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WELCOME TO THE CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY !

OUR PARISH ONLINE NEWSLETTER

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We presently have 2.3 million people in our jails and prisons. The United States has more prisoners per capita than any nation in the world. 470,000 people are detained in jail because they cannot afford bail to secure their release. In 2018, Black people represented 33% of the sentenced prison population, nearly triple their 12% share of the U.S. adult population and more than five times the rate among white people.

The Death Penalty Information Center in a new report just issued stated that Black people have been overrepresented on death rows across the United States, and killers of Black people are less likely to face the death penalty than people who kill white people.

The plight of prisoners was recently reported in the September 9 Democrat and Chronicle. As of August 10, "the state's prisons recorded 754 [COVID-19] cases among inmates -- a jump of 150 cases from August 4, with five staff deaths and 17 inmate deaths, according to the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision." The issue of the humane treatment of elderly and vulnerable prisoners needs to be urgently addressed.

It is an appropriate time to support New York State Senate Bill S1623, which restricts the use of segregated confinement and creates alternative therapeutic and rehabilitation confinement options. The Bill – "Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement" - would put restrictions when solitary confinement could be employed. Advocates have pointed to a United Nations report several years ago that determined any length of time in solitary beyond 15 days amounts to torture.

New efforts to reintegrate offenders into the community and increased support for mentoring programs that help offenders prior to their release could greatly assist them in the difficult transition back to the community. Investment in programs that support the victims of crime as well as the families of the offenders can advance our community transformation into more tolerance and respect for our racial diversity.

Christ's Peace...
Father Kevin

REFLECTION FOR FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Father Bob Kennedy

"Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down...." (Isaiah 64:1)

Isaiah prays with urgent longing in the name of God's People. They wander aimlessly, lost, a great distance between themselves and God. And they are feeling powerless to bridge the gap. They need a savior!

In the midst of "pandemic-fatigue", in the midst of its grief, frustration, depression, uncertainty, fear, and loss, we too need a savior. While the days seem to be getting darker, Paul bluntly reminds us: "God is faithful" (1 Corinthians 1:9). In Christ, God has torn open the heavens and come down; saving grace is faithfully and lovingly with us every moment of every day.



A PANDEMIC ADVENT-CHRISTMAS SEASON

Rose Davis, Ginny Miller and John Giugno

Do you have your Christmas tree yet? For weeks we've seen decorations, forests of lighted trees as we shop and drive, even around our own homes. And they all say, "It's Christmas!!"

But, in faith, we aren't ready to say that yet; something different is happening. For us, it's the first week of Advent, and entire season of the Church. And just as we'd never skip Spring to get from Winter to Summer, Advent has a unique beauty and meaning we don't want to miss.

It's been said that Advent faces two directions, backward and forward, and that both directions lead us to Jesus. Advent looks behind and remembers the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and all that led to that one night in the history of the world; Advent looks ahead to the day when the already crucified and risen Jesus will return to earth, his mission complete and the world ready to be made new again.

We would add that Advent faces a very important third direction. Yes, it looks backward and forward, but it also looks around. It looks to see Jesus coming in the person who may be crossing our path: the one we live with and the one we've never met. Be alert! Watch for the Lord!

Pope Francis says that to see Christ we must "touch his body in the suffering bodies" of others. Father Kevin has said we must experience an "exquisite mutuality" with those who are most vulnerable. So often the suffering and vulnerable ones are in the shadows, but not this Advent. The diseases of COVID-19 and Racism, and the illness, isolation, poverty, suffering, hunger and hopelessness they have caused, make the most vulnerable painfully visible. To meet Christ in them requires more than a glance. We must listen to a voice, hear a story, take an interest and take action, just as Jesus did. And all the while wearing a mask and keeping a safe distance.

This is what the work of Advent 2020 looks like; and it is both challenging and possible. Advent is always a remarkable season – don't sell it short! Advent looks back in faith and invites us to believe in all God has done for us, looks forward in hope and anticipates what God will complete, and looks around in love to meet the living Christ in ourselves and others.

So "Be alert! Watch for the Lord!" says Advent. He will come when you are least expecting him.

COVID-19 Orange Zone

Beginning Wednesday, November 25, 2020, portions of Monroe County which have been designated as an orange COVID-19 focus zone by New York State are required to follow Orange Zone guidelines.

Under the Orange Zone designation, services at houses of worship are greatly restricted as to capacity. As opposed to limiting our attendance to 25 individuals, and for the health and safety of all of our parishioners, we have decided to eliminate attendance at all. Instead we will stream our Masses, making them available to everyone safely. This will begin with the 12:10 daily Mass on Wednesday, November 25, and continue until further notice.

Our schedule will include the streaming of the daily Mass on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12:10pm. The Saturday Vigil Mass will be live-streamed at 4:00pm on Saturday on our Facebook page. Following that, it will be available for streaming at any time on our website link (www.cathedralcommunity.org) and YouTube (www.tinyurl.com/CathedralCommunityChannel) for Sunday viewing.

Please remember that the dispensation from Bishop Matano regarding Mass attendance remains in effect until further notice.