

**December 8, 2019**

**From Fr. Jim . . .**

**Retirement Fund for Religious:** Today is the collection for The Retirement Fund for the Religious. Many of us would not be where we are today in the practice of our faith if it were not for the faith of our parents and the faith of the religious sisters and brothers who have dedicated their lives to teaching the faith and living the faith in service of so many of God's people. This fund is always a way to show our deep gratitude to them and to show our care and love for them in the needs of their retirement. In a television advertisement for this fund, an elderly sister with a walker is making her way to her chair in the chapel. She is saying that there are many things that she can no longer do because of her age but one thing she will always be able to do is pray. She assures everyone that she is praying for us every day. She calls this her prayer ministry. The advertisement ends by asking the viewer to consider supporting the fund in some way and to remember the retired religious because "you know that they are remembering you." Thank you so much for keeping them in your prayers and for your generosity.



**For Your Advent Prayer and Reflection:** As the Season of Advent invites us to be awake and aware of the many ways that God has come, is coming and will come into our lives, where do we hunger the most for God's merciful love? Where does our world need it the most? Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come with your saving grace.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, from the moment of her conception, was free to say "Yes" to the presence of the Lord in her life without the effects, limits and conditions of sin. While we do not live our lives sinless as did Mary, nonetheless, we can, like Mary, choose to do God's will. God comes to us, too. What is God's will for us? To what is God asking us to say, "Yes?"

John the Baptist calls for repentance as we prepare for the Lord to come into our lives. We need to acknowledge our shortcomings and change our ways. We need help in order to say "yes" to God's will fully and completely as Mary models for us. We need God's forgiveness and mercy to keep saying "yes" to God's will and way of Love. Where do we need God's mercy the most? For what do we need forgiveness? Come, Lord, Jesus, quickly come with your saving grace.

**What can I do In Advent to prepare the way of the Lord?** Simple acts of kindness like holding the door for someone; saying please and thank you; Be kind, courteous and smile; Do works of mercy – feed someone or donate to our food pantry; share clothes with someone or donate to St. Vincent DePaul or Helping Hands in North Fairmount. Perhaps our parish Wish List in the bulletin can offer suggestions to you. Listen to someone; free yourself from distractions like the cell phone and be really present to someone. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation; come to our weekly Thursday night Mass; Pray a Hail Mary to our Lady of Guadalupe. Learn about St. Nicholas, or St. John the Baptist; Introduce yourself in church to someone you do not know and find out a little bit more about them. Make a family Advent Wreath and light the first two candles. Come, Lord Jesus. Quickly Come!

I recently read this post on Facebook: "While you are waiting for the Lord, do what waiters do – Serve!"