

St. Ambrose Parish

Our 100th Year!
DECEMBER 6, 2015
BEEHIVE

Pope Benedict's Teaching on St. Ambrose

Holy Bishop Ambrose - about whom I shall speak to you today - died in Milan in the night between the 3rd and 4th of April 397. It was dawn on Holy Saturday. The day before, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, he had settled down to pray, lying on his bed with his arms wide open in the form of a cross. In this way, he took part in the solemn Easter Triduum, in the death and Resurrection of the Lord. "We saw his lips moving", said Paulinus, the deacon who wrote his biography, "but we could not hear his voice".

The situation suddenly became dramatic. Honoratus, Bishop of Vercelli, who was assisting Ambrose and was sleeping on the upper floor, was awakened by a voice saying again and again, "Get up quickly! Ambrose is dying..." "Honoratus hurried downstairs," Paulinus continues, "and offered Ambrose the Body of the Lord. As soon as he had received and swallowed it, Ambrose gave up his spirit, taking the Viaticum with him. His soul, thus refreshed by the virtue of that food, now enjoys the company of Angels" wrote Paulinus. On that Good Friday 397, the wide open arms of the dying Ambrose expressed his mystical participation in the death and Resurrection of the Lord. This was his last teaching: in silence, he continued to speak with the witness of his life.

Ambrose was not old when he died. He had not even reached the age of 60. He was born in about 340 A.D. in Treves, where his father was Prefect of the Gauls. His family was Christian.

Upon his father's death while he was still a boy, his mother took him to Rome and educated him for a civil career, assuring him a sound instruction in rhetoric and jurisprudence. In about 370 he was sent to govern the Provinces of Emilia and Liguria, with headquarters in Milan. It was precisely there that the struggle between orthodox Catholics and Arians was raging and became particularly heated after the death of the Arian Bishop Auxentius. Ambrose intervened to pacify the members of the two opposing factions; his authority was such that although he was merely a catechumen, the people acclaimed him the Bishop of Milan.

Until that moment, Ambrose had been the most senior civil magistrate of the Empire in northern Italy. Culturally well-educated, but at the same time ignorant of the Scrip-

tures, the new Bishop briskly began to study them. From the works of Origen, the indisputable master of the "Alexandrian School," he learned the Bible. Thus, Ambrose transferred to the Latin environment the meditation on the Scriptures which Origen had begun, introducing in the West the practice of *lectio divina*. This method of *lectio* served to guide all of Ambrose's preaching and writings, which stemmed from prayerful listening to the Word of God. The famous introduction of an Ambrosian catechesis shows clearly how the holy Bishop applied the Old Testament to Christian life: "Every day, when we were reading about the lives of the Patriarchs and the maxims of the Proverbs, we addressed morality," the Bishop of Milan said to his catechumens and neophytes, "so that formed and instructed by them you may become accustomed to taking the path of the Fathers and to following the route of obedience to the Divine Precepts" (On the Mysteries 1,1). In other words, the neophytes and catechumens, in accordance with the Bishop's decision, after having learned the art of a well-ordered life, could henceforth consider themselves prepared for Christ's great mysteries. Thus, Ambrose's preaching - which constitutes the structural nucleus of his immense literary opus - starts with the reading of the Sacred Books ("the Patriarchs" or the historical Books and "Proverbs", or in other words, the Wisdom Books) in order to live in conformity with divine Revelation.

Ambrose's life-style, along with a strong Christian community in Milan conditioned the effectiveness of his preaching. In this perspective, a passage from St. Augustine's Confessions is relevant. Augustine had come to Milan as a teacher of rhetoric; he was a sceptic and not Christian. He was seeking the Christian truth but was not capable of truly finding it.

What moved the heart of the young African rhetorician, sceptic and downhearted soul, and what impelled him to definitive conversion, was not Ambrose's splendid homilies (although he deeply appreciated them). It was rather the testimony of the Bishop and his Milanese Church that prayed and sang as one intact body. It was a Church that could resist the tyrannical ploys of the Emperor and his mother, who in early 386 again demanded a church building for the Arians' celebrations. In the building that was to be requisitioned, Augustine relates, "...the devout people watched, ready to die

Continued on page 2

Benedict on St. Ambrose

Continued from page 1.

with their Bishop.” This testimony in the Confessions is precious because it points out that something was stirring in Augustine, who continues: “We too, although spiritually tepid, shared in the excitement of the whole people.” (Confessions 9,7).

Augustine learned from the life and example of Bishop Ambrose how to believe and preach. We can refer to a famous sermon of the African, which centuries later merited citation in the conciliar Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*: “Therefore all clerics, particularly priests of Christ and others who, as deacons or catechists, are officially engaged in the ministry of the Word,” *Dei Verbum* recommends, “should immerse themselves in the Scriptures by constant sacred reading and diligent study. For it must not happen that anyone becomes” — and this is Augustine’s citation — “an empty preacher of the Word of God to others, not being a hearer of the Word in his own heart” (n. 25). Augustine had learned from Ambrose how to “hear in his own heart” and to truly absorb and assimilate the Word of God in one’s heart.

Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to propose to you a “Patristic Icon,” which effectively represents the heart of Ambrosian doctrine. In the sixth book of the Confessions, Augustine tells of his meeting with Ambrose — an encounter that was indisputably of great importance in the history of the Church. Augustine writes that whenever he went to see the Bishop of Milan, he would regularly find him taken up with a *catervae* of people full of problems for whose needs to answer he did his utmost. There was always a long queue waiting to talk to Ambrose, seeking from him consolation and hope. When Ambrose was not engaged with people, and this happened for the space of the briefest of moments, he was either restoring his body with necessary food or nourishing his spirit with reading.

It is here also that Augustine marvels because Ambrose read the Scriptures with his mouth shut — only with his eyes.

In the early Christian centuries reading was conceived as something strictly for proclamation. Reading aloud also facilitated the reader’s understanding. That Ambrose could scan the pages with his eyes alone suggested to the admiring Augustine a rare ability for reading and familiarity with the Scriptures. “Reading under one’s breath,” where the heart is committed to achieving knowledge of the Word of God, this is the “Patristic Icon” to which I referred. It is here that one glimpses the method of Ambrosian catechesis — wherein the Scriptures themselves are intimately assimilated. When we read the content of Scripture in this way, it will lead to a conversion of hearts.



With regard to the magisterium of Ambrose and of Augustine — catechesis is inseparable from witness of life. What I wrote about St. Ambrose the theologian in my Introduction to Christianity might also be useful to any catechist. An educator in the faith cannot risk appearing like a sort of clown who recites a part “by rote memory.” Rather he/she must be like the beloved disciple who rested his head against his Master’s heart and there learned the proper way to think, speak and act. A true disciple is ultimately the one whose proclamation of the Gospel is the most credible and effective.

Like the Apostle John, Bishop Ambrose — who never tired of saying: “*Omnia Christus est nobis!* To us Christ is all!” — continues to be a genuine witness of the Lord.

Let us thus conclude this teaching with his same words, full of love for Jesus: “*Omnia Christus est nobis!*”

If you have a wound to heal, he is the doctor; if you are parched by fever, he is the spring; if you are oppressed by injustice, he is justice; if you are in need of help, he is strength; if you fear death, he is life; if you desire Heaven, he is the way; if you are in the darkness, he is light.... Taste and see how good is the Lord: blessed is the man who hopes in him!” (De Virginitate, 16,99).

Let us also hope in Christ. We shall thus be blessed and shall live in peace.

POPE BENEDICT XVI — *Adapted from a General Audience given in St. Peter’s Square, October 24, 2007.*

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

All Things Considered

The actual founding date of St. Ambrose Parish is September 16th, 1916. That is when **Bishop John Samuel Foley** signed a Canonical Letter erecting a parish dedicated to the patronage of St. Ambrose. He did it to accommodate the rapidly growing number of immigrant Catholic families who came to work in the automotive plants that were growing along the Jefferson Avenue corridor. To lead this new parish, he called upon **Fr. Patrick Cullinane**, a seasoned pastor who has just successfully started St. Thomas the Apostle parish near Conner and Harper, a few miles to the west of us.

Even though we don't officially turn 100 until September, we've chosen today's date for our Centennial opening because it's the Sunday closest to the Feast Day of St. Ambrose which is tomorrow, December 7th.

Today's 11:15 mass is a relatively low-key opening to our anniversary year. **Adam Cardinal Maida** will be here to join us, his 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.

Things will gradually ramp up with a number of Centennial events taking place in 2016 – social, educational, charitable and spiritual. We're printing a Centennial Calendar which highlights these events and at the same time pays photographic tribute to our history. We also anticipate the retiring of our building debt by the end of that year. For lots of reasons, 2016 will be a memorable year!

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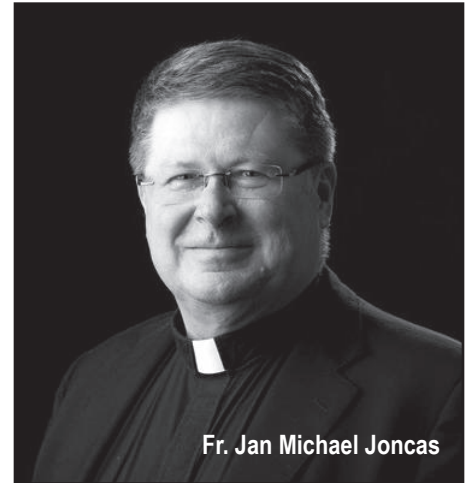
Fr. Jan Michael Joncas has written some of the best contemporary hymns of our age, including *Eagles Wings*, *I Have Loved You* and *Be Not Afraid*.

Through the aegis of **Marilyn Biery**, we've commissioned a new hymn from Fr. Joncas which is being premiered at this week's 11:15 mass. We see this hymn as our anniversary gift to the larger Catholic Church, and hopefully it will have a life in the worship of God far beyond our own parish.

The hymn is entitled: ***Omnia Christus Est Nobis – For Us Christ Is Everything.*** The lyrics of this song 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 as a conclusion to a 2007 address he gave about St. Ambrose. That talk is printed on today's front page.

I asked Fr. Joncas to write a few notes about this composition. Here is what he said: "It is an honor to be invited to create a musical setting for a text from St. Ambrose of Milan, especially since I have made a special study of his hymns. Known as 'the father of Western hymnody,' Ambrose created a metrical hymn form of four lines of eight syllables each, a form that became known in the Middle Ages as an 'Ambrosian hymn' whether Ambrose was the author of the text or not. Literally hundreds of melodies employing this same structure have been composed since Ambrose's day.

You'll notice that the present text doesn't follow the structure of a typical Ambrosian hymn. That's because the text has been adapted from one of Ambrose's prose writings and given a refrain/verse structure. My in-



Fr. Jan Michael Joncas

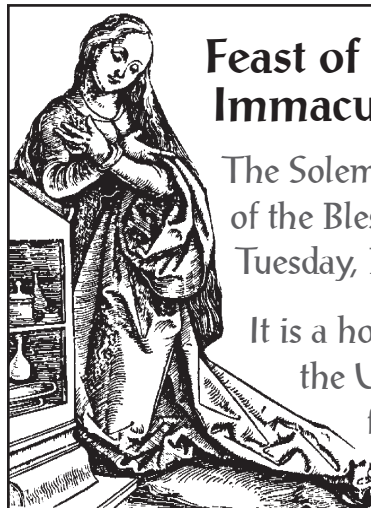
tent is that the refrain, in both Latin and English, would be sung confidently by the entire congregation, as though singing a marching tune. The verses are meant to be more lyrical; while they could be sung by the entire congregation, they might also be sung by a soloist or choir in unison. A more complex setting would have the first phrase sung by a solo voice or one section of the choir, the second phrase by another solo voice or section of the choir, the third phrase by both solo voices or the entire choir in unison, and the final phrase (e.g., "We shall always thus be blessed...") by the congregation.

I hope that this composition will enrich the prayer of your community, under the patronage of St. Ambrose, for many years to come."

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We did a comparison with envelope totals compared to last year,

Continued on page 3



Feast of the Immaculate Conception

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Tuesday, December 8, 2015.

It is a holy day of obligation for Catholics in the United States. Masses at St. Ambrose for the feast day will be at 10 a.m. and at 7 p.m.

All Things Considered

Continued from Page 3

and we are running significantly lower on a regular basis. This is a concern to me because I am not seeing fewer people in church – quite the opposite, attendance has been strong. But that is not translating into a viable collection number. Last week's total, compared to the Thanksgiving weekend 2014 was more than \$4,000 under – as was the week before that. We cannot run this parish on a \$6,000 – \$7,000 a week collection. We need \$10,000.

Some people have decided that they will give annually at Christmas time because the Archdiocesan taxation is lifted during that season. That's great, and we really depend on a hefty end-of-the-year collection to catch up with major bills such as insurances, employee benefits and health care. But our budget is factored with the Christmas collection in mind. It does not replace the minimum envelope number we need on a weekly basis, which is \$10,100. (That goal is actually lower than in FY '14-'15.)

We have been struggling to make budget since July. I didn't want to nag you about this because I believed that once we hit this time of year, generous people would remember to use their envelope. But for whatever reason, things are going in the wrong direction. Our weekly envelope has not kept up, in fact it is lagging behind last year's measure.

There are only so many bills I can delay and ever so few areas where I can cut expenses. In addition, in our Centennial year, we will be funding a number of special events and publications. Right now, many of these are on hold because we are cash strapped.

Bottom line: Please be faithful to your stewardship responsibilities to your parish. Give generously this Christmas AND give weekly in your envelope. If you are new to the parish and need envelopes, fill out the card in the front of the hymnal, or email the rectory. And if envelopes are too old fashioned for you, then please sign up for electronic giving.

TRP

Friar on Fire

Thanksgiving is over now and the new liturgical year has just begun. So much change is happening so quickly and I just realized also that I'm getting so OLD! My birthday is next week and I'm turning 30. As I enter into this new part of life, I realize what I am truly thankful for.

Looking back I realized how blessed I have been in these thirty years. My parents, who emigrated from Vietnam, sacrificed so much for me. My family has always been that support through all the joys and pains of my life. For thirty years they have passed on the Vietnamese culture, history and values that are instilled in my heart.

I realize how blessed I am with the friends that have walked with me in life. Just last week for Thanksgiving I went to different friends' places to celebrate life and to thank them for being in my life. They have given me so much joy and have inspired me by the way they share their gifts and lives with myself and others. The journey of life continues to bless me with new friends in Michigan and the blessing of the new Tap Into Life young adult ministry.

I am blessed to have the brothers that I have met over the last 15 years as well as the Franciscan perspective that they have helped me experience. To think that I used to think that these guys running around in brown dresses were so weird and crazy and then I became one after learning, knowing and loving who they are is amazing. I am blessed to have the gift of brothers and live a life of fraternity and to see the abundant gifts that surround us each and every day by recognizing the gifts in each and every person that enters into my life.

Most especially I am blessed by our Gracious God. Looking back after 30 years and reflecting about my life, I realized how God has always been there in every step of the journey. Through all the moments of joy, celebration and laughter and especially moments of sadness, loss, and pain God has always been there for me in my 30 years of life. After reflecting on these 30 years I hope I can live the next 30 years with a faith that recognizes that God is always blessing us and is always walking by our side each and every day of the journey.

We as a church community at St. Ambrose celebrate 100 years this Sunday as we open with a Mass of Thanksgiving to praise and thank God for always being there for us through all the tough moments as a community and to thank God for all the abundant blessings we have received, are receiving and will receive. May we take the time to reflect on the great birthday of the community of St. Ambrose and find new and exciting ways to walk forth with courage and inspiration of faith to know that our God is a Gracious God who overflows our lives with blessings and never leaves our side.

GIVE A CHEER!

I would also like to continue to ask for your generosity, support and prayers for the Tap Into Life young adult Christmas gathering called Give A Cheer! I know there are many students coming back from college for the holiday and I am asking for your help to invite them to The ARK on Sunday, December 20th at 6 p.m. Please contact the office if you would like to contribute to this ministry at St. Ambrose. It will be a fun gathering that will help us to see that God is constantly pouring out his Love on the future of our church and the next hundred years to come. Thank you for opening your hearts and lives to me. The wonderful people at St. Ambrose and the Solanus center have been the greatest birthday gift!

Br. Tom

Religious Education Notes

On this Second Sunday of Advent, I defer my own thoughts and reflections to those of Carmelite Fr. Roland Faley from his book, Footprints on the Mountain:

“... The Christian life is more clearly seen as a journey, and like any journey it has its unknowns, its perils, and its surprises. We are always growing in our understanding of the faith, more willing to admit our ignorance and inadequacies, more accepting of ourselves and others. The basic truth is still there as stemming from Christ but it is constantly unfolding. In journeying toward the heavenly Jerusalem, we listen to the world and ask it to listen to us. We realize better the need to give new expressions of old truths, reconcile long held positions with new insights and developments. As pilgrims, we realize our humanness and that of the Church as a whole convinced as we are that we are guided and directed by God’s own Spirit. As Luke is at pains to indicate, our journey is a part of history and involves a conversation with the world.

Growth on this journey is essential, as Paul tells the Philippians. It is a growth in love as well as knowledge and discernment.

God’s love extends to all people. About that Luke is clear – outreach to other Christians and non-Christians. In different ways we are joined in a common journey. We cannot be victimized by a religious myopia; our horizons must constantly expand. ‘The earth is the Lord’s and all things in it.’” Happy Advent! Enjoy the journey!

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS EVE MASS Each year at the Children’s Christmas Eve Mass (at 4 p.m.) our parish children participate in a re-enactment of the Nativity as told by Luke. Older children and teens narrate while our younger group dresses in costume to dramatize the birth of Jesus. We have Mary, Joseph, Caesar Augustus and his centurions. Most importantly, we have the angels who proclaimed the Good News of salvation to the shepherds who were watching their flocks by night.

While we tend to think the main characters are Mary and Joseph, Luke assures us that God always favors the lowly and the disenfranchised. It is why the angel Gabriel was sent to the humble young girl, Mary, who would give birth to God’s Son. It is why God chose to reveal the birth of His Son to those who seemed to matter the least – the shepherds. And, it is the angels who teach us to sing, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” What would the story be if we did not have many shepherds and a multitude of angels?

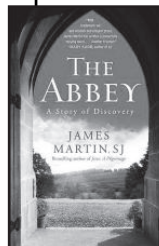
There is one rehearsal only for this wonderful re-telling of Jesus’ birth. The rehearsal is to be held after the 11:15 Mass on December 20th. If you think your child would like to be one of our angels, shepherds, or centurions OR if they are older and would like to be a narrator, please give me a call in the Religious Education Office at (313) 822-1248.

CONFIRMATION Each year the liturgy for Confirmation is held on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord at the 4:00 p.m. liturgy. The 2016 date for that is January 9th. It is fast approaching ... therefore, families of Confirmation candidates should expect a letter in the mail this week to give them “end of journey” information. We do know – and can announce – that Bishop Michael Byrnes will be our celebrant for this year’s group. He was with us a few years ago and the teens thoroughly enjoyed him.

As always, please pray for all of our of parish family who are preparing for sacraments. It is a great blessing to have them among us.

Betty Haley

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, January 17th 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 Dropriewski

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, December 7

St. Ambrose, bishop & doctor

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Tuesday, December 8, HOLY DAY

Immaculate Conception of the BVM

10:00 a.m. - Mass - Rosemarie Smarjian

7:00 p.m. - Mass - For American Catholics

Wednesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Thursday, December 10

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Michael Malawy

Friday, December 11

St. John Damascus, I, Pope

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Debra Lesnau

Saturday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

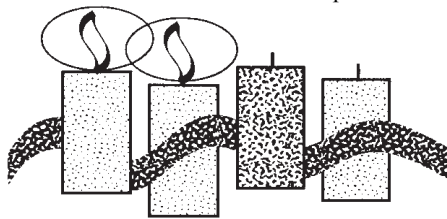
4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday in Advent

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

1:15 a.m. - Mass - For All People



Scriptures for the Second Week of Advent

Monday, December 7

• Is 35: 1-10 • Ps 85: 9ab, 10-14

• Lk 5: 17-26

Tuesday, December 8

• Gn 3: 9-15, 20

• Eph 1: 3-6, 11-12

• Lk 1: 26-38

Wednesday, December 9

• Is 40: 25-31 • Ps 103: 1-4, 8, 10

• Mt 11: 28-30

Thursday, December 10

• Is 41: 13-20

• Mt 11: 11-15

Friday, December 11

• Is 48: 17-19 • Ps 1: 1-4, 6

• Mt 11: 16-19

Saturday, December 12

• Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11: 19a; 12: 1-6a, 10ab

• (Ps) Jdt 13: 18bc, 19

• Lk 1: 26-38 or 1: 39-47

Sunday, December 13

• Zep 3: 14 - 18a

• Phil 4:4-7

• Lk 3: 19-18

Third Sunday in Advent December 12th and December 13th

4:00 p.m. – Saturday – Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Pat Ticknor
Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Bennert, Patrick Bernas, Ron Hoffman,
Jeri & Bob Krueger, Elizabeth Puleo-Tague

Altar Servers: Charlie, Daniel, & Eleanor Bernas

8:30 a.m. – Sunday – Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Laura Zajac

Eucharistic Ministers: Christopher Harrison, Maggie Jackson,
Joan Jackson, Liz & Steve Linne, Bernadette Pieczynski

Altar Servers: Nicholas, Margaret, & Meredith Kramer

11:15 a.m. – Sunday - Celebrants: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Roger Playwin

Eucharistic Ministers: Doris Fleming, Michele Hodges, Sue Playwin,
Janis Ramsey, Darryl Swiatkowski, Cynthia Warner

Altar Servers: Ella Chamberlain, Grace Whitaker

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

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

On Sunday, November 29, 2015

in envelopes we received \$5,294.00

in the loose collection \$512.00

in electronic donations \$1,200.00

in children's envelopes \$30.00

for a total of **\$7,064.00**

Under budget for the week **\$3,064.00**

Number of envelopes mailed 800

Number of envelopes used 152

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, Emilie Kasper, Angeline Boluk and Frank Kurta.

Our Dead

A funeral liturgy was celebrated by Fr. Pelc assisted by Deacon Tom on Tuesday, December 1st for **Alan Ramberger**, age 68.

Al was born and raised in Detroit and graduated from Notre Dame High School. He was employed by Burroughs and later at Prime and Stratus in Information Technology. Al married his high-school sweetheart, Judy, and together they raised three children: Nicole, Joy and Jason. Al cooked, coached his children's baseball and basketball teams, helped at Special Olympics, and sailed on the America's Cup boat as a crew member. He loved golf and tennis and rode dirt bikes. Al was a Eucharistic Minister and was regularly at the 8:30 a.m. mass here at St. Ambrose.

Al is survived by his wife of 46 years, Judy, his children, and two brothers, He will be missed by his grandchildren and the rest of his family and friends.

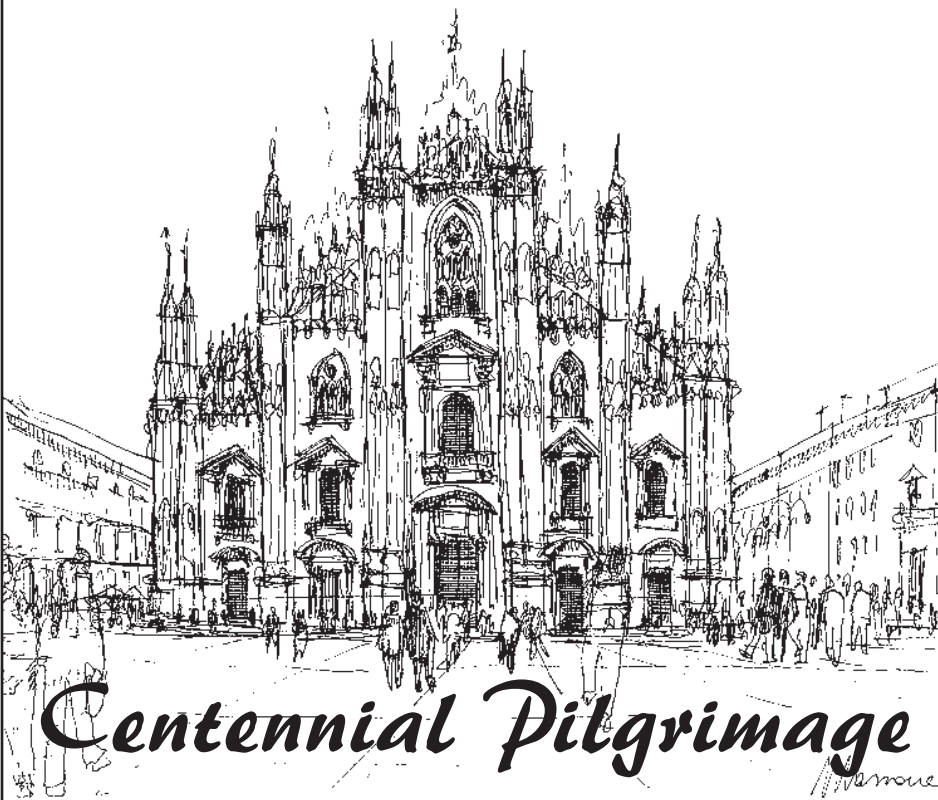
When Your Donation Is Worth More

As we come upon the last days of the calendar year, it means we are also coming up to the end of a fiscal tax period. **If you intend to make an end-of-the-year gift to the parish, you'll need to date it before January 1st and get it into our office in an envelope marked "Christmas Collection". Gifts made in this manner are free from the usual Archdiocesan taxation of 7%.**

When it comes to calculating your charitable deductions for the Internal Revenue Service this coming April, the cutoff date for 2015 deductions is December 31st. So, it's now time to review your tax strategy.



Join us on Facebook
facebook.com/stambroseparish



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.

Vincentian Reflection

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist urges us to "Prepare the way of the Lord." This is what Advent is all about. We are called to help prepare the way of the Lord by making the real meaning of Christmas come alive in our own hearts, in our family and to reach out to those in need. By supporting the St. Vincent de Paul Conference here at St. Ambrose, you are helping to reach out to those in need.