

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low.

DECEMBER 7, 2008

—Isaiah 40:4

NEWS OF COMFORT

In a time of preparation, much of it having to do with material things, it is good to hear the words of Isaiah, "Comfort, give comfort to my people, / says your God: (Isaiah 40:1). In a time of such stress and rush, when our usual burdens are augmented by piles of Christmas preparations, we can choose to slow down, take some time to heal, and appreciate the enormous gift we are about to receive. Christ, the Son of God, has become one of us, and knows our human limitations. Yet God, even now, is freeing us from the burdens that our inattentiveness to our God and to our deepest inner longings have heaped upon us. The Lord comes, not as a king with mighty armies, but as a shepherd leading the flocks with care and tenderness. Isaiah prophesies good news: our oppression is over, our sins forgiven. The savior we have awaited is coming, not the first time, but in the end times, as our salvation. Copyright, J.S. Paluch

COLLECTION FOR RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS NEXT WEEKEND

SHARE IN THE CARE

About 58% of women and men religious are past age 70; 7% are past age 90. More than 4,900 need skilled nursing care. Even at advanced ages, many work in compensated or volunteer ministry that benefits others. Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits, and investment return. Most elderly religious receive, on average, a Social Security benefit of just \$4,402 per year. Community living provides some economies of scale, but health care and living costs in most religious communities far exceed income. Contribution envelopes will be in the pews next weekend.

BLOOD DRIVE ON DECEMBER 28

Please sign up today to give blood on December 28th. Before giving blood, you must be in good health, bring valid photo I.D., be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 110 lbs. and have no new tattoos within the last 12 months.

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON GOD'S WORD

The readings for next Sunday, *3rd Sunday of Advent* are listed below along with questions for your quiet reflection throughout the coming week.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24)

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Like John, we are sent to "testify to the light of Christ in our words and actions. Do I take time for reflection in my life that I might recognize how Jesus is calling me to testify?"

FEAST OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

There will be **NO vigil Mass** on December 7th.
Mass times are 8:00a.m. and 5:30p.m. in English and 7:15p.m. in Spanish on December 8th.

PARISH PROJECTS AND GATHERINGS

TODAY, DECEMBER 7

Today our parish Society of St. Vincent de Paul is conducting a jacket and blanket drive. Please take your clean, gently used items to classroom number 1. All of the jackets and blankets will be distributed to the homeless throughout the cold winter months.

DECEMBER 6/7, 13/14, 20/21

Comunidad bell ringers will be outside the Church after all the Masses collecting donations for families within our parish who are in need. Your donations will help make Christmas special for someone!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Bilingual communal penance service in the church at 7:00 p.m. with individual confessions to follow.

DECEMBER 20/21

Peace and Justice ministry will be once again offer yummy loaves of bread for your Christmas morning breakfast or to give as a hostess gift. They will have banana nut, lemon, the always popular pumpkin and more.

WE NEED FLOWER DONATIONS

Please donate Poinsettia plants for our Christmas decorations. You may bring them to the parish office anytime between December 15 and the 22nd.

ALL SOULS CATHOLIC CEMETERY

Will have a re-dedication on Friday, Dec. 12th of the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe which has recently been moved and renovated. The statue will now reside in a new section of the cemetery appropriately named "*Garden of Our Lady of Guadalupe.*" Bishop Salazar will be preside in the blessing and rededication. All are welcome to attend.