

FROM FATHER BILL: Today, the *THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT*, is called *GAUDETE SUNDAY*. Gaudete (Latin) means *REJOICE* and sets a tone of joyful anticipation of the Lord's birth and Second Coming, as does the permitted use of *ROSE COLORED VESTMENTS*. We light the third candle (Violet/Pink) of the Advent Wreath and realize the spiritual meaning of the writing of Christmas cards, the giving of gifts and the lighting of Christmas bulbs. Each *CARD* proclaims the Good News of the Birth of Jesus to the recipient. Each *WRAPPED PRESENT* reminds us of the great gift that comes to us in the person of the Infant Savior. The *CHRISTMAS LIGHTS* brighten up our homes and spirits in honor of the great Light, the *STAR of DAVID*, who comes at Christmas. *REJOICE! COME, LORD_JESUS, BE OUR GUEST.*

COME HOME TO ST. PAUL'S or ST. PETER'S FOR CHRISTMAS: Please invite someone/everyone to come or return to our Parishes for our beautiful Christmas Eve or Christmas Day Masses.

TODAY - ST. PETER and ST. PAUL JOINT PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY at St. Peter's Lyceum.

2009 Church Calendars are available at our Parishes TODAY. A Parish GIFT to you. *NOEL!*

****ARISE! ADVENT SERIES: "HOW CAN I ACT ON MY FAITH in New Ways?"****

Final Presentation - Wednesday – 7:00-8:00 pm, December 17 at Our Lady of Victory Church, Troy, NY
Hospitality at 6:45

TOPIC: Serving and Speaking. – Father Kevin Mullin, OFM (President of Siena)
YOU ARE INVITED!

THIS WEEK - ST. PETER'S and ST. PAUL'S COMBINED PARISHES ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE (Christmas Confessions), THURSDAY, December 18, 2008 St. Paul's Church, at **6:30 pm**. We will sing, recite psalms, pray an act of Sorrow and accept a common penance followed by the sharing of His Peace with each other and then come forward in two lines, mention a sin or fault and Father Bill will give individual absolution to each person. Make an attempt to come and make your Christmas Confession at this time.

ADVENT GIVING TREES ARE PRESENT IN OUR CHURCHES: All gifts must be brought to the Rectory by tomorrow.

IN RECOGNITION of the YEAR OF SAINT PAUL and to provide the people of our Diocese with sufficient opportunity to receive the graces attached to this celebration, Bishop Hubbard has identified ST. PAUL the APOSTLE CHURCH, Troy, NY as a pilgrimage site for Rensselaer County. A person who desires a plenary indulgence should be: REPENTANT of their sins/ ABSOLVED through the Sacrament of Reconciliation/ RECEIVE Holy Communion and VISIT a designated pilgrimage site and pray for the Intentions of the Holy Father. A PLENARY INDULGENCE may benefit the Christian faithful, both living and deceased, as often as the conditions are fulfilled. Final chance to receive Plenary Indulgence – December 31, 2008.

THE CHRISTMAS COLLECTION: There will only be **ONE** Collection at our Christmas Eve and Day Masses. Father Bill asks for a generous gift from you to your Parish at Christmas. Your financial support and generosity is most needed this Christmas, 2008.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: Please fill out your Christmas Flower envelope and place it in the basket by Christmas. A Memorial list will be printed in the Bulletin on Epiphany Sunday, January 4, 2009.

PRAYER IN TIME OF CHANGE:

Beloved Jesus, anoint us to do your will.

May the joy of your dwelling in us draw us closer to each other,

Expand our vision to recognize your plan;

Warm our hearts by the flame of your love;

Open our lips so that we can embrace each other as your people; speak to us so we can discern the role you have for us,

Your body, your Church.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit,

Empowering us to become a vital expression of growth

In your changing Church.

Your Kingdom is now!

Help us to discover and live your will. AMEN.

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

Wednesday, December 24
4:00 pm at St. Paul's
6:00 pm at St. Peter's

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Thursday, December 25
9:00 am at St. Paul's
10:30 am at St. Peter's
NOON at St. Peter's (Latin)

NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS

Wednesday, December 31
4:00 pm at St. Paul's

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES

Thursday, January 1, 2009
9:00 am at St. Paul's
10:30 am at St. Peter's
NOON at St. Peter's (Latin)

**“Day by Day, Day by Day, O dear Lord, three things I pray,
To SEE Thee more clearly; LOVE Thee more dearly; and FOLLOW Thee more nearly”.**

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE

(may be prayed by families or individuals at home after the Christmas Tree is decorated!):

*Holy Lord, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of your Son, who rescued us from the darkness of sin by
making the CROSS a tree of Life and Light.*

*May this TREE, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the
new life that shines in our hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. AMEN!*

WHY DO WE SING? WHY DO YOU SING? (continued) **1** Listening to sung prayer lifts our minds to God, **2** Even if we don't have good singing voices, sung participation comes from our heart, **3** Through song, we honor and glorify the Trinity **4** We continue the song of the Victory; of the exodus, of the Resurrection, and of the eternal Song of the Lamb.

With the support of the U.S. Department of Defense and Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and with help from Pitney Bowes Government Solutions, the American Red Cross will collect, review and distribute holiday greeting cards to wounded military personnel. For security reasons, the Red Cross will be able to accept only holiday cards but not packages. Red Cross volunteers will receive and bundle the cards, which will be shipped by Pitney Bowes Government Solutions. Then, Red Cross volunteers at the medical facilities will distribute the cards throughout the holiday season. Please address your holiday cards to: We Support You During Your Recovery!

c/o American Red Cross

P.O. Box 419

Savage, MD 20763-0419

PRAY FOR THE SOUL OF Elizabeth Chiamonte (mother of Fr. Tony Chiamonte). God grant her Eternal Life.

Catholic Information: 1-800-MY FAITH
Pro-Life Pregnancy Hotline: 1-800-848-LOVE

THE ROSARY is prayed EVERY Sunday at St. Peter's Church at 11:30 am.

THE SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION is offered every Saturday at St. Paul's Church - 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

EVANGELIZATION: “Hope”..... “La Esperanza!”

