

Second Sunday of Advent

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ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Message from Fr. Niall

Dear Friends,

As the countdown for Christmas begins in earnest, we have the last CCE class for 2019; classes will resume on the 5th of January 2020. Bible Study also comes to an end with our last session this week, Wed. and Thurs., Dec. 11 & 12; we will begin again in the new year on the 8th and 9th of January. So, enjoy your break and get ready for the coming of Santa.

I will post the Christmas schedule and office hours in the bulletin next week; in case you are doing a little forward planning, **the Christmas Masses will be as usual - Christmas Eve at 5:00pm and 7:00pm, and Christmas morning at 8:30.** To prevent Santa arriving on a firetruck this Christmas Eve, we will have an incense-free Mass at 7:00pm. That should please many of you who have respiratory issues; it

will also keep my blood pressure from going off the scale as happened last Christmas when we tried to turn the fire alarm off and dissuade (to no avail) Santa from coming amid flashing lights, firetrucks and ambulance sirens! Once around that was enough. Let Santa arrive on his carbon-free sled with the gentle sound of bells instead!

Stay calm, keep your blood pressure from rising and smile a lot, come what may.

God bless,

Fr. Niall

Advent: 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Part of Isaiah's hopeful description of the Messiah contains the traditional seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Messiah, and looking forward to his coming in glory, let us take a look at those gifts and see how we can use them.

Wisdom is the gift of seeing God in creation. It means that we value the things of this world only as they help us to know and love God more. The second gift, **understanding**, follows from wisdom. We understand what God expects of us in dealing with creation and other people. This gift helps us know how to act in a world that seems to ignore God.

Counsel follows from understanding as the gift of making correct judgments on how to act. For example, understanding can lead us to love others; counsel guides us to love them in appropriate ways.

Strength, or **fortitude**, is the gift that enables us to do those things inspired by understanding and counsel, even if they are difficult. John the Baptist displays that gift in the Gospel. Fortitude gave him the courage to die for his faith.

Knowledge is similar to counsel in that we begin to see what God wants for us in this world. Knowledge leads us to deeper revelations of the truths of our faith. This can lead to the sixth gift, **piety** (seventh in Isaiah's text--"delight in the Lord"), a willingness to worship and love God, a desire to be close to God in prayer.

The final gift, **fear of the Lord**, is the awe and wonder of recognizing how great God is, how much God loves us, and how much we want to stay close to God. And the desire to be close to God circles back to the wisdom with which we see God in creation. - Tom Schmidt



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Annual Mens Retreat

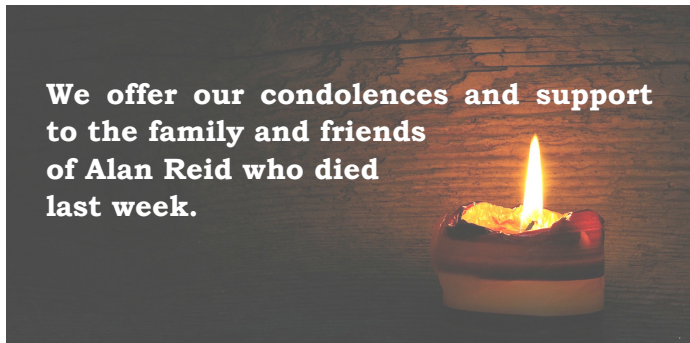
Our annual men’s retreat for the men of St. Catherine’s Parish will be held at Holy Name Retreat Center, 430 Bunker Hill Road, on January 10-12, 2020. This year’s theme is “Standing on Holy Ground: The Call to Holiness in Today’s World.” This is a great way to start the new year. Registration forms and brochures are located on the bulletin board in the foyer. Please contact Charles Hrachovy 713-468-0259 with any questions.



Parish Calendar

For full calendar, visit stcatherine-houston.org

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We offer our condolences and support to the family and friends of Alan Reid who died last week.

Club 55+: Trip Pics



Pictured above is the November 2019 Club 55+ Bus trip group in front of the St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica in Beaumont where they enjoyed a docent-led tour.



SAT 7	5:00 PM Sunday Vigil Mass Retirement Fund for Religious Collection Mission of Yahweh Food Collection 6:00 PM Parish Mingle
SUN 8	8:30 AM Sunday Mass 9:30-10:30 AM CCE Class 9:30 AM Parish Breakfast 11:15 AM Sunday Mass † Marie Cooper Retirement Fund for Religious Collection Mission of Yahweh Food Collection 12:30 PM Club 55+ Christmas Event 4:00-6:00 PM Confirmation Session
MON 9	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open No Daily Mass
TUE 10	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Weekday Mass
WED 11	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Weekday Mass 7:00 PM Last Bible Study for 2019
THU 12	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 10:30 AM Last Bible Study for 2019 12:15 PM Weekday Mass
FRI 13	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Weekday Mass
Next Week	Third Sunday of Advent
SAT 14	5:00 PM Sunday Vigil Mass
SUN 15	8:30 AM Sunday Mass NO CCE Class 11:15 AM Sunday Mass