

Christmas 2022



It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of another year. The holy season of Advent will be approaching quickly, followed by the Christmas feast. This will be my first Christmas with you all, and I am looking forward to celebrating together with you, the great mystery of the Word made flesh.

In the midst of all the “holiday” stuff, we can forget to prepare for Christmas. One way to look at Advent is to view it as the “winter Lent.” Just as fasting, prayer and almsgiving prepare us for Easter, the same spiritual disciplines can prepare us for Christmas.

Prayer:

Having an Advent wreath at home, and lighting it before the evening meal is a great symbol of how we wait for the coming light. We can also have awareness of the saints of Advent: Nicholas of Myra, Lucy, Juan Diego and our Lady of Guadalupe among others. Pray with those saints to prepare your heart to welcome Christ. You can also give yourself a gift by celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We will have a penance service on December 21 at Immaculate Conception, plus additional individual confession times at St. Joseph’s and Our Lady of Grace.

Almsgiving:

Every parish I have been in has always been so generous to others at this time of year. Other ways to be giving is to offer the gift of time: Examples might be, families having a weekly phone free meal to be present to one another, visiting a grandparent who can’t come to you, calling a friend you haven’t talked to lately.

Fasting:

Doing without is never easy. During Advent, our sense of sin is more communal. A good question to pray with is this: *“What must I do without to build a more peaceful and just world?”* Perhaps the answer is less social media, avoiding angry words, or simply a willingness to solve problems in ways that build up, and not destroy.

Please know you all will be in my prayers as I look forward to celebrating the Christmas season with you. The Christmas mass schedule is printed on the reverse of this letter. This is a change for all of you, but I want to be fair to each parish, and mostly to be present at all of the Masses of Christmas Eve with you.

There are a few Advent opportunities to help you prepare for the Feast of Christmas; hope you are able to take advantage of some or all of them. Keep your eye on the bulletin and website.

In the peace of Christ our pastor,
Rev. Thomas E. Konopka
Pastor

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Our Lady of Grace Church, 73 Midline Rd, Ballston Lake, NY 12019	518-399-5713
Church of the Immaculate Conception, 400 Saratoga Rd, Glenville, NY 12302	518-399-9168