



John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" *Matt. 3:1-2*



**LIFE (Learning In Faith Experiences)**

A friend forwarded me this reflection, suggesting that I consider using it as a starting point for this column. After having read, prayed, and reflected upon it, I'm wondering as to the reason why this was sent to me. Hopefully it was gifted to me because I've always got my eyes open for worthwhile and thought-provoking "gems" to be able to share with parishioners rather than the other thought that entered my mind: Do I personally need to hear this message? Well, here it is – may you ask yourself the same questions. A thought for the First Week of Advent taken from Brian Cavanaugh's Fresh Packet of Sower's Seeds: "There are great abilities people acquire, cultivate and demonstrate. In the service of God, however, there is one ability that is the greatest ability of all. What is it? Is it sociability? Compatibility? Accountability? Adaptability? Reliability? The greatest ability is **availability**. If we are not available to God, no matter what other kinds of ability we have, our ability is no good. Ability without availability is a liability. Availability means that there is a sense of preparedness and readiness. There are people in life who are prepared, but they are simply not available. Sometimes people assume God cannot use them because they do not have great abilities, special talents or gifted aptitudes. They feel they are just ordinary and do not have anything special for God to use. But God never asks about our ability, only about our availability." There's a book from the early 1960's entitled Prayers by Michel Quoist. In it is a prayer called "Lord, I have Time" in which he talks about how much people complain about rushing..."to not waste time, rushing after time, to catch up with time, and to gain time." In this prayer, Quoist provides examples at every stage of life of how we're so busy running through everything we do at such a frenetic pace, that we've no time to enjoy the special moments that God blesses us with – and we realize that we're still, too short of time. Quoist ends his prayer with these remarkable words: "*Lord, you give each one of us time to do what you want us to do. But we must not lose time, waste time, kill time, for time is a gift that you give us, but a perishable gift, a gift that does not keep. Lord, I have time, I have plenty of time, all the time that you give me: the years of my life, the days of my years, the hours of my days, mine to fill completely, up to the brim, but to offer them to you. I am not asking you, Lord, for time to do this and that, but your grace to do conscientiously, in the time that you give me, what you want me to do.*" So, the bottom line is: How available am I – to do what God wants me to?

Written by: Colette M. Savaria, LIFE Coordinator

**First Reconciliation Classes** continue on Thurs., December 8<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-4:45pm in the Parish Center.

**Bible Study** is held every Tuesday morning beginning at 9:45 in the Family Room led by Jane Parrillo.

**The Liturgy Committee** will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 3pm in the Parish Center.

**Christmas Flowers:** Christmas plants will be accepted in the Parish Connector until Thursday, Dec. 22. Special envelopes for flower donations are located in the pews. If you would like to have a loved one remembered during the Christmas season through your donation, please be sure to include those name(s) on your envelope or plant. **Decorating** will take place after the 9am Mass on Friday, Dec. 23. **All are invited and welcome to help out. Thank you.**

**CHURCH SUPPORT – November 26/27, 2016**  
**Weekly Collection \$5124.00**  
**The second collection this weekend is for the Retirement Fund for Religious.**  
*Thank you for your continuing generosity.*

**Community Action Committee (CAC)**  
 As you know, the **Giving Tree** is up in the Church. You are invited to take a tag (size marked on tag) and purchase an item of **warm** clothing for our area adults in need. Suggestions include flannel shirts, sweaters, earmuffs, thermal underwear, socks, mittens or gloves, hats, and turtlenecks. If the tag is marked for children, please purchase hats, mittens, or scarves only (**no toys**). Place your wrapped gift under the tree (tag on outside), and return it to the Church no later than the weekend of Dec. 17-18. If there aren't any tags left on the tree, you may still purchase a gift! Just be sure to clearly mark on the outside of the gift as to whether it is for a male or female and the size.  
**Many thanks for your past and present generosity.**

**Soup Kitchen Needs**  
**Tuesday, December 20, 2016**  
 4 bags oranges                      2 cans powdered juice (lemonade)  
 4 large loaves bread                4 btls salad dressing (Ranch or Ital.)  
 Assorted finger desserts (cupcakes, cookies, brownies)  
 If you would like to help with any of the above items please call Sylvia Bunker at 683-0320. You may drop off your donations at the Rectory anytime before 3pm on Tuesday, Dec. 20. We served 87 meals in November. Thank you all for your generosity.

Please **pray** for all the men and women who have served and who currently serve in the armed forces, and the military commanders who lead them. **Pray** for our homebound Parishioners and the sick of the Parish (including those in hospitals and nursing homes). **Pray** for the unborn, the premature, and the fragile among us so that we may deepen our respect for life at all stages.

**Rev. Robert Dunphy**, our beloved friend who has celebrated many Masses with us, has passed away. Calling hours are Tuesday, Dec. 6 from 5 to 7pm at the Connors Funeral Home in Portsmouth and on Wednesday, Dec. 7 from 10:30am to noon at St. Barnabas Church. His funeral Mass follows at noon. Please keep him and his relatives and friends in your prayers.

**Knights of Columbus Middletown/Newport Clothing Drive:** Men's, women's and children's winter wear, new or used clothing in good condition is being collected for those in need and those who are homeless. Suggestions include: coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, scarves, gloves, pants, and shirts. Please drop off clothing donations at the front entrance of the K of C Hall on 7 Valley Rd., Middletown from 5-8pm on December 14, 15, and 16 (Wednesday through Friday).

**Holiday Events**  
**"A Christmas Pudding"** will be presented by the Portsmouth Community Theater at St. Lucy's Parish Center on Saturday, Dec. 3 Saturday at 7pm and Sunday, Dec. 4 at 1pm. This is a holiday sampling of seasonal stories and songs. For more information call Cindy Killavey at 847-5148.  
**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Tree & Wreath Sale** by Cluny School will be held Saturday, December 3 until 7pm and Sunday, December 4, 10am-4pm (or earlier if sold out) at International Yacht Restoration School parking lot, 449 Lower Thames St., Newport. Christmas trees and Balsam wreaths will be for sale.  
**The Sounds of the Season** will be held on Sunday, Dec. 11 at 3pm, the Gregorian Concert Choir, the Prout High School Chorus and Festival Orchestra will present a concert at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Providence to benefit Bishop Tobin's "Keep the Heat On" Campaign.  
**10<sup>th</sup> Annual Living Nativity** at Cluny School, 75 Brenton Rd., Newport will be held on Monday, December 19 at 6pm (raindate December 21). A reenactment of the First Christmas is held outdoors under the stars, featuring live animals with choral music performed by students. Hot chocolate and sweets will be served. The event is free and open to the public.

**An Advent Series** has begun at St. Barnabas and will continue on Monday, Dec. 5, 12, and 19 in the Church focusing on Mary. All who participate with come away with an appreciation of the Mother of God that is real and relatable..

**TOYS NEEDED!!** The Martin Luther King Center is hoping to provide 395+ local children this Christmas with toys, gifts and gift cards. Every child gets at least 3 toys. With your support, the MLK Community Center's Holiday Assistance Programs make the holidays more manageable for needy local families. **How can you help?** Donate new toys for children up to age 16 for Santa's Workshop by Dec. 12. Volunteer at Santa's Workshop; several guides, gift wrappers and more are needed. Call or email Nancy Harten to sign up. 846-4828 x 103 nharten@mlkccenter.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK**  
 Monday: Is 35:1-10/Lk 5:17-26  
 Tuesday: Is 40:1-11/Mt 18:12-14  
 Wednesday: Is 40:25-31/Mt 11:28-30  
 Thursday: Gn 3:9-15/Eph 1:3-6/Lk 1:26-35  
 Friday: Is 48:17-19/Mt 11:16-19  
 Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Mt 17:9a, 10-13  
 Sunday: Is 35:1-6a, 10/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11

**MASS INTENTIONS AND CHURCH SCHEDULE**

- Saturday, December 3
  - 5:00pm (O'N) St. Lucy's Parishioners
- Sunday, December 4, **Second Sunday of Advent**
  - 8:00am (C) Ruth Carbone (26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)
  - 10:30am (O) St. Lucy's Parishioners
  - 5:00pm (O) Manuel T. Mello
- Monday, December 5
  - 9:00am Doris M. Silvia
- Tuesday, December 6
  - 9:00am Ramon Arroyo
- Wednesday December 7
  - 9:00am Deacon Robert Sheeley, Michael Sheeley
  - 5:00pm **Vigil Mass Immaculate Conception**
- Thursday, December 8, **Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
  - 9:00am (O) Stanley Sekunda, Sr.
  - 7:00pm (O'N) Cathleen Shavro (20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)
- Friday, December 9
  - 9:00am (O'N) Gary Varteresian
  - 5-8 pm Devotions
  - 7:30pm Navy Choristers Concert
- Saturday, December 10
  - 1:30pm Mass at Grand Islander
  - 5:00pm (O'N) Joseph Keeley
- Sunday, December 11, **Third Sunday of Advent**
  - 8:00am (O) St. Lucy's Parishioners
  - 10:30am (M) Gary Varteresian
  - 5:00pm (O) Deceased members of the Hopf and O'Connell Families

In the above celebrations:  
 C = Rev. Joe Creedon  
 O = Rev. John O'Brien  
 O'N = Rev. Tom O'Neill  
 M = Rev. Eugene McKenna

**An Advent Reconciliation Service** with St. Joseph's Church will be held at 7pm at St. Joseph's at a date to be determined. Please take the time to make use of this sacrament in preparing your heart to receive our Lord this Christmas.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word** continues at 10:30am Masses on December 4, 11, and 18. **Rehearsal for the Children's Christmas Pageant** will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 21 at 6pm in the Church.