



ST. IGNATIUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

3400 SE 43rd Avenue * Portland, OR 97206 * 503-777-1491 * www.sipdx.org

December 8, 2019

Into the Desert

Dear Parishioners:

During Advent, pay attention to “going into the desert.” Always incorporating Old Testament motifs, Matthew opens up today’s gospel with John the Baptist in the wilderness. John is dressed like the formidable ancient prophet, Elijah. He is eating inedible locusts, echoing one of the ten plagues that God brought upon Egypt at the time of the Exodus. He has a side dish of wild honey that recalls the bitter scroll that tastes as sweet as honey when the prophet Ezekiel swallowed it.

And John’s wilderness is the unforgiving, unrelenting desert, where Moses and the people learned the harsh demands of depending on God. Here in the desert, the last great biblical prophet after a hiatus of four hundred years, invites people to leave their usual locales and preoccupations, and come apart with him, away from the maddening crowd, in order to find themselves and God, “for the kingdom of God is very much at hand.”

So there you have it, Matthew’s basic Advent theme in a nutshell: Let go. And let God. The theme is so familiar, it almost needs a new expression to communicate John’s message. In a chapter about the second Sunday of Advent in *Once Upon A Gospel*, William Bausch does just that in the story of Michael Gill.

Michael was born into wealth and high society, but was pretty much emotionally abandoned by his partying parents. He hobnobbed with the rich and famous all his life. He went to Yale, then after graduating garnered a high-paying job at a prestigious advertising firm in New York. Always clever with words, he made scads of money travelling abroad creating ads for high profile customers. Life was good.

The truth is, Michael was not a particularly admirable man. He cheated on his wife and disgraced himself with his four grown children. His life completely unraveled when a young hotshot took over his company and wanted to project a “youthful” corporate image – and in the bloodless corporate culture where profit, not loyalty, prevails, he fired the sixty-four-year old Michael Gill.

There he was: divorced, alienated from his children, no benefits, totally broke and living in a one-room apartment. Michael, in gospel terminology, had been forced into the desert. But unknown to him, the kingdom of God awaited him there. This is how it happened.

One day he stopped at Starbucks in downtown Manhattan for a cup of coffee, totally unaware that it was their hiring week. A young black woman named Crystal, thinking that he was applying, offered him a job. To make a long story short, this down-and-out son of privilege took the job, and slowly and painfully learned how to live like everyone else. For one thing, the staff at that Starbucks was young and mostly African American or Hispanic – so that white old man stuck out like an antique roadster in a new car show. For another thing, he didn’t know anything about coffee or the difference between a latte and an espresso.

Continued next page >>>

Today’s Readings:

Isaiah	11:1-10
Romans	15:4-9
Matthew	3:1-12

Next Sunday’s Readings:

Isaiah	35:1-6a, 10
James	5:7-10
Matthew	11:2-9

Preaching Next Sunday:
Fr Craig Boly, SJ

Mass Schedule:

Saturday Vigil: 5:00PM
Sunday: 8:00AM & 10:30AM
Sunday Contemplative: 7:30PM
Daily: Monday 8:00AM in church
 Tuesday - Friday 8:00AM La Storta Chapel
Centering Prayer: Friday 7:00AM
Anointing Mass: First Friday 8:00AM
First Saturday Mass: 8:00AM
Reconciliation: Saturday 3:30-4:30PM
 or by appointment with a priest

Think about it. Here was Michael who was used to three-piece suits now dressed in black pants, shirt, green apron, and a Starbucks hat, commuting an hour and a half from his dingy flat to work for a black woman who was twenty-eight. He found himself on his feet all day, serving coffee to ordinary street folk – and learning to clean the bathrooms, at which he excelled.

Here comes the grace: along the way, he learned the Starbucks philosophy. Every customer is called a Guest and is to be treated as such. Every employee is called a Partner, and you had to cooperate to make it work. Ironclad rule: you must treat Guests and each other with dignity and respect. You must make eye contact and converse with every Guest -- this was a revelation to him, good news, gospel.

Eventually he discovered that Starbucks was not simply a job. It was a way of life. By and by Michael became eager to see his regulars. He learned their names, and they began to call him Mike. He discovered community. Even though he was the “old man” among a bunch of kids in a low paying job, he was amazed how welcomed he felt.

One learning was how different Crystal was from his boss at the ad agency – who said “fear is a great motivator;” and the game was “win or lose: you’re a hero when you got new clients, and a bum when you didn’t” Crystal was genuinely happy when the Partners succeeded in good service. Michael realized that the advertising world was based on a pyramid where only a few got to enjoy recognition. At Starbucks, everyone mattered.

For the first time in his life, Michael was accepted for the person he was, not where he came from; where serving rather than being served made him happy; and where rubbing shoulders with ordinary people was liberating, not demeaning.

The point is that Michael is a secular version of the Advent journey: a man dragged into the desert, forced to let go, stripped of his arrogance, painfully learning what really matters – human relationships and respect – and that life is not about him, but about the joy God accomplishes through him. John the Baptist would have been pleased.

Come to the Advent communal penance service on Monday night at 7:00 p.m. Perhaps you will recognize your own desert experience. Tell God one thing you want the Risen Christ to help you with as you prepare for Christmas.

Fr. Craig Boly, S.J.
Pastor

IGNITE in December: TODAY—12/8 – St. John of the Cross/Preface Dialogue – Diving into the Dark Night

HISTORY HEROES and **UGLY SWEATERS**, wear yours {prizes}!! **Tues, Dec. 10th**; Loyola Jesuit Center; Mass 12:15pm; Lunch & fun, ALL WELCOME. Bring household donations for St. Vincent if you can. **PLEASE RSVP** to Judi, 503-234-1147 or judi_vc@yahoo.com please call Judi Van Cleave at 503-234-1147.



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https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/sacred-advent-retreat?utm_source=ignsp&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=advent2019

AN EASY LINK CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE OPENING PAGE.

Dec 9, 2019

Advent Communal Penance Service

7PM in the church

MASS INTENTIONS

FOR THE WEEK

	Monday	Dec 9	† Therese Karen Lee Cook Love
	Tuesday	Dec 10	† Ana Dvorak
	Wednesday	Dec 11	† John Mudrick Sr.
	Thursday	Dec 12	† Jim Emig
	Friday	Dec 13	† Louie Pieretti



In Thanksgiving for the Life of Molly Benson

Women's club happenings. No regular meeting on Dec. 13th. Saturday, Dec. 14th, we are going to lunch at LaBambas on 49th & Powell, followed by a visit to a Christmas at Fort Vancouver 1840's style, how fun! Holiday crafts/caroling & more. Husbands invited too! We will START from St. Ig. parking lot by 11:00 for carpooling, go to the restaurant/then onto the fort. or Sharon 971-340-7525.



ACT, Active Catholics Together, is having their annual Christmas party on Dec. 21st, starting at 7PM, at Kay Klang's house, 8338 SE Bufford Lane in Portland. BYOB/soft drinks/potluck munchies. Please bring a gift for our white elephant gift exchange.

There's been some pretty funny ones over the years! We warmly welcome anyone who may wish to join us, singles/couples, open to all. Questions, please call Kay at 503-481-1479. So please come have some fun and good holiday cheer with us!



The giving tree alcove is up.

We are supporting Embrace Oregon this year with welcome boxes and "tens for teens" gift cards for children in foster care.

Return gifts to the church by Jan 5, 2020.

Church Office
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Pastor Fr Craig Boly, SJ
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Fr. Dan Sullivan, SJ
dsullivan@sipdx.org ext. 224

Pastoral Council
Co-Chair- James Nguyen
james@dragonberryproduce.com

Co-Chair - Joyce Keane
joyce.sipdx@gmail.com

A full list of staff & council members is located on our webpage at www.sipdx.org/parish-staff

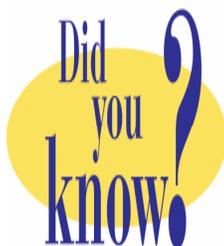
Revived Women's Conference, Breaking Barriers to Peace Dec 14th at 9am—3:30PM at St. Michael the Archangel. Register today at revivedconference2019.eventbrite.com Join us for a day to connect with other women in community, to renew your heart and to equip yourself with the tools to fight the spiritual battle of everyday life. With guest speakers, Adoration & confessions available.

Catholic Charities Give your extra day in 2020 to Catholic Charities! Join us for our the 23rd annual gala—Celebration of Hope, February 29, 2020. Saturday, February 29, 2020 Together, we give hope to those who need it most. www.catholiccharitiesoregon.org/events/ Reserve your table or tickets today! Special discount available to Parish hosted tables. Contact us – 503-688-2623 or celebration@CCOregon.org

LOOKING AHEAD:

CALL 503-777-1491 FOR DETAILS

Advent Penance Service	Dec 09	7:00PM
Christmas Program-School	Dec 19	10:00AM (rehearsal-open) & 7PM
CHRISTMAS EVE	Dec 24	4:00PM, 7:30PM & 10:30PM
CHRISTMAS DAY	Dec 25	10:00AM (only)
Peace Mass	Jan 1	10:00AM (Holy Day)



- Advent offerings are listed in the flyer in the vestibule of the church and can also be found on our website on the opening page!
- **There is a need for a VOLUNTEER** to help deliver bread from the Grand Central Bakery to the Women's Transition Shelter. Take about two hours, and one **Friday** a month. We need one volunteer on the 2nd weeks of the months. If you like to help contact Jim Mumby at 503-519-8991

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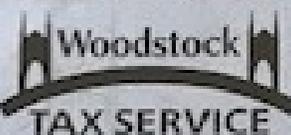
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