



Welcome to the 3rd Sunday of Advent! This Sunday is commonly known as “Gaudete Sunday”, and is distinguished by the rose-colored vestments. . . . the same ones used for

“Laetare Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Lent. The color that is most-used during Advent is purple. But, there is an option to use blue, as we have done for over 20 years, to help us distinguish this season from Lent. Blue symbolizes “the night”, which awaits the dawn . . . Advent is a “waiting” for the Light of the World to come into our lives. Below comes from The Catholic Encyclopedia, and gives a great description and history of what “Gaudete Sunday” is all about. Throughout the description, you may notice references to the “Office”. That is referring to “The Divine Office”, the series of prayers that the ordained pray throughout the day. I thought that I would share it with you . . .

“Gaudete Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent, so called from the first word of the Introit at Mass (Gaudete, i.e. Rejoice). The season of Advent originated as a fast of forty days in preparation for Christmas, commencing on the day after the feast of St. Martin (November 12), whence it was often called “St. Martin’s Lent” —a name by which it was known as early as the fifth century. The introduction of the Advent fast cannot be placed much earlier, because there is no evidence of Christmas being kept on December 25 before the end of the fourth century, and the preparation for the feast could not have been of earlier date than the feast itself. In the ninth century, the duration of Advent was reduced to four weeks, the first allusion to the shortened season being in a letter of St. Nicholas I (858-867) to the Bulgarians, and by the twelfth century the fast had been replaced by simple abstinence. St. Gregory the Great was the first to draw up an Office for the Advent season, and the Gregorian Sacramentary is the earliest to provide Masses for the Sundays of Advent. In both Office and Mass provision is made for five Sundays, but by the tenth century four was the usual number, though some churches of France observed five as late as the thirteenth century. Notwithstanding all these modifications, however, Advent still preserved most of the characteristics of a penitential season, which made it a kind of counterpart to Lent, the middle (or third) Sunday corresponding with Laetare or Mid-Lent Sunday. On it, as on Laetare Sunday, the organ and flowers, forbidden during the rest of the season, were permitted to be used; rose-colored vestments were allowed instead of purple (or black, as formerly); the deacon and subdeacon reassumed the dalmatic and tunicle at the chief Mass, and cardinals wore rose-color instead of purple. All these distinguishing marks have continued in use, and are the present discipline of the Latin Church. Gaudete Sunday, therefore, makes a break, like Laetare Sunday, about midway through a season which is otherwise of a penitential character, and signifies the nearness of the Lord’s coming. Of the “stations” kept in Rome on the four Sundays of Advent, that at the Vatican basilica is assigned to Gaudete, as being the most important and imposing of the four. In both Office and Mass throughout Advent, continual reference is made to our Lord’s second coming, and this is emphasized on the third Sunday by the additional signs of gladness permitted on that day. Gaudete Sunday is further marked by a new Invitatory, the Church no longer inviting the faithful to adore merely “The Lord who is to come”, but calling upon them to worship and hail with joy “The Lord who is now nigh and close at hand”. The Nocturn lessons

from the Prophecy of Isaiah describe the Lord’s coming and the blessings that will result from it, and the antiphons at Vespers reecho the same prophetic promises. The joy of expectation is emphasized by the constant Alleluias, which occur in both Office and Mass throughout the entire season. In the Mass, the Introit “Gaudete in Domino semper” strikes the same note, and gives its name to the day. The Epistle again incites us to rejoicing, and bids us prepare to meet the coming Savior with prayers and supplication and thanksgiving, whilst the Gospel, in the words of St. John Baptist, warns us that the Lamb of God is even now in our midst, though we appear to know Him not. The spirit of the Office and Liturgy all through Advent is one of expectation and preparation for the Christmas feast as well as for the second coming of Christ, and the penitential exercises suitable to that spirit are thus on Gaudete Sunday suspended, as it were, for a while in order to symbolize that joy and gladness in the promised Redemption which should never be absent from the hearts of the faithful.”

On behalf of all the retired religious, I thank you for your generous contribution to this weekend’s 2nd collection. It is hard to believe that the majority of those who dedicated themselves to the religious life are over 60 years old, with so many of those over the age of 80. Their care is getting so expensive with today’s costs, and they truly need and deserve our generosity. If you haven’t had the chance to contribute yet, please put your gift into next week’s collection.

Take time to pray, and don’t be overwhelmed by that ridiculous shopping! Have a great week! Fr. D.

WEEKLY COLLECTION REPORT:

	Dec. 7, 2008	Dec 9, 2007
Repairs & Improvements	\$547.00	\$313.00
Christmas Flowers	\$2,347.00	\$645.00
Sacrificial Giving	\$8,323.25	\$6,826.56
Amount Needed	\$7,250.00	
Over/(Short)	\$1,073.25	

(*includes loose money). Last week, out of 668 families of the parish, 305 envelopes (46%) were used, with an **average** Sacrificial Giving donation of **\$27.29**. Your parish depends on you for your weekly donation. Thanks for your sacrifice.




HOLY LAND ANGELS - This weekend, December 13th and 14th, Christian families from Bethlehem who make their livelihood through the selling of their handmade olive wood religious articles will be at Sacred Heart Parish.

After all of the Masses, there will be a display in the vestibule of the Church of these hand carved items, such as nativity scenes, crucifixes, rosaries, the Last Supper and many other beautiful religious statues. Please look over the carvings that are available and help support this self-help project to keep the Christians present in the Holy Land of Jesus birth.

Our **Parish Reconciliation Service** will be held next Sunday, December 21st at 7:00PM in church. We will have priests available for confession until all are heard. Please join us.



*Mass Intentions
for the Week* 

 *In Our Parish*

Monday, December 15th

8:30 - Bob and Rita Eichenlaub - Family

Tuesday, December 16th

8:30 - Communion Service

Wednesday, December 17th

8:30 - Mary Salibrici - Judy Andera

Thursday, December 18th

8:30 - Jerry Squeglia - Patricia Molly

Friday, December 19th

8:30 - Richard Hart - MM Tony Gonnella

Saturday, December 20th

4:30 - Catherine and Carmen Pirrello - Family

Sunday, December 21st - The Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 - For the Parishioners of Sacred Heart Church

11:30 - Pasquale "Pat" DiPaolo - Family

Priest Schedule for December 20th and 21st

Saturday, 4:30PM - Fr. Detisch

Sunday, 9:30AM and 11:30AM - Fr. Detisch

The Sanctuary Candle is burning in memory of †**Marie Sivillo** by the Family.

The Altar Bread and Wine are given in memory of †**Isabelle Smoot** by Mary Ann Geary.

Scripture Readings for Next Week

2 Samuel 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Romans 16: 25-27 Luke 1: 26-38

Monday - Boy Scout Meeting at 6:00PM in the audi.

Monday Night Scripture Group at 7:00PM in the sacristy.

Tuesday - The **Rosary** will be prayed at 2:00PM in church.

Saturday - Church Cleaning **Team #6** (Mary Lou and Vince Eppolito's team) is scheduled for Saturday, December 20th.

Sunday - Parish Reconciliation Service will be held at 7:00PM in church. We will have priests available for confession until all are heard. Please join us.

BIG GIVEAWAY NEWS AND WINNERS

Congratulations to these most recent **Big Giveaway Winners**: 8541 - Marty and Joanne Haulik, 5056 - Ellen and Rick Eber, 3150 - Marlia Coates, 6765 - Bonnie and Joe Wodarski, 0309 - Rick and Mary Carlotti, 2336 - Julie Cicero, and 8941 - Maureen and Steve Thompson.

Special congratulations to Patrick F. Donohue who was the \$1,000 winner for the last Wednesday of November.

There will be no turn-in until further notice.



YOUTH GROUP NEWS - The gospel shows us

John the Baptist as the messenger of Christ. When questioned he explained that he was not the Christ. They asked him this question because even though John the Baptist was not the true light, his word was the true light. He spoke of Jesus in a time when it was challenged. This story challenges us to speak the word and through it others may experience the true light which is Jesus the Christ. Sacred Heart Youth Group meets every Thursday from 7-8:30pm in the auditorium. Please feel free to e-mail me any questions at catholicconnection@gmail.com.

Peace. Jesse

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

What we ask you to give

Religious Give Thanks - "When my eyes came to the enclosed check, I immediately prayed a "Glory Be" and was practically moved to tears," wrote an abbot at an Oklahoma monastery for benefits received from The Retirement Fund for Religious.



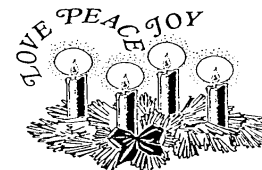
About 58% of women and men religious are past age 70; 7% are past the age of 90. More than 4,900 need skilled nursing care. Even at advanced ages, many work in compensated or volunteer ministry that benefits others.

Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits, and investment return.

Many elderly religious receive, on average, a Social Security benefit of just \$4,402 per year. The average U. S. beneficiary receives \$12,948 annually. Community living provides some economies of scale, but health care and living costs in most religious communities far exceed income.

Ninety-four cents of each dollar donated benefits frail and elderly religious. *Please give, especially in memory of the religious mentors and guides in your life.*

If you were unable to contribute this weekend, you may drop your envelope at the rectory or place in the collection next Sunday.



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 

MASSES

Christmas Eve - Wednesday, December 24th
4:30PM and 12AM Midnight Mass

A special music program with our Parish choir will begin at 11:30PM. In order to assure minimal interruptions during the performance, we would ask that if you plan to attend this pre-liturgy Christmas presentation, you try to be seated before 11:30PM.

CHRISTMAS DAY - Thursday, December 25th
9:30AM and 11:30AM

New Year's Eve - Wednesday, December 31st - 4:30PM

NEW YEAR'S DAY - Thursday, January 1st - 10:00AM

Pray For Peace