

# Fr. Simon Sez

**Advent Confessions:** I am offering extra time for Advent confessions next Sunday afternoon, December 18, 2022 in Sacred Heart Church at 1:30 pm and St. Pius X Church at 3:00 pm.



**New SHP Family Members & Baptism Congrats:** We welcome the Tyler & Rachel Vogel family to our Sacred Heart Parish and congratulate them on the baptism of their baby Kysen Ford Vogel Saturday, December 3, 2022!

**Thanks to SPXP Volunteers!:** We have been having a wonderful response to St. Pius X Parish needing many volunteers for Pastoral and Finance Councils, money counting, cleaning, decorating, liturgical, sacristan, and other volunteers. We have been needing a parish transformation with more parishioners getting personally involved with their time and talent. To be a true disciple of Christ, we need to be personally involved in our parish and Church to the extent possible with our time, talent, and treasure. This concretely demonstrates of personal and total commitment to Christ and the Church as well as helps us to deepen it. Our Confirmation candidates have been great in stepping up with the parish service too! Thank you all!

**Confirmation Retreat Save the Dates:** The only diocese retreat before June 2023 is Saturday, February 4, 2023 in Watertown. As an alternative, we can attend the St. Ann Parish Confirmation retreat in Miller on Saturday, April 1, 2022. Register through our parishes. Bus to Watertown.

## Guidelines for COVID, RSV, Cold and Flu Season

- **If you have the flu, a bad cold or are contagious in any way – STAY HOME!** Watch Mass on TV or our Mass at GetSHC.org.
- **There is NO REQUIREMENT to hold hands at the Our Father** – It's not part of the Mass' rubrics – (Previously, Bishop Dudley encouraged this. The U.S. Catholic Bishops suggest you hold out your hands in the same position as the priests since you are exercising your baptismal priesthood.)
- **At the "Sign of Peace" you can opt not to shake hands** – you can look at others, do a little head bow or wave or a 'fist bump' and say "Peace be with you." This is NOT a time to visit and cause distractions in front of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist! The priest and faithful people have just spent considerable time preparing to receive Communion.
- **We have hand sanitizer available in various church spaces including in the front corners off of the sanctuary for the Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers** – Please use it! – We are not allowed to have it in the sanctuary on the credence (Altar) table. (Bishop DeGroot provided a dispensation for it but rescinded it.)

## Here Is Your God Scott Hahn Reflects on the Second Sunday of Advent



Isaiah 35:1–6, 10  
Psalm 146:6–10  
James 5:7–10  
Matthew 11:2–11

John questions Jesus from prison in today's Gospel—for his disciples' sake and for ours.

He knows that Jesus is doing "the works of the Messiah," foretold in today's First

Reading and Psalm. But John wants his disciples—and us—to know that the Judge is at the gate, that in Jesus our God has come to save us.

The Liturgy of Advent takes us out into the desert to see and hear the marvelous works and words of God—the lame leaping like a stag, the dead raised, the good news preached to the poor (see Isaiah 29:18–20; 61:1–2).

The Liturgy does this to give us courage, to strengthen our feeble hands and make firm our weak knees. Our hearts can easily become frightened and weighed down by the hardships we face. We can lose patience in our sufferings as we await the coming of the Lord.

As James advises in today's Epistle, we should take as our example the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Jesus also points us to a prophet—holding up John as a model. John knew that life was more than food, the body more than clothing. He sought the kingdom of God first, confident that God would provide (see Matthew 6:25–34). John did not complain. He did not lose faith. Even in chains in his prison cell, he was still sending his disciples—and us—to our Savior.

We come to Him again now in the Eucharist. Already He has caused the desert to bloom, the burning sands to become springs of living water. He has opened our ears to hear the words of the sacred book, freed our tongue to fill the air with songs of thanksgiving (see Isaiah 30:18).

Once bowed down, captives to sin and death, we have been ransomed and returned to His Kingdom, crowned with everlasting joy. Raised up, we now stand before His altar to meet the One who is to come: "Here is your God."