



November 27, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

This weekend we begin a new ecclesiastical and liturgical year and celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, the season when we prepare to celebrate Christmas, the solemnity of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We prepare in these weeks before Christmas in a spirit of prayer and penance. The penance of Advent has its own special quality: It is expressed through patience and waiting. This time of patience and waiting is meant to recall the many centuries when God's people waited for the coming of the promised Messiah. It is meant to sharpen our anticipation and increase our readiness to welcome Christ when He comes again in glory to judge the living and the dead. It is meant to increase our appreciation that Jesus, born of Mary in Bethlehem, is truly the Word made flesh, the longed-for Messiah, who has come already and even now dwells among us. We keep Advent, therefore, in patience and waiting.

This year, we will need a lot of patience as Advent coincides with a very serious surge in the Coronavirus pandemic. We will have to wait even longer for it all to end, and we have already been waiting for many months now. Like the people of old who waited through many dark years for the coming of the promised One, we too must wait through many dark times for the coming of the promised vaccine. But let us continue to abide in patience and in waiting. In this season of Advent, let us offer to God our frustration, anxiety and impatience, and ask Him to give us peace, serenity and patience. With the help of this divine assistance, we will be equipped to continue all of our efforts to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe, to cooperate with the curfew order and the "stay at home" advisory, and to do all of this with utmost patience.

Two weeks ago, I shared with you our plans to celebrate Christmas Masses here at St. Andrew – that all Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses will require reservations for in-person attendance. The details and link to the reservation software will be available on our Parish website soon and emails will also be sent to households who currently receive the Parish ePost. If you do not currently receive the ePost, contact Mary Beasecker, mbeasecker@standrewparish.cc.

While St. Andrew still plans to allow in-person attendance at the Christmas Masses, the very serious surge in COVID-19 cases makes it difficult to know exactly what requirements will be in place. Currently, there is a stay-at-home advisory in Franklin County, which means you should carefully consider whether or not to attend Mass in person right now.

As an alternative, think about attending our livestreamed Sunday Mass at www.standrewparishlive.com. Although St. Andrew Parish is continuing to offer Mass as usual, you should watch the bulletin and check the website for up-to-date information. Most of all, please be careful, please be safe, and please be patient this Advent.

Your Pastor,
Msgr. Stephan Moloney