

St. Ambrose Parish

Our 99th Year!
NOVEMBER 29, 2015
BEEHIVE

What is the Jubilee Year of Mercy?

In the papal decree issued this past Spring, *Misericordiae Vultus* (“The Face of Mercy”), Pope Francis announced a jubilee year, and also invites us to reconsider Christian life anew. In doing so, he unpacks his own spirituality and invites the faithful to work for those on the margins. In essence, he invites us to meditate on and live the core of his pastoral vision, rooted in an invitation to conversion.

Beginning on Dec. 8th, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, and concluding on Nov. 20th, 2016, the solemnity of Christ the King, the Church will celebrate an extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. Jubilee years were part of the Old Testament law. The Catholic Church took up this tradition in the year 1300, and by 1450 ordinary jubilee years were set for every 25 years. Pope Francis’ invitation is an *extraordinary* jubilee year because we are not due to have another until 2025, falling out of the every 25-years pattern.

During this Holy Year, the Pope encourages us to do two things: he wants us to contemplate the mystery of mercy in the Christian life and, second, to live that mystery in concrete action.

To help us with the first task, our Holy Father in his papal decree starts by explaining that “Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy.” Jesus is the very personification of mercy. So to contemplate mercy is to contemplate Jesus and his relationship with the Father and his mission of salvation. For Pope Francis, contemplating mercy is not an option for the Christian life, or a kind of boutique piety. Thinking on and praying with this mystery of mercy is constitutive to being a Christian. It is the very heart of being a disciple who has admitted his or her own sinfulness and embraced the salvation offered through Christ Jesus.



Jesus, Pope Francis writes, “is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously.... The signs he works, especially in favor of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in him speaks of mercy. Nothing in him is devoid of compassion” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, No. 8).

“A Concrete Reality”

Pope Francis is calling on all Catholics to take this jubilee year to reassess our relationship with God who is mercy. He desires us to be converted or re-converted by exploring this relationship. He helps us with this task as he writes with such evocative language in his papal bull:

“The mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this is a ‘visceral’ love. It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy” (No. 6).

This is Pope Francis at his best. Engaging our imagination so that we can relate to God more intimately, he asks us to draw on our own experience of father or mother or on our love for our children. We know that this love indeed comes from a place deep within, naturally and uninhibited. God’s love for us is the same.

He wants us to meditate on the God whose love for us is deep, visceral, tender and indulgent. The way we love our babies is the way God loves us. This is not so much about intellectual investigation, though the pope does quote St. Thomas Aquinas and Pope St. John Paul II’s wonderful encyclical on mercy, *Dives in Misericordia* (“Rich in Mercy”). It is an invitation to expand our understanding and experience of God’s tender, personal love for us. Pope Francis is inviting us to pray with these experiences of loving mercy during this upcoming year.

Continued on page 2

Jubilee of Mercy

Continued from page 1.

Along with prayerful meditation, the Pope suggests that we might also read about the saints, whose lives are often inspiring examples of the merciful and intimate love of God. Though not mentioned in this papal bull, we might also seek out literature or art during this year to help us contemplate mercy. One of the Pope's favorite books is "The Betrothed," which includes several beautiful examples of merciful love. Caravaggio's "The Calling of St. Matthew" is an image of mercy which, though a static painting, is renowned for its inner movement and drama. Pope Francis has referred to these works of art many times during his pontificate because the theme of mercy has been dear to him since his youth.

Affirming Mercy

The Jubilee of Mercy is not just about contemplation, however. The Pope wants Catholics to allow the fruit of this conversion and faith-filled prayer to inform action. He writes, "Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who his true children are" (No. 9). This means that to be faithful to the mercy shown us by the Father we must be mercy for others. It is the Pope's desire that "we may become a more effective sign of the Father's actions in our lives" (No. 3). Indeed, the motto for this Year of Mercy is "Merciful like the Father." It is an invitation to change our hearts and our behaviors.

This invitation to merciful action and attitude is in part why Pope Francis chose Dec. 8th as the starting date. This year's solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council. At the Council, writes the Pope, "the walls which for too long had made the Church a kind of fortress were torn down and the time had come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way" (No. 4). The Church, during the Council, wished to avoid the condemnatory language of previous councils and looked to extend loving concern for the world. This shift of tone, not teaching, is what the Pope desires of us.

In typical Pope Francis style, he becomes very concrete. He invites us to avoid condemnations of people, who are all sinners like us. He notes that we violate mercy most often when we engage in gossip, or in judgmental comments about others. Pope Francis invites us to follow the model of the Good Samaritan and reach out in mercy "to those living on the outermost fringes of society" (No. 15). At the very least we ought to work against the tendency toward indifference and cynicism which keeps us from being with the poor.

To help us, the Pope reminds us to engage in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy in order to "reawaken our conscience" (No. 15). He asks us to help others escape the

causes of despair and poverty, to educate children, to be close to the lonely, to reject violence and to forgive those who have offended us. These works can be fulfilled any numbers of ways: visiting the elderly, volunteering at homeless shelters, mentoring young people, reaching out to someone with whom we've been estranged.

The point here does not seem to be that we gauge our commitment to Christ by the number or the size of our works. Instead, the Pope hopes that we will encounter conversion and so live out mercy as a natural overflow of the love which "gushes forth" from the Father to us. What this merciful activity looks like will depend on our own vocation, charisms, age and ability. But we are assured that as we stretch ourselves into areas that are uncomfortable, we will encounter the Lord.

The Year of Mercy ends on the solemnity of Christ the King, a feast during which we celebrate Christ as the sovereign of all of the world. Pope Francis writes that, as he closes the Holy Door on that Sunday in 2016, he will pray to the Lord of History to pour out His mercy on the world "so that everyone may work together to build a brighter future" (No. 5).



Honey from Our Hives

The "Fifth Vintage" of St. Ambrose honey is now processed and packaged. Because of Colony Collapse Disorder this past winter, in the spring of 2015 we replaced all of our hives. In harvesting this fall, we left a larger than usual amount of honey for our bees in an effort to give our bees their best potential for winter survival.

As a result, there is a *very limited* amount of honey that we can offer for sale this season. *The price is \$35 for a one-pound package.* Because of demand, quantities are limited to one container per person. This is a highly unique item – one that literally is a "taste of Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park" because, like vintage wine, honey takes on the characteristics of the area wherein it is produced.

St. Ambrose is the patron saint of bees, beekeepers, orators, song-writers and lawyers. That is anyone who has or seeks the gift of public speaking or singing. Is there someone you know in this list who would benefit from a gift of Ambrosian honey?

All our jars come attractively gift-boxed and bagged. Their sale begins on St. Ambrose's Feast Day, December 7th. Visit our office, or call (313) 822-2814

Finally, to serve that solidarity, he also invites us to pray to the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of Mercy, Our Lady, who is the mother of all the beneficiaries of God's mercy. The Pope suggests praying the *Salve Regina* during this Jubilee of Mercy in honor of her. By doing so he entrusts the fruit of this year to her tender, merciful care.

Edited from an article by Omar F.A. Gutiérrez for the November 1, 2015 issue of The Priest magazine.

All Things Considered

Phew! What a hectic year it has been for American Catholics! The beginning of Advent offers us a good time to catch our collective breath.

Consider the various Catholic headlines over the last few months. Pope Francis adjusted canon law vis-à-vis annulments.

He has visited Cuba and the United States, during which time he visited the sick and imprisoned and immigrants while also canonizing **Junipero Serra**, giving a first-ever speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations, and celebrating families in the 21st century.

In addition to all that, the Synod on the Family has also come and gone, and we are on the threshold of beginning the Holy Year dedicated to the Mercy of God.

While all this has been going on, we find ourselves having completed our liturgical year and turn our eyes to a new Advent. And not a moment too soon!

This is truly a time of new beginnings. As we open our Centennial, what better chance to consider how the past few months and decades might suggest new priorities and opportunities?

Advent and the theme of **mercy** go hand in hand. Advent and responsibility for our **environment** are made for each other. Advent and the need for **reconciliation** both personally and on a global scale have never been more ordered to each other.

We long for Christ coming into history, and at the end of time. This longing for Christ into our lives and the world can renew and strengthen us for the challenges that lie ahead in the new liturgical year. As Advent opens this week, how can this hope help us?

The hope of a world restored under God proclaims that evil is not the final word. If we base our awareness of the world around us, it is limited to certain sources of information, we might easily slip into a distorted and negative view of the world, becoming the “prophets of gloom always forecasting disaster” decried by **St. John XXIII** during his opening address to the Second Vatican Council.

Our St. Vincent dePaul and other ministries like Pregnancy Aid, which focus on the poor, the sick, the abandoned and those left at the margins, can feel overwhelming. However, we need to be ministers of hope to others: God’s mercy is always available to us and through us.

The purpose of the Advent season is to allow us to prepare – to be open to the promise of the future. We are not to do anything in particular, but to wait: to wait for God to come among us. The verbs in our Advent liturgies exhort us to “repent,” to “stay awake,” to be “alert,” to be “prepared,” and to “listen.”

In this season, all people hear the Word that God loves each and every person, regardless of state of life or condition in life, without exception. Who in our communities is most in need of such a word of hope? Are there people we serve who do not believe this Good News? What might be done — concretely — to show them otherwise?

In short, may this Advent be a time of renewal, a time of waiting, of listening, and of hope. How might we rededicate ourselves to being people who go out and seek those who have lost heart and hope and are most in need of God’s mercy?



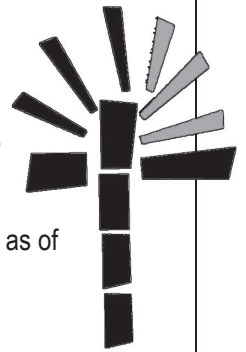
The hymn *On Eagle’s Wings* written by **Michael Joncas** in 1978 coincided with his MA in liturgy from Notre Dame, an academic pursuit that has since taken him to the Pontifical Liturgical Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum, San Anselmo in Rome. During that interim, he was ordained

Toward the
St. Ambrose
Centennial 2016

St. Ambrose Building
and Renovation Debt as of

January 2011
\$3,830,668.82

Balance as of September 2015
\$697,886.97



in 1980 as a priest for the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis. He has written some of the best contemporary hymns of our age, including *I Have Loved You* and *Be Not Afraid*.

Through the aegis of Marilyn Biery, we’ve commissioned a new hymn from Fr. Joncas which will be premiered at next week’s Centennial opening 11:15 mass. The hymn is entitled: *Omnia Christus Est Nobis – For Us Christ Is Everything*. The lyrics of this hymn are based on the writings of St. Ambrose. The title sung as a refrain comes from a talk of Pope Benedict XVI who used it to conclude an address he gave on St. Ambrose.

Next weekend at our 11:15 liturgy, we’ll mark the opening of our Centennial Year. We’ve chosen that date because it is the Sunday closest to the Feast Day of St. Ambrose which is on December 7th.

The mass next weekend is a relatively low-key opening to our anniversary year. **Adam Cardinal Maida** intends to join us, health permitting. A member of one of the smallest clubs on earth – Former Pastors of St. Ambrose, **Fr. Robert Ruedisueli** has also promised to be here. We’ll host a brunch in the ARK following that mass.

Things will gradually ramp up with a number of Centennial events taking place in 2016 – social, educational and spiritual. We also anticipate the retiring of our building debt by the end of that year. For lots of reasons, it will be a memorable year!

Name

_____Home Phone

_____Work Phone

_____Email Address

- I would simply like to learn more about the Catholic Faith.
- I desire to prepare for my Baptism into Christianity.
- I've been Baptized as a Christian and now desire to join in Catholic Communion.
- I'm non-Catholic, but married to a Catholic, and now wish to join the Catholic Church.
- I'm Catholic and I would like to complete my initiation into the Catholic Church by celebrating Confirmation and/or Communion.
- I'm Baptized Catholic and would like to learn more about my faith and how to practice it.
- I want to propose someone for Catholic Church membership and offer to serve as their sponsor.
- I would be willing to help with an R.C.I.A. program.
- I have other needs, requests, and questions. Please contact me.

Return this to the Parish Rectory or place it in the Collection basket.

Religious Education Update

In her book on prayer, *The Breath of the Soul*, Sister Joan Chittister says this, “Gratitude is not only the posture of praise but it is also the basic element of real belief in God. When we bow our heads in gratitude, we acknowledge that the works of God are good. We recognize that we cannot, of ourselves, save ourselves. We proclaim that our existence and all its goods come not from our own devices but are part of the works of God. Gratitude is the alleluia to existence, the praise that thunders through the universe as tribute to the ongoing presence of God with us even now.” Alleluia!! Happy Thanksgiving! Betty Haley

Friar on Fire

Going to see a movie is one of my favorite things to do because it allows you to relax and enter into a moment of joy and friendship with others. I enjoy movies that are comedies and action films, but most of all I love movies that are inspiring. One of the movies that I recently saw in theaters was *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2*. The Hunger Games series was not written for the reader to bask in glory like other popular films and books. It was created to make your stomach turn. The main characters – Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark – are forced into the annual Hunger Games along with 22 other children to fight to the death on live TV. Their story expresses political and social injustice, oppression, the depravity of human nature, the frightening insensitivity to destruction and the desensitized culture that we see more than glimpses of in our world today. I will not spoil anything, but *Mockingjay Part 2* is where the series ends.

The series does not just tell the story of a messed up dystopian society, but it also tells the story of Katniss’ own heart. This is the story of a teenage girl who endures traumatic events one after the other and has every reason to crumble inside. Yet she always finds the courage to do the right thing and sacrifices whatever she can for a cause that is bigger than herself.

I think this movie series has a lot of truth about our own world and our own lives today. In our own lives we hunger. We hunger for friendship, family, and relationships. Sometimes there is an imbalance in the relationships in our lives and it causes a hunger in our own hearts and spirits. Yet there are people in our world who are striving for peace, justice and mercy. It can be easy for us to want to stand back and watch from afar on TV or from our own comfort zones.

We all are invited to be peacebuilders and build a world of justice and mercy. We all are called by Christ to find the courage to sacrifice for something that is bigger than ourselves, the Reign of God. Thanksgiving has always been a favorite holiday of mine because of **food!** But that is not the only aspect that makes it meaningful for me.

Thanksgiving is a time that brings about awareness to the real Hunger Games in our world and in our lives. Thanksgiving is a time that we can all gather around the table of plenty and know that we are loved and surrounded by relationships that are meaningful and life-giving. It is an opportunity to give thanks and praise for all the many blessings we are abundantly given each and every day. And it is a time of invitation to be heroes and heroines and be aware of the hunger that happens in our world. It calls us to prayer and it calls us to try in our own way to share the gifts that we have been blessed with and reach out to those in need.

The ministry of **Tap Into Life** is another place where I have seen great passion and enthusiasm from young adults to be those heroes and heroines who want to do something for others and build a community that gives life. The next **Tap into Life** will be a very special one as it will be in The ARK at St. Ambrose on Sunday, December 20th starting at 6 p.m. I’m very excited for people to come, and I would like to invite you to please support us and pray for us.

I also simply want to say that I am thankful for you all at St. Ambrose. I’m very grateful to be a part of this community and to grow as a minister with hearts that are so full of generosity and love.

Br. Tom

The Buzz

Happy New Year ... the Catholic Church Liturgical Year, that is! In the Sunday cycle of readings at mass, we are entering Year - C, with a primary use of Luke's Gospel.

As new years go, this one at St. Ambrose can't get much better: 2016 – the 100th in the life of this faith community. The recent Centennial Retreat set the tone and prepared the way for it quite tremendously. All we have to do is jump in . . . fully . . . plunge in and get fully immersed. (There are some good Baptismal, new life images here!)

We do this by looking again at our roots – not only the past history of the Parish, but also, more deeply, at the sources of our faith. Advent provides a perfect opportunity to do this as we find new and richer ways together to recognize and welcome the Lord's coming among us now. Today's Gospel passage has Jesus reminding us not to let our hearts grow "drowsy" with bad behavior or even with "the anxieties of daily life" And Paul speaks of strengthening hearts in order to increase and abound in love for one another and for all, and thus be prepared for the coming of our Lord Jesus.

We're not preparing for Baby Jesus to be born again. We're not preparing for a cataclysmic end of the world. Both are true. But like the dynamic interplay of the artworks in our church sanctuary, in between the first coming and the last coming of Jesus, we have the altar – down closer to our level – where we meet and share with Him in the sacrifice of sacrament and of our daily lives. The Centennial Year is a great time to be Catholic with one another at St. Ambrose. Happy New Year!



The Centennial Retreat encouraged us to renew our understanding of ourselves by going back to the beginning of the Bible. Both creation stories tell us something importantly true. One speaks of us being made in the image and likeness of God. The other reminds us of our essential and intimate unity with every other human being. We've heard all this before ... since childhood. So what?!

Last weekend I was profoundly struck by how important and elusive the "what" actually is. Last weekend we were still very raw in coping with the dark news of the terrorist attacks in Paris. Conversations with some individuals and with the adults of the RCIA program reminded me how uncomfortable we should be with our quick reactions and judgments. If during the Centennial Year we help one another become more of what God made us to be, how would we feel and think and judge and act differently in the face of such horrors? How do you think God looks upon the victims? . . . upon the terrorists? Only through a lot more prayer can we begin to accept the Spirit and join God and His Christ in a totally different way of thinking and living. Advent and the Centennial Year will be filled with great life and joy in this Parish. But they also challenge us with a lot of spiritual work. Yet, there is no better way or place to be. I'm glad we're here together.

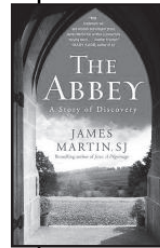


This also brings up how excited I am with anticipation about next Sunday's premier of the musical composition written for our Centennial celebration. Since I haven't heard the tune yet, it's the title that's hooked me: ***Omnia Christus Est Nobis / For Us Christ Is Everything***. Marilyn Biery, who has been crucial to the text and the project itself, has been verbally placing before us this saying of St. Ambrose himself as part of the introduction to our Sunday masses over a number of weeks.

Marilyn's echoing of Ambrose in the context of our Centennial Year challenges all of us to prayerfully ask – *if Christ is everything*, how do we imag(in)e taking on His life and ministry in 2016? ... as individuals ... and as a parish? This is more than just simply a hymn. *It's everything!*

Chuck Dropiewski

Marcellina's Book Club



In his debut novel, ***The Abbey: A Story of Discovery***, James Martin, SJ, provides a window into how God works in the spiritual journeys of three very different people. A divorced single mother, Anne struggles to

make sense of her son's death; a former architect, Mark works as a handyman and wonders how his life got off track; Abbot Father Paul sometimes questions how to best live a life that secludes him from the world.

Through the characters' struggles, we see firsthand how God uses our worries, questions, and even anger to help us become whole.

Book club will meet Sunday morning on Sunday, December 20th from 9:45-11:00 am in the ARK. No cost; no preregistration; come join us.

The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc
Deacon: Rev. Mr. Thomas Nguyen, ofm, cap
Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski
Religious Education: Elizabeth Haley
Minister of Music: Marilyn Biery
Office Manager: Lois Sokolowski

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton

Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230

Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838

Email address: stambrose@comcast.net

Religious Education: (313) 822-1248

Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814

Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, November 30
St. Andrew, apostle

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Tuesday, December 1

11:00 a.m.-Funeral-Alan Ramberger

Wednesday, December 2

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Thursday, December 3

St. Francis Xavier, priest

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Fr. Jim DeWitt
 Helen Wood, Angie Vincent

Friday, December 4

St. John John Damascene, priest & doctor

11:00 a.m. - Funeral - Ellen O'Brien

Saturday, December 5

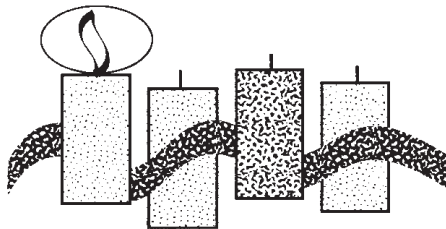
4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. - Mass - For All People

11:15 a.m. - *Opening of the St. Ambrose Centennial Year* - For the souls of all of our St. Ambrose parishioners, living and dead.



Scriptures for the First Week of Advent

Monday, November 30

- Rom 10: 9-18
- Mt 4: 18-22

Tuesday, December 1

- Is 11: 1-10
- Lk 10: 21-24

Wednesday, December 2

- Is 25: 6-10a
- Mt 15: 29-37

Thursday, December 3

- Is 26: 1-6
- Mt 7: 21, 24-27

Friday, December 4

- Is 29: 17-24
- Mt 9: 27-31

Saturday, December 5

- Is 30: 19-21, 23-26
- Mt 9: 35-10: 1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday, December 6

- Bar 5: 1-9
- Phil 1: 4-6, 8-11
- Lk 3: 1-6

Second Sunday in Advent

December 5th and December 6th

4:00 p.m. – Saturday – Celebrant: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Bob Krueger
Eucharistic Ministers: Beverly Bennert, Della Cimini, Peter Hern, Elizabeth Puleo-Tague, Mary Urbanski
Altar Servers: Frankie Pangborn, Blake Hern

8:30 a.m. – Sunday – Celebrant: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Bob Gatzke
Eucharistic Ministers: Colleen Gatzke, Maggie Jackson, Judy & Bob Jogan, Liz & John Witherell
Altar Servers: Joseph & Nicholas Kurta

11:15 a.m. – Sunday - Celebrants: Cardinal Maida & Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Kurt Vatalaro
Eucharistic Ministers: Maria Cox-Borkowski, Lupe Davila, Cristina Swiatkowski, Cynthia Warner, Patty Yaden, Anthony Yaden
Altar Servers: Ana & Lara Hoffman

Your Envelope Speaks . . . the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of \$10,100.00

On Sunday, November 22, 2015

in envelopes we received \$8,306.00
 in the loose collection \$494.00
 in electronic donations \$1,200.00
 in children's envelopes \$36.00
 for a total of **\$ 10,036.00**

Under budget for the week **\$ 64.00**

Number of envelopes mailed 800

Number of envelopes used 189

Mass attendance over the last few weekends has been strong, yet that does not reflect itself in the Offertory collection which has failed to make the minimum budget expectation. Even a few token dollars dropped in the collection by visitors would make a difference.

To give electronically, go to stambrosechurch.net

Our Sick

Please pray for our parishioners who are seriously ill or hospitalized:

Roma Affelt, Kay Balas, Peyton Barron, Pat Blake, Laura Bush, Dominic Centorbi, Andrew Chavez, Maria Chinchilla, Maryjane Cullen, Karen Culver, Mary Pat Egan, Kathleen Elbersson, Dan Fleming, Mary Ellen Greenup, Bernadette Gutowski, Angela Hansen, Elizabeth Howard, Bp. Joe Imesch, Ann Sullivan Kay, Donald & Marilyn Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Mary Myers, Jeanne Noto, Ray Oberly, Elizabeth Robert, Bob Ramsey, David Schumacker, Irene & Bryan Scopel, Fred Schroeder, Matthew Elias, Susan Bucec, Scott Nedoff, Anne Billiu, Felix Checki, Betty Greenia, Eugene Martin and Emilie Kasper.

St. Vincent dePaul Adopt-a-Family at Christmas

Our chapter of the St. Ambrose St. Vincent de Paul Society is once again sponsoring a Christmas "Adopt-a-Family" program. You can "adopt" a needy family or individual within our parish boundaries and provide them with food and gifts for the Christmas season. We still have a few families to be adopted. Sign up to adopt by contacting SVdP through the parish rectory at (313) 822-2814.

Pray Every Day



Could you be searching for a fresh new way to pray every day of the coming year?

Daily Prayer 2016 is your guide to prayer that includes scripture, psalmody, a brief reflection, general intercessions, and a closing prayer. It is ideal for personal and family reflection upon the word of God. This also makes an excellent gift for a senior, a newly wed or for a student away at college.

These prayer books are \$12 each — a dollar a month — which is a modest investment in someone's spiritual formation. To pick up a copy of this year's Daily Prayer 2016, stop in the back of church or call the rectory office at 822-2814.





Centennial Pilgrimage

Travel planners **Lisa Morreale** and **Patti Ralko** are readily available to answer questions about our **St. Ambrose Centennial Pilgrimage** to Milan. The dates for the trip are May 25th – June 1st, all in and around the city of St. Ambrose – *Milano*.

The cost for land and airfare per person will be \$3,945 (based on 30 pilgrims) which includes 6 nights' lodging, transfers, guides and some meals. Lisa and Patti are willing to work with those who might want to make other air arrangements outside of the group, including those who might want to use frequent flyer miles, or to add days for an extension to Rome for the Holy Year festivities.

To secure a place on our Centennial Pilgrimage, we would like a deposit of \$800 per person by the 31st of December – although that deadline will be extended. What a great Christmas gift this would make!

Highlights of this trip would be seeing Da Vinci's masterpiece, The Last Supper; mass at the tomb of our patron, Saint Ambrose; a tour of the City's Brea district and the Brea Gallery; the *Castello Sforzesco*; the *Duomo* (the Cathedral where St. Ambrose baptized St. Augustine); a tour of the *La Scala* Opera house (with an opportunity to take in a performance of Puccini's Girl of the Golden West; participation at a choir mass in the ancient Ambrosian Rite in the *Basilica di Sant' Ambrogio*; an afternoon excursion to Lake Como; plus guided sightseeing in the city and ample time for leisure and shopping in what is known as the fashion capital of Europe. If you want to discuss details with Lisa or Patti before the presentation days, you can contact them at lisa@Travelworld.bz or pralko@hotmail.com

Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree

For 22 Advent seasons now, we have erected a **Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree** in our church building as a demonstrative way of supporting our pro-life convictions. This Giving Tree outreach program benefits the local Pregnancy Aid Society at 17325 Mack, where women with unplanned pregnancies can find positive alternatives to abortion. Take a "snowflake" from the tree as a pledge – a reminder – and a gift tag – to bring back attached to a present for a newborn at one of our Christmas masses.

The Pregnancy Aid Society has a wish list which includes: baby clothing (0-12 mos.), sleepers, blankets, bibs, undershirts (one-piece snap-style), bath accessories, baby toiletries, diapers (size 1 and 2), strollers, breast-feeding accessories and informative books like: "You and Your Baby" or support items such as "Baby Einstein" DVDs, books and toys. "Pack 'n Plays," along with Pack 'n Play-sized crib sheets, are also welcomed, as are all gently used baby furniture and car carriers. In short – things that are practical, educational and essential.

The major assimilation of these items takes place at our Christmas Eve Children's liturgy, but early gifts can be brought in on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20th and 21st, or to the other Christmas masses. Items brought in at Christmastime are part of an inventory from which Pregnancy Aid draws all year long. There are few better ways to give a birthday present today to Jesus than through this Pregnancy Aid project.



Mass Times When Traveling

Your membership in the Catholic Church gives you privileges to worship with any Catholic Community world wide. While on your vacation or traveling, websites like masstimes.org and thecatholicdirectory.com make it easy to find a mass wherever you are.