



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5 (1A)

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14 GOSPEL: Matthew 24:37-44

FATHER KEN'S KORNER

The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment,
Heaven and Hell – Part 3 On Hell

It has been said that Satan's greatest triumph in modern times has been in convincing the world today that he does not exist. Well, more and more today, a fleeting belief in the existence of Hell has caused it to gradually inch toward that same sad status. I have met many people, and you probably have too, who have rejected the Church's teaching on the existence of Hell. Their reasoning generally goes something like this: If God is loving and merciful he could never allow a place like Hell to exist or if it does exist, God would make sure that such a horrible place remained empty. This latter sentiment (a belief in an existent but empty Hell) is not much newer than the idea of rejecting Hell's existence altogether. In fact one of the first to propose such a theory, known better as Universal Salvation, was a Catholic philosopher named Origen (185-254 AD). Origen envisioned a Hell that functioned more like our Catholic teaching on Purgatory (which I discussed last week). Origen erroneously believed that all sinners were sent to Hell to work off their sin but that eventually they would all be released and received into Heaven, including Satan himself, who, in the mind of Origen, would be the last to be released. The problem with this concept and others similar to it in our own modern times is that such a thought was condemned as a heresy by the Church. Hell is not a temporary holding cell for the sinner but an eternal state of the damned. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraphs 1033-1037 states, "We cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him". It adds, "To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love means remaining separated from him forever" and that "the Church affirms the existence of Hell and its eternity." More importantly, "the Biblical figure who speaks most often of Hell and damnation is none other than Jesus himself. Time and again in the Gospels, Jesus warns about 'Gehenna' and its everlasting fire" (Word on Fire). So the existence of Hell and its eternal nature

cannot be placed in doubt unless one would want to reject the teachings of Jesus himself, which would make one a non-Christian. And, by the way, believing or refusing to believe in the existence of a thing does not, in any way, actually change the fact that it either does or does not exist. However, as to the emptiness or crowdedness of Hell we cannot speak with any knowledge. If the Church refers to a deceased person as a "canonized" saint, it is making an infallible statement that Saint XYZ is in Heaven but it does not speak of the "canonized" damned or claim to know who is in Hell. In other words, we believe in Hell and its eternity but we pray it is not a crowded place.

However, if Hell truly exists as we believe it does, we are still left with two troubling questions: How could a loving, merciful God ever allow such a reality to exist and how could he send souls there? The answer can be arrived at by unraveling three other flaws in thinking. Flaw #1 - Yes, it is true that God is loving and merciful but we sometimes forget that God is also just. Paul, in his letter to the Romans reminds us that the wages of sin are death (Romans 6:23) so none of us can stand before God and claim we have earned the right to enter Heaven. Instead we are taught that even if we were to have made it through life never having committed a single sin (which only Jesus by divine nature and Mary by grace can claim) we would still be standing before God as profitless servants who had done only what they had been commanded to do (Luke 17:10). No, we do not deserve Heaven. According to God's justice, we all deserve Hell. Heaven is an unearned gift of mercy and we are only able to have access to it by calling upon God's mercy and drawing from the saving work of Jesus Christ. St. Faustina, promoter of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, put it this way...at the end of our life's journey, we stand before two doors; We may choose to enter either through the door of God's justice (which leads to Hell) or the door of his mercy (which leads to Heaven). Both are expressions of His Divine Power. This image is closely associated with...

FATHER KEN'S KORNER

...Flaw #2 – God does not send anyone to Hell. We send ourselves when we reject God and insist on living our lives apart from Him. God is the source of all that is good so when we reject God we are also cutting ourselves off from the good he provides and, in the eternal state, that looks like Hell. Being allowed to go to Hell is simply God granting such a sad person their wish. CS Lewis once said that if there is a lock on the gate of Hell it is on the inside. Finally, we come to ...Flaw #3 – How could a loving God ever allow Hell to exist? It is that very same love that requires hell to exist. Let me explain briefly. For love to exist,

freedom must exist. One cannot command another to love them. Love must be freely chosen and given. In order for freedom to exist you must have a choice (yes or no). In order to love God we must have a choice available which is not God ... a state or place where God will not intrude...in other words Hell. God's power holds it in existence but God agrees not to be present there in order to honor our freedom and our choice should we choose to reject him. Take away Hell and you have taken away choice...freedom...and ultimately love. Next week tune in to my final installment of the Four Last Things when I offer a few thoughts on Heaven.



CONFIRMATION

Registration for Confirmation for students Grades 9 -- 12, begins this week, December 1. Our program will run on specific Wednesdays (10 total) , from January 15 to Confirmation Sunday, May 18. Father Ken and Father Arturo will share in the teaching of this sacrament. To register pick up a blue packet at church or at the parish office. Registration forms are available on our website at www.sacredheartmedford.org Confirmation requirements and class calendars are available in the office or church only.

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE UPDATE

Dear Parishioners:

Several months ago I announced the discontinuation of the daily 7 am Mass in 2014. In announcing this, though I listed a number of reasons for the decision, my primary goal was to implement this change as part of a multi-step solution for making the clergy work schedule healthier and more balanced. My sense was that most of the attendees at the 7 am Mass were retired or stay-at-home parents who would be able to adjust to a schedule change and that the negative impact would be minimal. In hindsight, it was easily the least popular thing I have ever written. As the weeks passed I began to hear from more and more concerned individuals who were appealing to me to reconsider this decision. This seemed to indicate a larger negative impact than originally anticipated. When I attempted to counter this appeal with a survey to determine whether or not a new compromise mass time between the current 7 am and 8:30 am could be established to replace both of the current daily masses, the level of protest only rose. As a result, I recently announced publicly at both daily masses that my original decision has been reversed and there will be no changes made to the current daily Mass schedule in the new year and I apologize for any undo anxiety this process may have caused. That being said, I still maintain that the current clergy work schedule at Sacred Heart Parish is unhealthy and must be reduced through other means. I am left with only one other alternative solution which will effectively reduce the number of clergy appointment times that will be made available to the public. Appointments involving crisis counseling, the sacrament of reconciliation or time-sensitive processes will be given the highest priority. For all other types of appointments, please call or e-mail whenever possible as an alternative to a face-to-face meeting and exercise patience.

Sincerely,
Fr. Ken Sampson



FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Sacred Heart Church will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with a bi-lingual Mass on Thursday, December 12th. Festivities begin at 5:00 p.m. with dancing, food and joy in the Hall, followed by the Rosary and then Mass at 7:00 p.m. in our church. All are welcome.



FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, falls on a Sunday this year. Our Archdiocesan chancellor has moved the celebration to Monday, December 9, and decreed that this year it will **not** be a Holy Day of Obligation. Masses, on Monday, December 9, will be at 7:00 and 8:30AM and include music.

PLEASE PRAY for the sick of our parish especially:

Butch Naumes, Jim Carrigan, Barnie Deffley, Ruth Frisbee, Patti Otto, Jennifer White, Cecelia Rayburn, Loretta Thrun, Celia Caporici, Joyce Farrell, Jason Stark, Theresa Matthews, Pat Kelly, Jeff Leroy, Leonard Krug, Alice Blenkush, Linda Blixt, Nanette Hall, Vickie Harris, Marie Casilio, Brian Chachere, Margaret Welk, Rosary Brooks, Margaret Mucha, Shizuka McCue, Mary Beveridge, Rita Morrell, Rose Casagrande, Marion & Bill Owens, and Dick & Beverly Handley.

Please pray for the deceased of our parish and for their families, especially: +Bobby Burns and +Mickey Ketchum.

PERPETUAL EUCHARISTIC ADORATION



Open hours :

Saturday 12midnight, 1:00 a.m., 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m. 4:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 a.m., 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m., 4:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12 noon, 5:00 p.m.

Monday 12 midnight, 1:00 a.m., 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m.

Tuesday 7:00 a.m.

Wednesday 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m.

Friday 1:00 a.m., 4:00 a.m., 5:00 a.m., 11:00 p.m.

To sign up for these or any hour or if you have any questions please call Dan or Sarah @ 541- 582-3717.

7:00 a.m. DAILY MASS INTENTIONS

M. Dec. 2: +Edward Ford
T. Dec. 3: Catholic Daughters
W. Dec. 4: +Ernest Bahr
Th. Dec. 5: Maggie Baxted
Fr. Dec. 6: Legion of Mary

8:30 a.m. DAILY MASS INTENTIONS

M. Dec. 2 through Sat. Dec. 7: +Souls in Purgatory

LITURGY CORNER

Happy New Year! That's right, we Catholics get to say "Happy New Year!" on the first Sunday of Advent, since it is the beginning of the new liturgical (Church) year. Today we begin a new cycle of readings, Cycle A, and we will hear the Gospel of Matthew proclaimed. We also begin the season of Advent, a special time the Church gives us to make the humble inns of our hearts open and prepared to receive Lord Jesus on Christmas, and every day.

"Serving as a lector at Sacred Heart is really my first experience at parish ministry since I was an altar boy a really long time ago ("Ad deum qui laetificat, juventutum mei" – that's how long ago!) I was never really away, but in recent years I have felt a yearning to come closer to my church. Because I am still working, I am not able to participate in a lot of things at Sacred Heart. At Mass a few years ago, Father issued a plea for people to volunteer to be lectors. I thought, well, I can read, I can speak, and I can walk. I'm coming to Mass anyway. Guess I can be a lector. After a few nervous experiences, I got comfortable with the lector's role in the liturgy, and since then, serving with the priests, other lectors, Deacon Ron, altar servers, and sacristans has been a great pleasure. Preparing for my readings has enlightened me about how the readings relate to each other in each Mass, and how so much Scripture is presented to us at Mass though the liturgical year. It's a great experience, and I'd recommend it to anyone."

– Steve Schnugg

Please take Steve up on his recommendation and consider serving as a lector! To schedule training, please call or e-mail abrophy@shcs.org. Thank you! Ann Brophy, Pastoral Associate



ANNUAL MUSIC MINISTRY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Please mark your calendars for our annual Christmas Concert!

Friday, December, 13th at 7:00 p.m.!!

All proceeds benefit the new sound system!!



SACRED HEART GIVING TREE

'Tis the season for giving! Elves from Sacred Heart School worked hard to create gift tags to decorate our Giving Tree.

Please take a tag for Magdalene Home or St. Vincent de Paul from the Giving Tree in the Parish Hall. Then on a Sunday during Advent - December 22 at the latest - please return the bagged gift to the Giving Tree with the tag attached.

Thank you, Sacred Heart School student for making our gift tags this year, and thank you, Sacred Heart parishioners for this tenth year of making someone's Christmas much warmer and brighter!

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS LUNCHEON

Tuesday, December 3rd we will meet in the Parish Hall at 10:30 a.m. Sacred Heart School choir and our seminarian Norman will sing for us.

Please bring a favorite food dish to share. We will be collecting gift cards for our Christmas gift to the seminarians at Mt. Angel.

For information call Regent Connie Moyer at 541-773-8736.



Thank you Advertiser of the Week BELLACURE

Please thank our Advertisers with your patronage.
To place an ad call 1-800-867-0660.

Last **ROSARY SALE** this year
December 1: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
A **HAND MADE ROSARY** makes a great
Christmas present for young & old alike.
We have all colors and all prices.



ALTAR SOCIETY NEWS

Our Christmas Luncheon with our Evening and Day Group will be held Saturday, December 21, at Horton Plaza, at 11:00 a.m. Husbands are invited to attend this event as well. Call: Louise-541-776-2441 or Eleanor-541-499-0277. Please consider buying your ticket early. Price \$15 per ticket.

Sees Candy will go on sale December 7th/ 8th, after all the Masses.

Christmas Caroling---6 nights in December. Call: Chato: 541-772-4180, for specific nights and times. Seminarians Norman and RJ (Our Lady of the Mountain), playing the guitar, will accompany the Carolers.

The more Carolers, the Merrier.



THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Once again the students of Sacred Heart School brought us boxes of Thanksgiving Dinners to hand out to people who asked for extra help this Thanksgiving Season. Thank you for your generosity. You have blessed our staff by giving us this opportunity to help the poor. God bless you & yours.



PATRICIANS

A CATHOLIC DISCUSSION GROUP

Monday, December 16 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall
Our topic: Vatican II documents - "Dei Verbum"
Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
With: Father Carmelo, our spiritual advisor

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL 2424 N. PACIFIC HWY., MEDFORD 541-772-3828

SALE OF CHRISTMAS TREES

Friday, November 29 -- Saturday, December 14

Hours: Saturday & Sunday -- 9:00AM -- 7:00PM

Mondays - Fridays -- 3:00PM -- 7:00PM

Proceeds benefit St. Vincent de Paul and Knights of Columbus Charities.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

CASHIERS at the Thrift Store

Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays

To volunteer please call: 541-772-3828 (Ext. 7)

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

"We cannot better assure our eternal happiness than by living and dying in the service of the poor, in the arms of Providence, and with genuine renouncement of ourselves in order to follow Jesus Christ."

~~ St. Vincent de Paul

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS



THE ADVENT ART OF WAITING

One of my favorite classes during Religious Education is the one focusing on helping children understand and celebrate the season of Advent. Sister Mary Margaret, my 5th grade teacher ‘pounded into our heads’ that we were to focus on Advent, the beginning of the new liturgical year, and not even think about Christmas until a week before. (Thank goodness we don’t “pound” anymore).

As Advent begins, the first thing I discuss with the children is the beginning of the new Church year. Then I have the children make a simple Advent wreath. It helps them understand the four week time period and that we light only one candle at a time. (They usually want to light all the candles at once like on a birthday cake!) They learn to wait. Perhaps your family could make an Advent wreath?

I then have the children take “special quiet breaks” to think about what we are doing during Advent to “wait” for Jesus. At first it is hard for them to wait five seconds. But as the weeks of Advent progress, they learn to wait and pray for longer periods of time.

During Advent, and anytime really you can take these “special quiet breaks” with your child(ren). Take 10 or 15 seconds a couple of times a day or during the week to consciously pause and wait. Always remind them it is Advent and we are preparing and waiting for Jesus. It is not Christmas yet!

My prayers are with you and your family always, but especially during this busy but “quiet” time of waiting during Advent.



Mary Stallard (Religious Education Coordinator)

CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for your contribution to the Collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development! Your generous gifts will help CCHD end poverty in America through better education, improved housing, and overall economic development. Through CCHD and its beneficiaries, we manifest Catholic social teaching and carry out Jesus’ mission to “bring glad tidings to the poor ... to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Lk 4:18).



SACRED HEART SCHOOL NEWS

Annual Fund Drive- The Drive the Mission brochure serves as our end of the year report and also shares highlights from the 2012-2013 school year and some fun pictures of our students and activities. I am working with Fr. Ken to find a weekend to present at each of the Masses, but in the meanwhile I have placed copies of the brochures at the entrances to the church. Thanks to the parishioners of the area parishes, last year we received \$29,849.00, exceeding our goal of \$25,000! As you consider your end-of-year donations, please consider Sacred Heart Catholic School. I will post a graph on the bulletin board in the back of the church to track our progress with this year’s Annual Fund Drive. Our goal once again is \$25,000.

We have made great progress at Sacred Heart School and continue to work on improving the quality of the Catholic education we provide. We appreciate your partnership in our mission.

Thank you for your continued, generous support of your parish school. Please know that you are in our prayers as well. Once again, we invite you to continue to help us through a donation to our Annual Fund Drive. RSVP...respond, if you please:). God’s richest blessings to you all!
Shirley Kennedy
Principal, Sacred Heart Catholic School

We will be selling Scrip after the 7:00 and 8:30 Masses on December 1st, December 8th, and December 15th

“Make yourself familiar with the angels, and behold them frequently in spirit; for, without being seen they are present with you.”

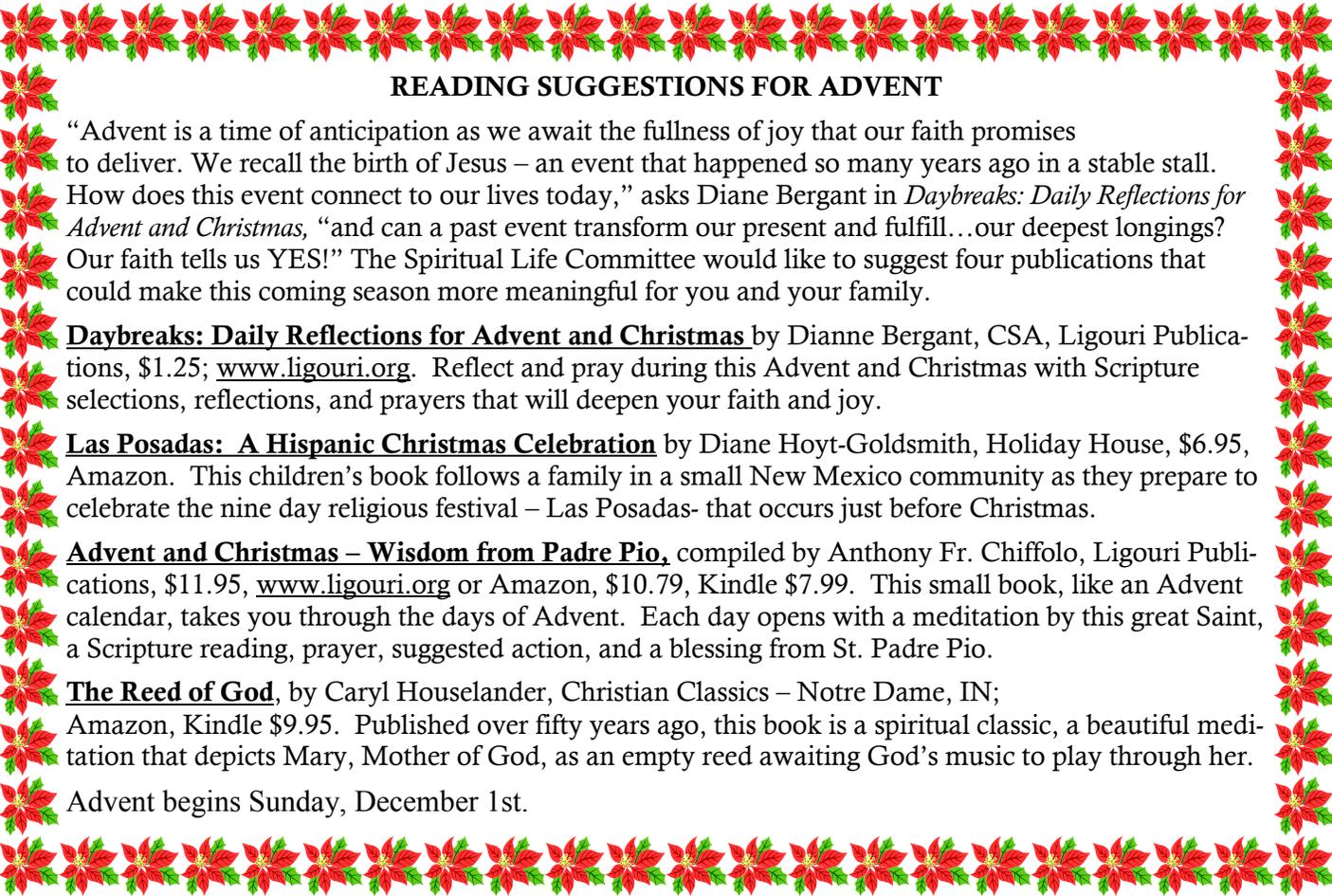
~~ St. Francis De Sales



Financial Report

	11/17/2013	11/18/2012
Offertory received - this week	\$14, 817.97	\$16,912.41
Offertory received - Year to Date	\$347,981.91	\$353,887.25
Needed for Budget	\$361,105.79	\$366,509.43
Over (Under) Budget	(\$13,123.88)	(\$12,622.18)

“How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good God has done for me?” (Psalm 116:1)



READING SUGGESTIONS FOR ADVENT

“Advent is a time of anticipation as we await the fullness of joy that our faith promises to deliver. We recall the birth of Jesus – an event that happened so many years ago in a stable stall. How does this event connect to our lives today,” asks Diane Bergant in *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas*, “and can a past event transform our present and fulfill...our deepest longings? Our faith tells us YES!” The Spiritual Life Committee would like to suggest four publications that could make this coming season more meaningful for you and your family.

Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas by Dianne Bergant, CSA, Ligouri Publications, \$1.25; www.ligouri.org. Reflect and pray during this Advent and Christmas with Scripture selections, reflections, and prayers that will deepen your faith and joy.

Las Posadas: A Hispanic Christmas Celebration by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith, Holiday House, \$6.95, Amazon. This children’s book follows a family in a small New Mexico community as they prepare to celebrate the nine day religious festival – Las Posadas- that occurs just before Christmas.

Advent and Christmas – Wisdom from Padre Pio, compiled by Anthony Fr. Chiffolo, Ligouri Publications, \$11.95, www.ligouri.org or Amazon, \$10.79, Kindle \$7.99. This small book, like an Advent calendar, takes you through the days of Advent. Each day opens with a meditation by this great Saint, a Scripture reading, prayer, suggested action, and a blessing from St. Padre Pio.

The Reed of God, by Caryl Houselander, Christian Classics – Notre Dame, IN; Amazon, Kindle \$9.95. Published over fifty years ago, this book is a spiritual classic, a beautiful meditation that depicts Mary, Mother of God, as an empty reed awaiting God’s music to play through her.

Advent begins Sunday, December 1st.