

December 7, 2018

Dear Parents,

The second candle on our Advent wreath is called the Bethlehem candle in honor of Mary and Joseph's famous journey. We join them on this pilgrimage as we focus on the virtue of love this coming week. We see God's love in so many places: in our families that mirror the holy family, in our friendships, and in the many blessings God has given us. The theme of love will smack us in the face at Valentine's Day, but this Advent season has a much more subdued, quiet approach. It's easy to say, "I love you!" with holiday treats and pricey material gifts. It takes much more effort to show our love quietly, sincerely, from the heart. Each day at school we've had an Advent challenge as part of the morning offering prayers. I've encouraged children to pay someone a compliment, hold open a door, smile at every one, and my personal favorite—give someone your full attention. As I told the children, that sounds easy, but how rare it is these days to approach another person with the actual mindful intent to listen, care, and respond to only to them. Since this particular challenge was on Wednesday, I pointed out that they could actually give their full, undivided attention to God as we went to Mass and Reconciliation. This should not be a radical idea, friends! Make sure to ask your child each day what the Advent challenge was and if they were able to complete it. Join us as we continue to make ready the way on this beautiful journey.

You are also invited to join us as we celebrate the Immaculate Conception of Mary. This holy day of obligation lands on a Saturday this year. Your mass options at St. Aloysius are 7:00pm on Friday for the vigil mass or 8:15am on Saturday. This does not fulfill your regular Sunday obligation, so we will see you double this weekend! Use the opportunity to focus on the love God had for Mary and that Mary in turn has for us. When it comes to family trips, moms are famous for making plans, packing, organizing, and just plain wrangling all the details and participants into some sort of order. Mary, as our heavenly mother, is more than willing to join us on our faith journey. When in doubt, give Mary a shout!

There are many other activities to love this season. You're invited to the children's Christmas performances next week. Tuesday we will enjoy kindergarten and first grade and Wednesday we will see second and third grades. Both performances are in the gym beginning at 7:00pm. Make sure to come early so you can buy some delicious homemade treats at the PTO bake sale in the cafeteria. Yes, I'm baking, so grab those stretchy pants! We also love our tradition of holiday hijinks so check out the web site for details. Please note, hijinks are NOT next week, but the following, short week before classroom parties. In case you need the reminder, we have a noon dismissal Wednesday, December 19 and there is no lunch or after school care. Finally, I love to see students participating in Governor's Cup practices. The practice team schedules have been updated with some day/time changes so please double check your calendars.

Take care on your Advent journey,

*Mrs. Hayslip*