

**From the Pastor's Desk:**

**Dear Friends:**

The Third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudete Sunday" because today's Mass begins with the opening antiphone: "Gaudete in Domino Semper" - "Rejoice in the Lord always." While it is nice to hear someone tell us to "rejoice" the reality is that in the world and in our lives there are times when it is difficult to find joy. On the news we hear of wars, terrorist attacks and senseless massacres as happened not long ago in Las Vegas. We hear about hurricanes, earthquakes and fires that result in so much death and suffering. Where is the joy in all of this? In our own lives we might be facing various trials of health, family tragedies, and relationships that are suffering. How can we be joyful with all these things going on around us and in our lives? When Saint Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians and tells them to rejoice, he is not being entertained in the house of some wealthy member of the community and being waited on hand and foot. It's easy to rejoice when everything is going right. Everything is not going well for Paul, and he wrote this letter as he was being persecuted and fleeing from town to town. Throughout his ministry Paul suffered multiple times including stoning and imprisonment, too many to list here. Yet Paul never stopped calling upon the various Christian Communities to rejoice, and in his letter to the Philippians he wrote: "Rejoice in the Lord always, I shall say it again, rejoice!" When Paul speaks of joy, he is not referring to a nice, fleeting feeling that makes one feel good, it is the rich long-lasting joy that comes from the Holy Spirit that goes to the very core of our being. This is deep inner joy that comes from knowing Jesus. Paul believed and experienced that God was always with him, the Joy of the Lord was his strength, and he knew that even in the darkest and most difficult situations God would provide for him. When we have a deep personal relationship with him we experience the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives. These are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. The joy of the Lord is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. We bear fruit when we welcome and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. These are what gave Paul the ability to shout out for joy even during the most difficult times. Advent is a time that helps us to be more appreciative of the gift of Jesus, more open to his presence, and more receptive of the joy that comes from him.

**God Bless You!**

**Fr. Madanu Lourdu Raju**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**CCD - Catholic Christian Disciples**

Third Sunday of Advent - the theme of HOPE...As Christians, we must be sustained by the hope of heaven. As St. Paul tells us that "the sufferings of the present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed" (Rom 8:18). What will heaven be like? Love is the deepest longing of the human heart, and in heaven, we will be embraced by the love of God and surrounded by the love of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels and all the saints. The hope of heaven must be the light that guides our choices in life.

+ **There are no CCD classes until January 3<sup>rd</sup>.** We will only cancel classes when the Gilman school district is closed.

+ During this time off, check out some Catholic websites for children and teens such as Holy Heroes.com or Dynamic Catholic.com for older children and adults. Also, EWTN is full of various programs for children and adults.

+ Eileen O'Malley and the fourth graders initiated the Christmas bags project for the Veterans in Rice Lake. The children of Grades K - 5 decorated and filled bags with many items such as toothbrushes, pens&paper, candy, playing cards, and lip balm that were donated by the Gilman Community.

**Blessings & Peace this Advent ~ Sr. Marianna**

**OUR WEEKLY GIVING**

Ss. Peter & Paul	
Adult Envelopes	\$ 1,297.00
Loose	6 6.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,363.00</b>
Total from December 11, 2016	997.00
Building Fund	3 00.00
Immaculate Conception	2 46.00
Christmas Flowers	70.00
Christmas	10.00
St. Stanislaus	
Adult Envelopes	\$ 351.00
Loose	9 3.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 44.00</b>
Total from December 11, 2016	5 28.00
Building Fund	50.00
Immaculate Conception	3 13.00
Christmas Flowers	1 20.00
St. John	
Adult Envelopes	\$ 658.45
Loose	9 1.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 49.46</b>
Total from December 11, 2016	1,360.61
Immaculate Conception	253.00
Christmas Flowers	35.00
St. Michael	
Adult Envelopes	\$ 245.00
Loose	4 4.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 89.00</b>
Total from December 11, 2016	2 73.00
Building Fund	10.00
Immaculate Conception	3 0.00
Christmas Flowers	30.00

*(Totals include only the basic collection)*

**2017/2018 Catholic Services Appeal**

	Assessment	Received	Amount Due
Ss. Peter & Paul	\$ 11,179.00	\$ 3,420.00	\$ 7,759.00
St. John	\$ 8,721.00	\$ 1,790.00	\$ 6,931.00
St. Stanislaus	\$ 5,249.00	\$ 2,315.00	\$ 2,934.00
St. Michael	\$ 2,509.00	\$ 1,970.00	\$ 539.00
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**OUR SPONSOR THIS WEEK**

**Village Hair Designs**  
 by Monica  
 (715) 447-8276 \*\*\*\* W15218 Hwy 64  
 Wed. 1:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
 Thurs. & Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

