



2024 Advent Week 2



Dear Parishioners,

The second week of Advent we light the Peace candle. This is also sometimes referred to as the Bethlehem candle, which reminds us

of Mary and Joseph's journey. The hope and prophecy heralded in the first week of Advent points towards the peace that Christ will bring, and encourages us, like Mary and Joseph, to find our peace and security in the Lord.

This week, I'd like to celebrate all of the good men and women at St. Anthony's who are helping to bring peace to the impoverished, journeying with others as they seek Christ, and fostering fellowship and good will amongst our parish. As the Gospel message exhorts us: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths". We sincerely thank the many volunteers giving so much of their time to prepare a place for Christ in the hearts of others.

In Christ,
Fr. David Reamsnyder

This Week's Prayer: Lectio Divina



Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) is an ancient practice of the church where we pour over scripture in prayer. We move away from the literal sense of the passage and instead seek to open our hearts to a personal word that sticks out in the reading and inspires our prayer. Lectio Divina consists of four parts:

1. **Lectio (Read):** Take a short passage from the bible and read/listen to it. Be attentive to a single word, phrase, or image that sticks out to you. Reread if necessary.
2. **Meditatio (Meditate):** When a word or phrase strikes you, repeat it. Ponder the word that the Lord has given you and engage with it in prayer. Let your thoughts, memories, and desires interact with the word.
3. **Oratio (Speak):** Respond to God's word. What do you want to say to the Lord? Tell Him what you think He's saying, share your thoughts and desires, hold nothing back. Enter into conversation with God.
4. **Contemplatio (Contemplation):** Rest in God's presence. Still your thoughts. Sit in silence. Be content with wordless prayer as you allow God to work in your Spirit.

Spend 20-30 minutes each day (preferably first thing in the morning) to pray Lectio Divina. We'll pray from the daily Gospel as follows:

- » **Mon. 12/9** - Lk 1:26-38
- » **Tue. 12/10** - Mt 18:12-14
- » **Wed. 12/11** - Mt 11:28-30
- » **Thur. 12/12** - Lk 1:26-38
- » **Fri. 12/13** - Mt 11:16-19
- » **Sat. 12/14** - Mt 17:9-13
- » **Sun. 12/15** - Lk 3:10-18

Each day, we ask that you pray for our 1.) Evangelization and Local Outreach, and 2.) Fellowship and Communication ministries. Please pray especially for our Grotto Expansion and the hiring of new campus ministers.

Ministry Updates: Evangelism and Local Outreach & Fellowship and Communication

Growth (Where We've Been)

- » An average of 80-100 students attending weekly convivium nights at The Grotto
- » Our Grotto chapel is overflowing with an average of 5-15 students attending daily adoration at any given time
- » Record numbers of Family Center food baskets to serve needy families (we're grateful for the resources to serve, despite a troubling increase in those who need—we ask for prayers)
- » Social events and fundraisers that have brought the community together in record numbers: Polish Feast, CCW High Tea, Holiday Bazaar, Catholic Society's Family Fun Day, and more

Hope (Where We're Going)

- » Grotto Expansion fundraising has exceeded \$700,000 in outright gifts or pledges. We're prayerfully preparing for next steps upon hitting our \$800,000 minimum, and we'll continue to seek funds for our stretch goal of \$1,200,000 to furnish and maintain The Grotto
- » We're excited to have a job search for our new campus ministers underway—many thanks to Ben and Shelby Hufford for the last four years of service!
- » Though OCIA falls under Adult Faith Formation, our other ministries have helped bring students and members of the community to our parish. We're blessed to have well over 20 individuals attending OCIA each week, and we look to see even more in the new year. Please pray for our catechumens

Thank you

Thank you to the 40 volunteers giving over 500 hours a month at the Family Center; thank you to college students and young adults who faithfully participate in Catholic Society, The Grotto, and Youth Faith Formation; thank you to many dozens of committed members in the Knights of Columbus and Council of Catholic Women who support our parish with service and community; and thank you to all who have supported our feasts, fundraisers, funeral lunches, homebound ministry, social events, and all other service opportunities through the years. Your work brings the truth, beauty, and goodness of the Catholic faith to others.

We're also excited for the planned Grotto expansion and the fundraising that is underway. We've prayerfully discerned that the Lord is calling us to provide more space for the Catholic students who are eager to participate in prayer and fellowship at The Grotto, and this has been the number one request from students and visitors year after year. Thank you as well to the many donors from our parish who have given targeted gifts to support both The Grotto's general operation fund and the Family Center.

