DECEMBER 04, 2016  I  SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The Church of Saint Pascal Baylon

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MASS TIMES
Saturday - 4:30 pm
Sunday - 8:45 & 10:30 am (ASL)
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday - 7:30 am
Wednesday - 9:30 am
Dear Friends:

Not all of us are Irish, so not all of us turn to the obituaries of the daily newspaper as our first source of information in the morning. But I am, and so I do. And That Other Newspaper (the one published across the river) usually has a featured obituary article on its pages, kind of an extended "Obit of the Day." Often they are news items in tribute to people who have made important contributions to the local business, civic, religious, or charitable communities. But last Sunday I was particularly impressed and grateful for the story that was shared about Drew Christensen, age 25. When people of that age die, many others who are readers of obituaries often wonder why, and in particular they wonder, "Was it Suicide?" Frequently the text does not make it very clear. But this feature story left no doubt. It said, "Christensen died by suicide November 8 after a years-long struggle with bipolar disorder." What a courageous and good family to have simply put it out there for the rest of us to try to understand and embrace. Emotional disorders are so common in every community, and yet are so misunderstood and denied, only to our own detriment. I didn't ever know this young man or his relatives, but all have much to teach us because I do know of people who are dealing with such illnesses right now. I'll bet many of us do. Young Drew was apparently very intelligent, athletic, and charming. But he had his demons that kept him from being the success that he'd wished to be in this world, and which eventually drove him to despair. His mother was quoted in the article as saying, "I want people to know that there are resources out there...there are so many people who have come up to me, there are so many people suffering, and I want to tell them that if you're a parent or have a loved one, you don't have to be afraid."

In this season of Advent, we are invited to recognize the things of which we are afraid and to confront them. Some of them are dramatic, like terrorism, civil unrest, wars and natural disasters. Others of them are much more personal and seemingly "private," but some of those more hidden conflicts hurt us more every day. Depression, addiction, repressed anger, alienation, family dysfunction, racism, and yes, mental illness. Advent is a time to recall that Almighty God chose to come to us as a human being, in order to experience every temptation and vulnerability to which we are susceptible. There is no hurt in the human story with which God is not familiar, and from which our Lord is not able to save us. The greater struggle for us is actually to believe that, and to admit that we are loved in spite of all that. And then to share that wonderful news with others who are also caught up in the struggle.

The family of Drew Christensen wishes his life to be an example and a source of hope, as it seems he also wished. In this season of expectation, I am grateful for such a prophetic witness, surely through tears. May he rest in peace, and may we be the source of encouragement for others. This is what Advent demands, and it's not always easy.

Fr. Mike Byron

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Women's Book Salon Holiday Gathering

**Monday, December 12 in Brioschi Hall**

The ladies will share some Christmas goodies and a discussion of Julie Salamon’s *The Christmas Tree*. All parish women are invited to join the Book Club on the 2nd Mondays of each month at 7:00 PM. Contact Toni Baker at 731.7763 or toni@bakers.us for a list of the 2017 selections or for more information. Make a New Year's resolution to join the group on January 9 and get yourself reading. Feel free to start early by coming this month!

**Gift Cards for Friends and Family Dinner**

With Christmas coming you may find a great deal on gift cards. How about picking one up for the Friends and Family dinner on Saturday, April 22, 2017? Just put it in an envelope, write Friends and Family Dinner on the outside, and drop in the collection basket. Ideas for gift cards we can use—Target, Best Buy, local restaurants/fast food, local grocery stores, movie theaters, local retailers, Visa/MasterCard and so many more. Questions? Contact Ellen at 307.8241/ellenoaeling@gmail.com or Mike at 307.8237/mjaeling@gmail.com.

**Retirement Fund for the Religious**

Your donation works for aging religious.

Your gift works for elderly religious by helping to furnish medications, nursing care, and more. Please support next week's collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, and give to those who have given a lifetime.

**Christmas and Sunday Offerings to Support Our Parish**

Each year, we rely on generous Christmas contributions to support the ministries of our parish. Weekly Sunday offerings are also vital: it is through these ongoing gifts that we are able to fund staffing needs, building operation and maintenance costs, and the many services our parish provides. This year, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. Please consider offering your regular Sunday gift and an additional Christmas gift to the parish either at Mass or you may wish to contribute electronically. Thank you for your generous contributions at Christmas and throughout the year!

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**In Christ We Live Forever**

Please remember in your prayers...Egil Zabel who was recently buried from our church. We extend our sincere sympathy to his family and friends, and pray for his soul's eternal peace.
School Parent Focus Groups
Wednesday, December 7
5:30-6:30 PM (former parents/guardians)
7:15-8:15 PM (current 4th and 5th grade parents/guardians)
I am so glad your family supports our school! I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group (small discussion group) in the Founders Room to gain feedback about St. Pascal's middle school. You may participate in either or both groups. The focus group should last no longer than one hour. Dessert and beverages will be served.

The focus group will provide an opportunity for you to discuss a variety of issues facing St. Pascal's and for the staff and School Board to learn about your interests and concerns. Several of the issues we would like you to consider include:

- Why you would or would not recommend the middle school program to your friends
- Your level of satisfaction with your educational experience at St. Pascal's?
- Specific areas where we could improve
- What you believe were the primary reasons your child graduated or will likely graduate from St. Pascal's? Or, if you decided/decide to change schools during middle school years, what might be some of the issues or reasons for making the change?

Your feedback will be used to help us identify areas of strength and areas of concern regarding the middle school program. Your input will influence decisions regarding re-designing our middle school curriculum and programming. Findings will be shared with the focus group participants, the middle school teachers and the School Board.

To participate, please contact Laurie Jennrich at 776.0092 ext. 113 or laurie.jennrich@stpascals.org.

Confirmation I—9th Grade Families
Recently a mailing was sent to families of 9th graders regarding registration for confirmation. If you are a registered family at St. Pascal’s with a 9th grader and did not receive the mailing, please contact Kim Roering in the parish office. Youth in 9th grade and older who wish to prepare for the sacrament are welcome to be a part of the process.

Davanni’s Night
Monday, December 12 from 4:00-8:00 PM
St. Pascal’s and Blessed Sacrament Mission Trip Fundraiser
Come enjoy dinner at the Eastside Davanni’s (310 White Bear Avenue) between 4:00-8:00 PM on December 12. With a ticket, 20% of your pre-tax total order will support our youth and adult mission trip participants. Dinner tickets will be in the December 11 bulletin, and available on the parish website, at the welcome desk and in parish kiosks. For more information about the fundraiser or the mission trip, contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

Seeking Dismissal Leaders for RCIA
This year we have two young people preparing to celebrate baptism, Eucharist, and confirmation at the Easter Vigil. Beginning sometime in January and up through Holy Thursday, we need dismissal leaders at various Masses. Following the homily, the dismissal leader and our catechumens (those to be baptized) will be dismissed and go to reflect on the Scripture readings of the day. If you are able to help with this important ministry or would like more information, please contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

Santa Shop—Tuesday, December 6 through Thursday, December 8 from 9:30 AM-3:30 PM
We are looking for volunteers to help students shop, run the registers and wrap the purchased gifts. We especially need wrappers. Any amount of time you would like to spend helping is greatly appreciated. To sign up to help, please call the school office.

Cookies in a Jar— get yours from an 8th grader after Masses on December 10 & 11
Each jar is $7.50 and contains everything needed to make a delicious batch of cookies. This is half of what “cookies in a jar” are selling for in local stores. A variety of fantastic cookies will be available. If we run out of a particular type of cookie, we will take orders to be delivered the following week after Masses. These make great holiday gifts!
Mass Times & Intentions

Tuesday, December 06
7:30 AM The People of the Parish

Wednesday, December 07
9:30 AM The People of the Parish
11:00 AM St. Paul

Thursday, December 08
9:30 AM The People of the Parish
6:00 PM The People of the Parish

Friday, December 09
7:30 AM + Al Olsen
10:30 AM The People of the Parish

Saturday, December 10
4:30 PM The People of the Parish

Sunday, December 11
8:45 AM + Joe Quinn
10:30 AM The People of the Parish

Heart Questions
This is the one [John the Baptist] of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Matthew 3:3

Adult: What do you need to change so that others can learn from watching you that Christ walks among us?

Child: What could you do so that others will see in you what it means to follow Jesus?

Readings for the Week
December 04, 2016

Sunday:
Is 11:1-10
Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Rom 15:4-9
Mt 3:1-12

Monday:
Is 35:1-10
Ps 85:9-14
Lk 5:17-14

Tuesday:
Is 40:1-11
Ps 96:1-3, 10-13
Mt 18:12-14

Wednesday:
Ps 40:25-31
Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10
Mt 11:28-30

Thursday:
Immaculate Conception
Gn 3:9-15, 20
Ps 98:1-4
Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Lk 1:26-38

Friday:
Is 48:17-19
Ps 1:1-4, 6
Mt 11:16-19

Saturday:
Sir 48:1-4, 9-11
Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Next Sunday:
Is 35:1-6a, 10
Ps 146:6-10
Jas 5:7-10
Mt 11:2-11

Readings for the Week
December 04, 2016

Sunday:
Is 11:1-10
Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Rom 15:4-9
Mt 3:1-12

Monday:
Is 35:1-10
Ps 85:9-14
Lk 5:17-14

Tuesday:
Is 40:1-11
Ps 96:1-3, 10-13
Mt 18:12-14

Wednesday:
Ps 40:25-31
Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10
Mt 11:28-30

Thursday:
Immaculate Conception
Gn 3:9-15, 20
Ps 98:1-4
Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
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Is 35:1-6a, 10
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Jas 5:7-10
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Stewardship of Treasure
Financial Gifts – Week of November 27, 2016
For fiscal year July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

For the Week: Actual Received
Sunday Stewardship $ 7,259
Mortgage Campaign $ 2,387
Other (Includes Thanksgiving) $ 1,258

Year to Date: Actual Budget Variance
(July 1 – June 30)
Sunday Stewardship $ 346,529 $ 374,000 $ (27,471)
Mortgage Campaign $ 118,589 $ 121,000 $ (2,411)

Please note: Automatic (electronic) contributions are made on the 1st and 15th of each month and will be recorded with the following Sunday’s collection. Each week our budget requires $17,000 in Sunday stewardship collections and $5,500 in Mortgage (capital campaign) contributions.

Thank you for your generous support!

The Week Ahead

Visit us at www.stpascals.org for more information on upcoming events.

Sunday, December 4 — 2nd Sunday of Advent
After Masses Women’s Club Christmas Party Signup: CM
After Masses Cub Scout Pancake Breakfast: BH, Kit
9:00am Men’s Club Christmas Tree Lot: Conway lot
12:00pm Confirmation II: CH, OC

Monday, December 5: Friday, December 9
3:00pm Men’s Club Christmas Tree Lot: Conway lot

Monday, December 5
6:30pm Boy Scouts 294: CF, Gym

Tuesday, December 6 — Feast of St. Nicholas
9:30am Santa Shop (through Thursday, December 8): OC
7:00pm Spirituality Book Club: LB

Wednesday, December 7
1:00pm Marian Center Mass & Dessert: Marian Ctr—St. Paul
5:30pm School Parent Focus Groups: BH, FR
6:30pm Faith Formation: LB, OC, 101, 105
7:00pm Choir: Choir Room

Thursday, December 8 — Immaculate Conception
Holy Day of Obligation
9:30am School Mass
9:30am Nia: BH
6:00pm Mass: CH
6:45pm Pastoral Council: SL
7:00pm Men’s Club Membership Meeting: CF

Friday, December 9
8:00am Reflect & Renew Day: FR
9:30am School Advent Reconciliation: CH

Saturday, December 10
Retirement Fund for Religious
After Mass Cookies In a Jar sales: BH
9:00am Men’s Club Christmas Tree Lot: Conway lot
11:00am Women’s Club Christmas Party: Tinucci’s

Sunday, December 11 — 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudette)
Retirement Fund for Religious
After Masses Cookies In a Jar sales: BH
After Masses New Member Registration: BH
9:00am Men’s Club Christmas Tree Lot: Conway lot
12:00pm Ensemble Rehearsal: CH
12:00pm Confirmation II: OC
2:00pm Girl Scouts: CF
2:00pm Piano Recital & Reception: BH, CH

REMEMBER SOMEONE IN A SPECIAL WAY
THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

Please complete the form below and return it to the parish office or place it in the collection basket at Mass. Suggested donation is $10.

I would like to purchase a Christmas plant (circle one)

In Honor of / In Memory of:

From:

Thank you for your generosity and care!
Today’s Readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Romans 15:4–9; Matthew 3:1–12. “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse” begins today’s First Reading. These words not only set the tone for the day’s Scriptures but are the foundation for images and understandings of the coming of the Messiah and of his familial roots. Isaiah’s prophetic voice outlines a kingdom where the Messiah brings justice but also one that is an outgrowth of the line of David. The son of Jesse, David was a shepherd who became king. The kingdom described today is one in which the ruler will be guided by the poor and justice will be the outcome of his judgments.

When justice reigns, all will live in harmony and all of creation will be at peace. The harmony of wild animals living with domestic ones, and of children who curiously reach into a snake’s home without harm coming to them, are the bases for the Gospel, where John the Baptist, the wild precursor, proclaims the coming of the Kingdom. His warning to prepare calls us to question whether we are ready for a kingdom of harmony. When John states that the ax is ready for the trees that do not bear good fruit, we are taken back to the stump of Jesse.

The Jesse Tree, the genealogy of Jesus’ family, is full of hope and promise. In your homes, discover who some of the ancestors of Jesus were, and make a Jesse Tree with symbols of those ancestors. Rediscover the ancestors of your family, those who brought hope to your family tree. In that way, you may find the encouragement “to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus” (Romans 15:5).
THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 5
A Forgiving Household
Forgiveness and mercy can be difficult to accept, as Jesus reminds us in today’s Gospel. The season of Advent is an opportunity to prepare for the coming of Christ by seeking forgiveness as we prepare our hearts and forgive others as we prepare our homes for Christ to enter. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 35:1–10; Psalm 85:9ab, 10, 11–12; 13–14; Luke 5:17–26.

Tuesday, December 6
St. Nicholas, Bishop
As you place your shoes for Bishop Nicholas of Myra to fill, remember his generosity. He gave money to help three young women who were being taken advantage of. This season of Advent consider ringing bells to assist the Salvation Army, or finding a group that others have not yet begun to assist, and changing their lives. Most appropriately today, donate some shoes for homeless children. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 96:1–2, 3, 10ac, 11–12, 13; Matthew 18:12–14.

Wednesday, December 7
St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
In today’s Gospel, Jesus says that his “yoke is easy” and his “burden is light.” St. Ambrose accepted the yoke and burden that the city of Milan placed on him, electing him their bishop. Still a catechumen, Ambrose was baptized, ordained, and made a bishop on December 7, 374. Our burdens may not seem quite as daunting as were those for Ambrose, but we know we do not tackle them alone. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 40:25–31; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 8, 10; Matthew 11:28–30.

Thursday, December 8
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
“Nothing will be impossible with God.” Mary accepted the angel Gabriel’s message and even reached out to support her cousin, Elizabeth, as she approached the birth of her son, John the Baptist. At home today, let your family support system be strengthened by reaching out beyond your needs. Then find a symbol for someone else in your family and hang it on the Jesse Tree. Today’s Readings: Genesis 3:9–15, 20; 145:1, 9, 10–11, 12–13ab; Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12; Luke 1:26–38.

Friday, December 9
The Law of the Lord Is Wisdom
In a time of quick judgments and hurtful words, often found in social media, today’s Gospel reminds us to hold off on our criticisms that are instant rather than thoughtful, immediate rather than purposeful. Wisdom is to be our guide. Today’s psalm response is our comfort for this week of Advent: “Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.” Today’s Readings: Isaiah 48:17–19; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4, 6; Matthew 11:16–19.

Saturday, December 10
O Come, Divine Messiah
Halfway through the season of Advent, we are still waiting, but we wait with hope. The days are getting shorter, and so we sing of the Messiah’s coming as the world waits in silence “the day when hope shall sing its triumph.” Find a way to break through the darkness and silence in your world today, and discover Christ in that activity, reaching out and breaking through. Today’s Readings: Sirach 48:1–4, 9–11; Psalm 80: 2ac, 3b, 15–16, 18–19; Matthew 17:9a, 10–13.
ADVENT REFLECTION

THE ANNUNCIATION

“Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.’”
Luke 1:38

How do we know God’s will?
How do we say “YES” to God?

Mary serves as a role model for us in being open to God. She listens, receives, and responds to God’s Word. Join us as we explore Mary’s “yes” and how to respond to God’s call in our own lives.

Tuesday, December 13
7:00-8:30 pm
Brioschi Hall
with Fr. Mike Byron

Please call the parish office by December 12 if you plan to attend so we can prepare appropriately for hospitality.
JOIN US FOR YOGA!

Saturday, December 17 at 3:00PM
In the OLD CHURCH

Join Studio 925 Yoga for a faith-based yoga class focused on slowing down this Advent season by praying, praising and practicing in the presence of the Lord.

**What is yoga?**

Yoga is an ancient Hindu tradition that combines the practice of breathing with meditation and a series of physical postures.

**Who can practice yoga?**

Everybody! Despite the common misperception of yoga being sets of advanced postures that challenge physics, yoga is something that can be practiced by everybody no matter what their age or physical condition. The most important part of any yoga practice is breathing.

*Yoga mats are provided—or bring your own!*

I would like to invite everybody from St. Pascal’s to come and practice together before Mass. The cost is open. We recommend $8 each, but everyone is welcome! If you have any questions, feel free to contact Shane Lefler at shane.lefler@stpascals.org