

St. Mary of the Angels PSR Newsletter

January 9, 2022

The Banko family will be providing snacks this coming Sunday, January 16th. If your family would like to provide snacks, please let me know and I will get you scheduled. Thanks!

This Sunday, January 16th is the next PSR Mass. Liturgical Roles are as follows:

Servers: Gamble Gooch, Seth Farnen, and Rafe Vanderpool

Lectors: Nick Pennington, Penelope Banko, and Blayke Ewigman

Greeter: Juliette Banko

Offertory: Kane Stallo, Reis Ewigman, and Eli Allen

Sunday, January 23rd will be PSR Mass with the 7th -12th grades. Helping with these Masses are part of the Confirmation Program.

I am going to try to schedule an evening this week for the Confirmation Class to meet and take down Christmas decorations in Church as well as an abbreviated class.

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.

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 the Gospel today from Luke (Lk 3:15-16, 21-22) We hear of the Baptism of our Lord, which is the Feast we celebrate today. The people were wondering if John was the Christ, but he answered them, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." Then we hear, "after Jesus had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from Heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'"

God revealed himself to us as man in order to teach us how to live and to save us from our sins. In a different account of the Gospel, we hear John say, "Behold, the Lamb of God," which means the great sacrifice. Jesus was the unblemished lamb and gave himself as the ultimate sacrifice. By his death on the cross, he saved us from our sins and by his rising, he opened the gates of Heaven that we may one day join him in everlasting joy.

John was preaching repentance and baptizing people in the Jordan River with plain water, but he made it clear that the Christ was to come and baptize with the Holy Spirit and Fire. Many times when we hear "fire", we think about the unquenchable fire of gehenna, but here, it is more of a purifying fire in the way gold is heated to remove impurities. Baptism by immersion has some symbolism to it. Once the person is immersed, it symbolizes death of the old corrupt self and they emerge as a new person, a person who no longer serves their own selfish interest, but God's will. When we were baptized, we too received the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus did. The only difference, there was no visible dove.

Today marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Ordinary Time. Even though the sanctuary of Church is no longer decorated with all the glitz and glamor of Christmas lights and the Nativity, we do not have to lose the Joy of Christmas. Christ has lived among us as man and showed us the way we should live and the way we should treat others. At our baptism, we became adopted sons

and daughters of God, and joint heirs with Christ. We died to our own selfish ways and received the Holy Spirit, which dwells within us. We are being called by God our Father to seek the lost, comfort the sick and lonely. We don't need to take a missionary trip to a third-world country to do God's work. It is right before us. God is calling... are we answering that call?

St. John the Baptist, pray for us!