

NOVEMBER 28TH 2021 - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

St. Thomas More Parish with St. Bernadette Mission



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PASTOR: FR. ANTONIO BAROL

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Those who are sick, especially:
Erica Perk, Hermie Jandristis

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

ST. THOMAS MORE RECTORY CHAPEL

WEDNESDAY: 5:30 PM THURSDAY: 10:00 AM
FRIDAY: 10:00 AM

ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH, MILLBROOK

SATURDAY: 4:00 PM

For the eternal rest of **Beth Campbell**
SUNDAY : 9:00 AM (Rosary at 8:45AM)
For the People of the Parish

ST. BERNADETTE , NESTLETON

SUNDAY: 11:00 AM — For the departed members of our
family and friends.

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FR. ANTONIO BAROL'S MESSAGE FOR SUNDAY – NOVEMBER 28TH, 2021

Dear sisters/brothers, parishioners of St. Thomas More and St. Bernadette,

I would like to use the entrance antiphon of last Thursday's mass from the Book of Sirach: "Give peace, O Lord to those who wait for you, that your prophets be found true. Hear the prayers of your servant, and your people Israel".

(Parishioners of St. Thomas More and St. Bernadette). We could change Israel to our local parish family for we have been waiting and praying for an end of this pandemic. As we are about to celebrate a great and joyful season of the Church, Advent and Christmas; let us continue to pray that God will take away our fears and will protect us at all times. Please let us continue to be vigilant and also to protect each other by our faithful adherence to the health protocols and through vaccination.

Advent has a two-fold nature: It prepares us for Christmas, when we recall Christ's first coming among us, and it is also a time when we look forward to his second coming at the end of the ages. Advent is a season of joyful expectation. It has been a common mistake that most Christians put more emphasis on the first coming that is Christmas, which is associated with focusing on the material side of giving and receiving gifts, which is not bad at all but just don't go beyond our means that instead of having a joyful spirit it will turn into a stressful time of the year. May I recommend that in the spirit of Christmas giving, do not forget those who are in most need locally and in the world. Our parish family through the CWMC (Catholic Women's and Men's Council) is trying to reach out to our children through our gift giving on Christmas Eve (4 pm) and Christmas morning mass. Please, register your child age 10 and under. The deadline is December 5th – name, age and gender is required so that appropriate gifts can be purchased. (Please respond to the email or complete the form at the entrance to the church).

During Advent, each Sunday's gospel reading has a specific focus. The Old Testament readings, especially taken from the prophets, are prophecies about the messiah and messianic times. The second readings are selections from the writings of the Apostles that present exhortations and instructions of different themes of this season. I hope most of you have already a copy of our New Sunday Missal to guide you for the different Sundays in Advent and for the whole year.

The missal is our tool to prepare us for the Sunday celebrations and therefore it is necessary to read ahead the readings so that coming to church would not be like going to a movie or a concert that you are just there sitting and listening.

Cont'd.../

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At least when you read ahead, you can engage on the responses and you already know the reading and this time you hear it from someone's lips. When you read it at home at least you already have some words that are important and meaningful to you. This is one of the main topics for the synod's questioner, which I hope that many of us had done in the spirit of Communion and Participation. This is our hope and aspiration as a Church starting from each parish that would lead us to our mission as a Church, moving towards the realization of God's Kingdom of love, justice and peace.

This first Sunday of Advent, prophet Jeremiah foretold that the Lord will fulfill the promise that he had made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The Old Testament writings point to the coming of the Messiah, which we Christians celebrate yearly the birth of Jesus on Christmas day, while the Jews had not accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah. Until now, they are still waiting for the fulfilment of the prophecy and we Christians had been celebrating Christmas for more than two thousand years and even waiting for the second coming of Jesus as the King and Judge of the living and the dead, which we celebrated last Sunday's feast of Christ the King.

The first letter to the Thessalonians for our second reading this weekend, St. Paul had prayed for the followers of Christ, "May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all and may he so strengthened your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." St. Paul was already encouraging his audience to prepare for Christ's second coming especially that St. Mark mentioned about Jesus saying, that this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. We know that Jesus was speaking about the end of Jerusalem and the Temple that happened in the year 70. The other end time that Jesus mentioned he said, "But about day or hour no one knows, neither the Angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." Let's not deal much about it and not also attempt to predict when because what is needed is not to know when, but to make ourselves ready at all times. The end time is not something to be feared but a time of joyful expectation as Advent is for the people of God and also for us who are anticipating Jesus' second coming. Whether we would be around during that second coming but we are sure that whenever we will not be able to wait for the second coming but we know Jesus is coming back to take us with him, as the gospel of St. John narrated, "I will go and prepare a place for you and I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14; 1-6) His first coming to us in person is at the end of our earthly journey when we are judged individually, whether we are worthy to enter the place prepared for us since the beginning of time, or we still need a little purification in the place we call purgatory which many say is a place for God's mercy that we are not condemned, but given a chance to be worthy of heaven.

As we start the new liturgical calendar of the Church, the cycle C, we will be reading the gospel of St. Luke and this week we are given the scenario of the end times. There will be heavenly and earthly signs, of the sun, the moon and the stars and on earth like the roaring of the sea and the waves. Jesus warned us all, "Be on guard, be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

In this first Sunday in Advent let us try to look beyond the preparation of the first coming Christmas to the preparation of his coming to us which we try to make the two preparations of his coming to us at the end of our earthly journey, and also his second coming at the end of time. In the first preparation which is Christmas, we try to prepare material things as, decorations, gifts giving and maybe a family and friends Christmas dinner and please do not forget the reason of the season who is Christ who came to live with us to become part of our human family. What do we prepare for him? He does not need anything because he owns everything, he only wants us that in everything we do this Christmas we remember him as the reason of the season, therefore put Christ in Christmas, and give praise and honor him by attending one of the masses during the season, greet others saying with a smile, "Merry Christmas" even if one greets you with a happy holiday, you can respond with a merry Christmas. Try to become a sign of contradiction in this secularized world which wants to take Christ out of Christmas. Do not forget that the number one symbol of Christmas is the Nativity Set and you can even have an outside set and it is already a good tool for evangelization.

The first candle of Advent is the candle of Hope, and it is our hope that God will heal the world from this pandemic, to touch those who are sick, physically, spiritually, psychologically and even socially. It is said that when we pray we must first believe. Quote of the week: "In the twilight of life, God will not judge us on our earthly possessions and human successes, but on how well we have loved." (St. John of the Cross)

Mass Intentions: Sat. Nov. 27 @4:00 PM- For the eternal rest of Beth Campbell: Sunday Nov. 28, @9:00 AM – For the People of the Parish; 11AM @ Nestleton – For the deceased family members.

Please, continue the journey of Truth, Reconciliation and Peace by watching the You Tube presentation of Archbishop Donald Bolen of Winnipeg.

In December please, I need some volunteers to help in gathering up and share their mind from the answers of the diocesan/parish survey because we have to submit the result in January. Thank you and God bless.

Fr. Tony

Contact Fr. Tony for details about arranging baptisms, marriages, birthday or anniversary announcements or blessings, or mass devotions.

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