this Wednesday at 6 pm to visit the Fred Lind Manor and sing Christmas carols. There will be no Pathfinders December 23rd, 30th or January 6th. Pathfinders will resume January 13th at 6 pm.

The **CFF** classes will not meet December 20th, 27th or January 3rd. Classes resume January 10th. See you in 2010!

Be 4 NOLA Information Night

A parent and high school student information night for the parish sponsored trip to New Orleans is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16th at 7 pm in the Parish Center. Please contact Randy Novak at 206-965-1654 or rnovak@stjosephparish.org for additional information.

Eco-Justice Ministry Care for Creation Update

What's different about recycling/composting at St. Joe's? When we need to use disposables, our campus-wide goal is to use only compostable products. More plastic items can be recycled.

Recycling Now Includes: Rinsed Coffee Cups, Plastic Cups, Clean and Plastic Coated Paper Plates, Plastic Bottles (all colors) and Plastic Food Containers i.e. "Clam Shells". **No Liquids!**

Compostable Items Include: Compostable Coffee Cups, Compostable Clear Cups, Chinette Paper Plates, Compostable Utensils (brown or beige), Waxed Dixie Cups, Napkins, Food-Soiled Paper and Food-soiled Cardboard. **No Liquids!**

Trash Includes: Plastic Cup Lids, Food- Soiled Aluminum Foil and Corks. **No Liquids!**

Seniors on the Go

Change the Date... The Seniors "Over 50" Potluck (OWLS) will be held on Wednesday, December 16th (NOT Tuesday, December 15th) at 6 pm in the Social Hall. If you need a ride, please call Mary Ott at 324-7459 or Delores Dorn at 322-2259.

Change this Date too... The First Friday Healing Mass and Luncheon has been moved from January 1st to Friday, January 8th with Mass at 11:30 and the luncheon following in the Parish Center. Please join us!

Seniors Planning Meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, December 17th at 11:30 am in the Parish Center. Please bring your lunch.

New Gather Hymnals

You may have noticed some new hymnals in the pews that are embossed with the name of a parish in Missouri. One of the first things that I noticed when I arrived a little over a year ago is that we were woefully short of *Gather* hymnals. Not a great recipe for encouraging us to become a stronger singing congregation! I placed an ad in the journal Pastoral Music and got a call from the music director at St. Gerard Majella Parish in Kirkwood, Missouri. They had recently switched to a different songbook and had 150 copies of *Gather* that they were glad to send to us for just the cost of shipping. At the time, I didn't realize the songbooks were embossed with their parish name, but I think it just serves to remind us that we're all part of a bigger church! In any case, we now have a songbook for every seat in the church. Now all we have to do is make sure they get put to good use! And, if you're ever traveling through Kirkwood, Missouri, stop by and say thanks.

~ Bob McCaffrey-Lent

In Silent Wonder Retreat for Women

Deepen your experience of Advent by coming on a silent, preached retreat for women, led by Sr. Joyce Cox, December 18-20th at the Palisades Retreat Center. This is a wonderful time to get away for spiritual reflection and prayer. Immerse yourself in the true meaning of Advent. For additional information, contact the Palisades at 1-800-330-7622 or www.seattlearch.org/palisades

A Christmas Carol

Bishop Blanchet High School Performing Arts Department presents *A Christmas Carol*, the musical. Performances are December 19th and 20th at 2 pm and 7 pm at The Moore Theater, 1932 2nd Ave. Tickets may be purchased through several venues: www.stgpresents.org or www.tickets.com The Paramount and Moore Theater box offices are also selling tickets. For ticket information, call 206-527-7746.

St. Joseph Church ~ Holiday Schedule

7 pm Tuesday, December 15th, Parish Reconciliation Service

{Dessert social following}

Holiday Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve ~ December 24th

4 pm ~ Family Mass

6 pm ~ Mass with Youth Choir

10 pm ~ Lessons and Carols followed by 10:30 pm Mass

Christmas Day ~ December 25th

10 am ~ Christmas Morning Mass

Feast of the Mother of God, Day of Prayer for Peace ~ January 1st

10 am ~ Mass

Epiphany of Christ to the Nations ~ January 2nd & 3rd

5 pm, Saturday ~ Mass

9 am, 11 am & 5:30 pm, Sunday ~ Mass

{The CFF 3,4, & 5 Classes will be participating in the 9 am Mass}

Epiphany Dinner in the Social Hall ~ 2 pm, Sunday, January 3rd

Please contact Steve Wodzanowski at 965-1646 or stevew@stjosephparish.org to help with this annual event.