

Dear Eucharistic Ministers and Sacristans,  
*Sue Robb, a writer for Celebration  
Publications offers this reflection for the  
First Sunday of Advent—December 2nd & 3rd*

### **Watch!**

Welcome to another liturgical year ... another Advent—a new opportunity to prepare our minds and hearts for the coming of Jesus into the world on Christmas Day. Much like parents who wait, hope, dream and prepare for the arrival of their first child, there is an excitement that surrounds these days leading up to Christmas. But, guess what? We are not waiting for Jesus to come and save us. Jesus came! Jesus saved! Jesus lovingly showed us how to live in relationship with God and one another. And Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit is present today, guiding us. So what can we learn from today's passages?

In Isaiah's time, people turned away from God; he described them as "unclean," "withered" and guilt-ridden, comparing their deeds to "polluted rags." Likewise, in today's psalm, the words, "Lord, make us turn to you," are filled with resignation and desperation. It's humanity who repeatedly turns away from God, never God from humanity. Both Isaiah and the psalmist recognized this and begged God to step in and return the chosen people into right relationship with one another and with God. Jesus was God's loving answer to their pleas.

In contrast to these two readings, Paul's letter to the Corinthians offers hope. Paul, living in the light of Christ's resurrection, assures us we are not lacking in any spiritual gift. As we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Paul reminds us that our faith will provide us with guidance and strength to endure any hardship. Unfortunately, as we journey through life, we accumulate bad habits and insecurities that cloud our spirits and keep us from recognizing and utilizing our spiritual gifts that lay dormant.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a 20th-century Jesuit priest, scientist and mystic, beautifully articulated the connection between the human condition and the spiritual life. In *The Phenomenon of Man*, he affirmed: "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience." We all have days when it's hard to feel like a spiritual being. We are bombarded with so many earthly distractions, especially during this season. World catastrophes, political unrest, technological distractions, illness, family/work stressors, violence and addictions are just a few things that clutter our minds and hearts and keep us from living fully as spiritual beings.

In today's Gospel, Mark emphatically tells us what we must do: Watch! We are neither to watch nor judge what others are doing, but rather to watch and be alert to what we are thinking, doing, feeling, giving and taking. We can examine our actions and interactions to see if they align with those of Jesus. Do our thoughts, words and actions reflect a spiritual existence or a human existence?

Jesus' greatest gift while he walked among us was his loving, healing presence. Who would benefit most this season from the gift of your loving presence? If we truly lived our earthly lives as the spiritual beings we were created to be and lived as Jesus lived, what would we have to change?

Advent challenges us to be alert to the ways we turn our minds and hearts away from God and others. Take this time to clear out any earthly distractions. Unplug! Simplify! Unleash those spiritual gifts! Share them and thus bring Jesus more fully into our lives and our world. Only then will there be space for God's grace to enter. Only then will we be ready for a spiritual awakening like never before.

### **SOME INFORMATION:**

- The new schedule from October 7, 2017 through February 11, 2018 is posted to our website and also attached to this email.
- There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for the 9:00am Mass on November 23rd, Thanksgiving Day.
- Linda McKeague and our multiple choirs and musicians will host their Music Gala on Sunday, December 10th at 3pm in the Church. Our Parish Advent Reconciliation is December 17, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Church.
- We will continue to have a sign-up for the Christmas Masses! Christmas Eve is Sunday, December 24th and is also the 4th Sunday of Advent. Masses in the morning will be for the 4th Sunday of Advent. Then the 4pm, 6pm, and 10pm will be for Christmas Eve. Christmas Day, Monday December 25th, the Masses will be 7:15, 8:30, 10, and 11:30am. The Feast of the Holy Family is Saturday, December 30th, and Sunday, December 31st, our regular weekend Mass times. There will not be a 5pm Mass on Sunday December 31st. Monday, January 1st, New Year's Day we will have a 10am Mass. Keep an eye on the bulletin for more details.
- **Please read the next page for more information.** As we celebrate liturgical events, and conclude this Liturgical Year, with Thanksgiving Day, and The Feast of Christ the King, may you continue to feel the blessings of this Ministry.

With much gratitude, Claudia Nolan

(OVER)

- *We started just about year ago the new process, that if you were assigned “B1\*”, you would go to the tabernacle during the “Our Father” and bring to the altar the “Bowl of Hosts” and help the priest “Fraction the Hosts” into the individual minister bowls. And if you were assigned ##B8 at 7:15am Mass, or ##B9 at all the other Masses to immediately after receiving your bowl from the Priest to come down the center aisle and distribute Communion to those parishioners who cannot come forward. Hard to believe that we initiated this process a year ago. During this past year, we have tried to assign all ministers at least once at these positions. Hopefully you are feeling more comfortable with these new changes.*
- *If you are assigned as an Eucharistic Minister at a Mass that **does not have a Deacon** present, please walk up the stairs (if you are able) and receive your bowl or your cup from the priest at the Altar. The Deacons have been a great help to the priests and they have been walking over and giving you the bowl or cup at the stairs. When the priest is by himself celebrating the Mass, be observant and helpful, walking up the stairs and to the altar to take the bowl or cup from the priest.*

### **Symbols we find next to our name on our Eucharistic Minister Schedule!**

Your Name@

If this sign @ is next to your name—and there will be two names with an @ sign.

You both walk forward **after** the Prayer of the Faithful and **before** the collection begins and place the Altar Cloth and Corporal on the Altar.

**B1**            Your Name\*

This sign\* indicates that you are serving B1 and you are the Bread Captain Minister.

**New: During the time the Congregation is saying the Our Father, we invite you, to go to the Tabernacle and bring an additional Bowl of Hosts forward to the Priest.**

**W1&2**        Your Name\*

**W3&4**        Your Name\*\*

These signs \* \*\* indicate that you are serving W1&2, and W3& 4 and that both of you are the Precious Blood Cup Captain Ministers.

All three Ministers **B1, W1&2, and W3&4**, receive Communion from the Priest and Distribute Communion to other Eucharistic Minister.

The **B1 the Bread Captain** walks up the stairs of the sanctuary and stands closest to the Ambo.

The **W1&2 and W3&4 Cup Captains** walk up the stairs from the front of the altar and stand to the right of the Bread Captain.

### **A New Sign ##**

B8            Your Name##

At the 7:15AM Mass

B9            Your Name##

At the 5pm, 8:30am, 10:00am, & 11:30am

*If you are assigned **B8 at 7:15am Mass** or **B9 at any other Mass**, you will receive Communion from the Captains just like you have been. **After you have received your bowl of Hosts from the Priest, you will immediately go to the center aisle and distribute Communion to those parishioners who cannot come forward to receive. You then go along the back wall to the station that is B8 at the 7:15am Mass or the station that is B9 at all the other Masses. I will helping with this new procedure at every Mass. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to find me or call me at 403-0101 x102. Many thanks, Claudia***