

From the Pastor's Desk



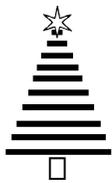
My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The appearance of the Lord Jesus to Israel began with the ministry of John in the desert and by the river Jordan. All four evangelists present the work of John as a prologue to the public ministry of Jesus.

Like the book of Genesis. Mark speaks of *the beginning*-this time the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus, the Messiah and the Son of God. The Gospel opens with a desert scene where John, a character embedded in his desert surrounding, calls people to repentance. While some "theologians" in Israel (the scribes and the Pharisees) will see him as possessed by demons because of his solitary life, singular diet, and strange fashion statement," crowds will flock to him, seeing in him a prophet of the Lord. It has been so long that the voice of a prophet has not been heard in the land, and this time that the voice of John reverberates in the desert, the people are only too happy to realize that God is again speaking to his people. Their famine is about to end-not a famine of bread or thirst for water, but for hearing the word of the Lord (Am 8:11).

Today, as we hear once more the cry of the Baptist at Mass, let us relish the feeling of excitement and hope. The spirit of Advent comes to us to awaken us to the truth that Jesus' coming, as prepared by John, is not simply an event of the past. Advent-and Christmas-returns to us every year like a cycle, until the final and unending Advent, when Jesus comes again in glory.

Your Servant in Christ,
Fr Khanh D. Nguyen, Pastor



GIVING TREE LAST CHANCE This Sunday is our final day for this year's Giving Tree. There are still some tags in the basket and we would like to see all the requests fulfilled. Please have your wrapped gifts to the church by 12 noon

today. Please note that a gift card can be purchased from our Scrip table in the Community Center after Mass today in place of the specific gift requested on the tag. Gifts will be sorted & bagged on Sunday to be ready for the agencies to pick up on Monday December 11 at 9:30 am. If anyone would like to help sort and bag the gifts, please join us here at the church today at 2 pm. Thank you for your kindness and support of this ministry.

SIMBANG GABI ADVENT CELEBRATION Nine days of consecutive Masses will be held at St. Matthew beginning Friday, December 15 in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and preparation for Christmas. See the insert in today's bulletin for the full schedule.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK ❖

Monday, Dec. 11, St. Damasus, Isaiah 35:1-10; Gosp Luke 5:17-26 - **Mass at 8:45 am**

Tuesday, Dec. 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Romans 8:18-25; Gosp Luke 1:26-38 - **no morning Mass**

Wednesday, Dec. 13, St. Lucy, Isaiah 40:25-31; Gosp Matthew 11:28-30 – **Mass at 8:45 am**

Thursday, Dec. 14, St. John of the Cross, Isaiah 41:13-20; Gosp Matthew 11:11-15 – **Mass at 8:45 am & 7 pm**

Friday, Dec. 15, St. Mary Di Rosa, Isaiah 48:17-19; Gosp Matthew 11:16-19 – **Mass at 8:45 am**

Saturday, Dec. 16, St. Charles Borromeo, Romans 11:1-2a, 11-12, 25-29 Gosp Luke 14:1, 7-11 – **Mass at 8:45 am**

Third Sunday of Advent, Dec. 17, Isaiah 61:1-2a 10-11; Gosp John 1:6-8

✠ **Advent and Christmas Schedule** ✠

Tues., Dec, 12, Advent Reconciliation Service – 7 pm

Saturday, Dec. 16, Simbang Gabi Mass – 5 pm

Sat., Dec. 23, 4th Sunday of Advent Mass – 5 pm



Sun., Dec. 24, 4th Sunday of Advent Masses – 8 & 10 am

Sun., Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Masses – 5 pm & 8 pm

Monday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day Masses 8 am & 10 pm

PARISH STEWARDSHIP UPDATE Stewardship is sort of an eternal Christmas and means, of course, "All that I am and all that I have is in trust (or entrusted) to me from God." Advent is a time of preparation to share in the extravagant goodness and grace of God. The Parish deeply appreciates those who have already returned their Parish commitment cards. 198 pledges have been returned out of 590 registered parishioners. If giving online, please also fill out a pledge giving us notice of your renewed commitment. Also, as a reminder to school families, your pledge card is part of your requirement for the following school year's contracts. Thank you for the gift of your membership as a St. Matthew parishioner. Please prayerful consider your stewardship commitment.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CHOIR All children grades 1-8 are invited to sing with the Children's Choir for the 5 pm Family Mass on Christmas Eve! Please join us for rehearsals in the Music Portable on Sundays, December 10 and 17, from 9 to 9:45 am. High school & college-aged singers and musicians are welcome to accompany the Choir and/or participate in other Christmas Masses. Please contact Kelli Hart at khart@stmatthewseattle.org or 206-898-1680 for information or questions

SCRIP HOURS: Mondays from-1:45 - 2:30 pm; & Fridays from 8 - 8:30 am and 2:45 – 3 pm in School work room. Sundays: 8:30-11:30 am in Community Center

Sacred Story – Week 10

Chose the time and place for your 15-minute prayer time.

- ♦ Establishing the ritual is vital to your discipline of prayer. If you decided on one period, you are free at any time to switch to two, and vice versa.

Week 10

- ♦ We are not doing a “new” exercise, but taking previous exercises and asking God for the grace to see patterns that will illumine our history—our sacred story.
- ♦ The content of *Forty Weeks* has been a progressive and systematic “sacred scavenger hunt.” We have gathered our holy and unholy items. The exercise invites us work with them in a series of helpful charts.
- ♦ Follow the schedule. Don’t spend more than one day on each part and, stay with the assigned section for each day.
- ♦ Persevere without anxiety because the work of creating these charts will bear fruit many times over as we move forward in our Sacred Story journey.

Affirmation “ *I affirm that everything that has happened to me and everything that I have experienced in my entire life, is present in my memory.*”

Information

- ♦ January 8, Parish Office Library at 7pm is our next Sacred Story Gathering. All Are Welcome!
- ♦ If you wish to receive regular e-mail contact marycross@aol.com and msloane@comcast.net

NEW PROGRAM CONTINUES THIS SUNDAY from 11:20 am to 12:30 pm - Catholic Conversations in Parish Center library. A program about the Catholic Faith welcomes those interested in Baptism, those interested in reunion with the Church, and those practicing the faith seeking a deeper understanding. Each week the conversation will be based on the Gospel readings of the week. All are welcome. For information, contact the Parish Office 206-363-5724.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS There will be a REPEAT training meeting on Monday, Dec 11 at 7 pm in the church. Due to many changes, all current EMs need to attend or other make arrangements with Jolene Lynch. More EMs & Sacristans are needed. All parishioners, please prayerfully consider becoming a part of this sacred ministry for Mass. For information, contact jnslynch@comcast.net.

SOCK IT TO HOMELESSNESS Operation Nightwatch needs men’s white socks for homeless who are on their feet all day and rarely have more than one pair which are often wet. To help, please bring new white socks on Sunday to the Church vestibule or weekdays to the Parish Office by December 14. We deliver them on Dec. 15. Questions: call Jackie or Clark @ 206-866-4103.

St. Matthew School News

Karen Herlihy, Principal, 206-362-2785, ext. 102

kherlihy@stmattschool.org

Andy Hews, Administrative Assistant, 206-362-2785, ext. 101, ahews@stmattschool.org

“Excellence – Diversity – Community”

It’s Admissions Time! Please invite friends and family to our winter Open House on January 28 or to schedule a tour. Come explore all that St. Matthew School has to offer: •Academic excellence in an environment of community and diversity •Affordable before and after school care (\$4.50 per hour) •Music, art, library and fitness •Sports• Summer camp program. We also have a limited number of openings in our Pre-K program NOW for 4 and 5 year olds. Private tours available. Email spretti@stmattschool.org.

Advent Reflections Join students and staff at Advent Prayer Services twice each week now through December 14. Check www.stmattschool.org for the schedule each week. This is a peaceful way to start the day during the hectic season. Please join us.

Nominate the 2018 Distinguished Graduate and Young Alumnus As part of Catholic Schools Week in January, we will honor two St. Matthew School graduates. The Distinguished Graduate is sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association. Nominees must have graduated a minimum of 10 years ago. The Young Alumnus Award is sponsored by St. Matthew School to recognize more recent graduates. Nominees for both awards must have made contributions to their community and church and be examples of faith and service. Nominations forms can be found at <http://www.stmattschool.org/alumni.html>. Nomination forms must be turned in to the school office by Dec. 12.

Give to St. Matthew School for Christmas and your gift will be doubled! A very generous donor has offered a gift to honor our amazing teacher and staff. For each dollar donated to the school between and December 31, the donor will match your gift (up to \$4,000 total). If you donate \$100 the school will receive \$200. Have someone on your list for whom it’s hard to find the perfect gift? Donate in their honor by Dec. 15 and a handmade thank you card by our students will be sent to let them know a gift was made in their honor. Turn donations to the school office by noon on Dec. 15 or online by Dec. 31 to qualify for the matching funds. Please include contact information if you would like a card to be sent. Thank you for your generosity!

DECEMBER 2017 COLLECTIONS

| | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Dec. 3 | \$ 12,794.92 | \$ 12,450 | \$ 344.92 |
| YTD | \$215,506.54 | \$214, 850 | \$ 656.54 |



John the Baptist’s call to repentance is echoed in the U.S. bishop’s pastoral letter on stewardship: “Christians must beg God for the grace of conversion: the grace to know who they are, to whom they belong, how they are to live---the grace to repent and change and grow, the grace to become good disciples and stewards.”