

## **Father Jim's Weekly Bulletin Article for December 3 2017**

**This week's celebrations:** This week includes two feasts very important to the Advent Season. The first is Wednesday, the Feast of Saint Nicholas, commonly referred to as Santa Claus. Saint Nicholas is a 4<sup>th</sup> century bishop known for his generosity. Many of the things associated with Santa Claus are fantasy, but the choice to give, and often to give without hope of receiving anything in return is very true to the Spirit. The second is Friday, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This is a Holy Day of Obligation. We celebrate that Mary was conceived by her parents without original sin, so as to be better prepared for her role as the mother of our savior. Although we are not prepared in the same way, this season is very much about our preparing to receive and give our Savior Jesus Christ.

**Readings for next week:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8

**Reflection:** John the Baptist loudly proclaims the urgency of reformation, "Make ready the way of the Lord, clear him a straight path". "Why the rush?", we might reply. John shouts, "One more powerful than I is to come after me. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit!" We scoff, "What else is new? We know the Messiah is coming. We've been waiting for thousands of years. What makes you think he is coming today?" John knew because he had been personally touched by the Messiah. The people knew because they recognized the Spirit in John's words, actions, and eagerness. We know the Messiah is coming, and is already among us, because we too feel his touch. We know that he is coming when we see the joy and excitement in those around us who already know his presence. We wait in joyful hope because it is precisely in our joy and hope that Christ will make his home.

1. Reflect upon your life as the home to which you would invite Jesus to live.
2. Consider something that brings you joy. How is your joy felt by those around you?

**Prayer:** Jesus, we know that you are with us in everything we say and do. We thank you for your presence. We know that you will touch us in ways and places of which we may not even be aware. Be with us Lord, as we prepare to share the life you promise.