

St. Mary of the Angels PSR Newsletter

December 12, 2021

The PSR Christmas Party will be Friday December 17th at 6pm in the Hall. We will have pizza, a Christmas Movie, and I am making arrangements for a special guest... maybe two. If your family is coming, I need you to RSVP by December 10th to get an estimate for pizza. Thanks!

Wednesday, December 15th will be our Advent Reconciliation Service here at St. Mary of the Angels at 6 pm. It would be good to attend this as a family to recognize this healing Sacrament.

The Confirmation Class will be decorating the Church for Christmas after Mass December 19th.

ATTENTION CONFIRMATION PARENTS: If a Candidate misses over 4 classes, they will need to be made up before Confirmation in May. Confirmation is scheduled for Sunday May 22nd at 8 am Mass.

There will be no class December 19th, 26th, and January 2nd for Christmas break.

December 26th is the next time I will be on the Mustard Seed Radio program on KWIX Moberly.

CONFIRMATION Those Confirmation students need to be researching Saints. They will need to pick their favorite and that Saint's name will be their Confirmation name.**

In today's Gospel from Luke (Lk 3:10-18) John the Baptist says, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." He then uses the analogy of threshing to explain how Christ is going to separate the wheat from the chaff. He will gather the wheat (those who choose to follow him) and take it to his barn (heaven). He will then burn the chaff (those who turn their backs toward him) in an "unquenchable fire" (hell).

There are some today who question the existence of the devil and hell. Some will go as far to say that all people are going to heaven and others will assure us, they are going to heaven. These are all dangerous viewpoints. It is true God revealed himself to us as a man with very humble beginnings. Jesus then went on to suffer excruciating pain and death to forgive the sins of all mankind. He rose on the third day so we all may rise with him in heaven, but we have a role to play in our own salvation. God is Love and that Love must be given freely and without reserve, so God gave us the gift of "free will." Though God wants us to Love and follow him, he will never force us... it is our choice. It is up to us as individuals to choose good or evil.

The devil and hell are mentioned numerous times throughout the Bible. If they did not exist, Jesus wouldn't have mentioned them. The devil has no power over us unless we choose evil and allow him to control us. He lies to us to gain our trust so we in turn choose to turn our backs on God and follow him. Heaven and hell are real, but it is beyond our knowledge and comprehension to know exactly what each look like. A very basic description of hell is "the absence of God", where Heaven is "in God's presence." We as God's creation long for our creator. For those who tell us they know they are going to heaven, it has not been decided until our "Particular Judgement" and Jesus will be the judge. We will be judged according to the choice we made. We have two choices, to follow God, or to turn away from him. In order to realize eternal life in heaven with God our creator, we must choose to follow God. T

We as human beings were born with the stain of original sin, which means we are of a fallen nature. We alone will never reach perfection, but with God, all things are possible. Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation to offer us a way back to his unconditional Love and Mercy when we make mistakes. We all make mistakes, and they are ok so long as we learn from them and ask for God's forgiveness. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we receive free council from the Priest who is acting in the person of Christ. They are not there to make us feel uncomfortable, but to help us. One of my students today asked what happens when a Priest needs to use the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I explained to them that Priests go to another Priest to participate in the Sacrament. They were shocked to find out that Bishops and even the Pope use the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I pray we all take the opportunity to take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Wednesday December 15th at 6pm here at St. Mary of the Angels, or one of the other Reconciliation Services this week at neighboring Parishes.

I tell my youth, we are not perfect, but we should always give it our best and let God take care of the rest. If we follow God and give it our everything, we have nothing to worry about, for God will provide. It may not be what we want or expect, but it will be what we need.

St. John the Baptist, pray for us!