

December 3, 2017



FROM THE
PASTOR

For **ADVENT IS A TIME OF WAITING**: waiting for the opportunity to celebrate God's intervention in human history; waiting for, and preparing for, Jesus' return. We hear from the book of Isaiah for the first three Sundays of Advent. It speaks of historical events in the life of the Israelites like wars, revolts, dethroned rulers. The prophet calls for an intimate relationship between God and his chosen people. During exile Isaiah recalls all the times in history that God provided protection, and begs for the Lord to come once more to their aid. He acknowledges that they have sinned, but is confident in God's abiding covenantal promise.

Like him we are to have confident hope in God's love for us. As our Father God shapes our lives with the loving tenderness of a potter molding clay. We hear this same confidence in the Gospel message of Jesus to his disciples. His words, *Be watchful! Be alert!* are instructions for how to live with assurance that we don't have to wonder or worry.

The nights are much longer than the days in this dark time of the year. We may be facing harsh difficulties, unknown risks or painful circumstances. Yet what the prophet Isaiah names is what Paul the Apostle confirms: *In him you were enriched in every way, because God is faithful.* We have already been given the graces we need to face our specific circumstances. In the words of Saint Paul in today's reading: *you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

God is, indeed, faithful. The only question we must answer is, how are we responding to this awesome grace?

Fr. Michael

REFLEXIONES DE NUESTRO
PASTOR



El **TIEMPO DE ADVIENTO ES UN TIEMPO DE ESPERA**: espera para la oportunidad de celebrar la intervención de Dios en la historia humana.; esperando por, y preparando para, el regreso de Jesús. Es lo que, escuchamos del Libro de Isaías por los primeros tres domingos de Adviento. Habla de los eventos históricos en la vida de los israelitas como las guerras, revoluciones, gobernadores destronados. EL profeta llama a una íntima relación entre Dios y su pueblo elegido. Durante el exilio, Isaías hace un llamado a todos los tiempos en la historia que, Dios provee protección, y ruega al Señor que venga una vez más a su auxilio. El reconoce que ellos han pecado, pero tiene confianza en la promesa del pacto permanente de Dios.

Como el, nosotros estamos con confiada esperanza en el amor de Dios por nosotros. Como nuestro Padre le da figura a nuestra vida, con el amor tierno de un artesano moldeando el barro. Escuchamos esta misma confianza en el mensaje del Evangelio que Jesús da a sus discípulos. Sus palabras, *¡Velen!, estén preparados!* Son instrucciones de cómo vivir con seguridad que no tenemos que preocuparnos o dudar.

Las noches son más largas que los días en el año, en el tiempo de oscurecer más temprano. Podremos enfrentar dificultades, riesgos desconocidos o circunstancias dolorosas. Lo que el profeta Isaías dice es lo que, el apóstol Pablo confirma: *En el somos enriquecidos en todo, porque Dios es fiel.* A nosotros ya se nos ha dado las gracias que necesitamos para enfrentar nuestras circunstancias específicas. En las palabras de San Pablo, en la lectura de hoy: *ustedes no carecen de ningún don, los que esperan la manifestación de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.*

Dios es, por seguro, fiel. La única pregunta que debemos contestar es, ¿cómo estamos respondiendo a sus maravillosas gracias?

Padre Miguel

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Did you know that couples who attend a Worldwide Marriage encounter (WWME) Weekend:

- Experience only a 2% divorce rate
- Live the true meaning of the Sacrament of Marriage
- Become more involved in their church
- Renew the Church through discipleship with other couples

The next Marriage Encounter Weekend is **February 23-25 (2018)**, at Mt. Angel Abbey. For more information call 503-853-2758, or at www.rediscoverthespark.org. Additional dates and locations are listed on-line.

Did you know? — The **CARMELITE AUXILIARY** exists to help our cloistered Carmelite sisters, at the Carmel of Maria Regina on Greenhill Road?? It is open to all women of the parish, and hold their meetings at **10:00am**, on the **2nd Monday** in the months of January, February, March, April, May, September, October, & November. *Come join us, and learn how we help our Carmelites!*



Do you know anyone who could benefit from a Christmas Food Box? Encourage them to call SVDP, and request a box! The distribution day for St. Mark Church is Dec. 21st.

HELP FOSTER A CULTURE OF LIFE AT 1ST WAY — 1st Way is in need of volunteers to help at their crisis pregnancy center. Just a few hours/week can help save lives! Give a call to the 1st Way office (in Springfield 541-687-8651), and see what's needed for volunteering.



FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

REVELATIONS FROM GOD ...

The ancient Israelite judge, Gideon, acted on a personal revelation he received from God (Jgs 6:11-40) ... Stories of such special revelations are now an important part of what is called the “public” revelation of God to the Church, which includes sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition — a deposit of faith that we need to take as our norm of belief (2 Tm 1:14).

In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors, through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son” (Heb 1:1-2. Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, is the Father’s one, perfect definitive Word, which can never be surpassed. In Christ, God has said it all. So the heritage of faith, given in Christ and contained in Scripture and Tradition, is complete. We expect no new *public* revelation until Jesus returns to earth.

Over the course of centuries, the Church has come to understand the meaning of that complete revelation more deeply. From this deposit handed down by the apostles and their successors, the teaching office of the Church (magisterium) draws everything that is proposed to us for our belief, as being divinely revealed. Catholics are obliged to accept this public revelation of God.

Do special revelations still come to individuals from heaven? The Church certainly allows for that possibility. At times, she has even authoritatively recognized such messages — eg the appearances of our Lady to St. Bernadette at Lourdes. But these “private” revelations do not belong to the deposit of faith. Their role is not to add to, or improve, Christ’s definitive revelation, but to help believers live it more fully in a specific period of history.

For that reason, Catholics are not obligated to believe in these *private* revelations in the same way they would place their faith in sacred Scripture and Tradition. At the same time, Catholics should exercise caution toward any alleged “revelations” that have not yet been approved by the Church. And they must firmly reject as false any that offer a “different gospel” (Gal 1:6-9), claiming to surpass or correct the deposit of faith given in Christ.

RECOMMENDED READING: Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

Ps 119:29 · Jer 23:13-32 · Mt 24:4-5,11 · Lk 21:8 · Acts 8:9-25 · 2 Cor 11:4,13-15 · Eph 4:14 ·

2 Thes 2:1-5,15 · 1 Tm 1:3-4; 4:1-2,7; 6:12-16 · 2 Tm 4:3-4 · Rv 13:11-14 ·

& Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Nos. 50-100 ·