God’s love knows no barriers. St. Pascal’s...where all people matter.

Welcome! We hope you enjoy your time with us. Whether you are just visiting, looking for a parish home or already part of our faith community, it’s great to have you with us. Whatever your life circumstances, wherever you have been or whatever has happened in your life, you are welcome here. Please join us after Sunday Mass for hospitality and to find out more.
Dear Friends:

Advent can be a time of new beginnings. We are winding up a year that has been filled with hate speech, violence, deception and shame in our public life. Threats of nuclear war, allegations of sexual assault among public figures, deliberate destruction of other peoples' character and reputation, indifference to the plight of the poor and immigrant, the empowerment of racist groups and attitudes. 2017 will not be remembered as a year in which we demonstrated our greatest virtue as a nation.

One of the things that all of this has demonstrated to me is the potential evil that is embedded within social media, which has fueled the flames of so much of it all. I don’t do Twitter or Snapchat or Facebook or any of that stuff. In fact really don’t understand it—just not the technological part of it, but the purpose of it. If a person wishes to express a heartfelt opinion about an important matter, why would he or she send it electronically into the anonymous wide world of cyberspace, where there can be no meaningful discourse about anything? Why wouldn’t such a person sit down across the table from a trusted friend—or even an adversary—and seek wisdom while sipping on coffee? An electronic rant really accomplishes very little and it can stir up great mistrust and hatred. And even in those occasional episodes when I have sent off angry emails to public authorities about various issues, trying to be more personally directive about it, I have learned that they simply get ignored. That accomplishes nothing and maybe makes things worse by ratcheting up the frustration level on all sides. This past year I have emailed at least a few impassioned messages to various officials in the City of St. Paul. In no case was the communication even acknowledged. That didn’t help.

But Advent can be a time of new beginnings. It is a season of anticipation, but it’s not like Lent. In Lent we are a bit more clear about what such a season involves: repentance, prayer, fasting, almsgiving. But what does Advent call out of us in terms of behaviors while waiting? For me it can be an invitation to step away from patterns of living and interacting that aren’t proving to be very beneficial. Like communicating important things via electronic devices. That is certainly a notion that cuts against the grain of what is presumed to be useful, but Advent is at least about putting forward a vision of what and how we might be together that is different from what already is. There really is no substitute for real human conversation about things that matter, no matter how inefficient or time consuming that may seem to be. I hope to use this season to do more of that, and to spend less time typing on a keyboard.

This past week I noticed the obituary of a man whom I’ve not seen in 25 years. He was the father of students that I taught in high school long ago, and here’s the reason why I remember him so well. He and his wife wanted their five kids to know how to live with and befriend people who were poorer than they and not as privileged as white Americans. So they bought a house in the heart of the Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis and raised the family there, amid all of that racial diversity and economic hardship. He believed that you don’t solve the problem of racism or classism by blogging or tweeting about it. You put yourself physically into the midst of it, and get to know your neighbors. There was risk in that—I recall him speaking of gunfire that would occasionally interrupt the night—but it was what he felt he needed to do as a Catholic agent of God’s Reign. Not for everybody, of course, but an unforgettable witness to me. And I will use his memory as an impetus to try to live Advent more as a real person than as a screen name.

Fr. Mike Byron

From Fr. Mike

Many of you have inquired about the young girl about whom I preached last month, whose life was threatened by cancer and who was in a coma. The good news is that she’s now re-awakened. The bad news is that she has a very long road ahead for healing. Some of her loved ones have organized a mail blast for her, to help her with her spirits in her healing. If you’d like to do something to help in encouraging her, please just send along, together with prayers, a card or letter: Amara Strande, Room 7491, Children’s Hospital, Minneapolis MN 55404. God has been great in giving her life. This is something we can do to express our hope in this season.

Parish Advent Reconciliation
Tuesday, December 5 at 6:30 pm
Plan to join us on this evening as we celebrate God’s love and forgiveness. There will be about 16 children celebrating the sacrament for the first time. This is an opportunity for the community to embrace these children, leading them to the sacrament by your example. A number of priests will be present to hear individual confessions. A social will follow in Brioschi Hall.

CAN YOU HELP? Tuesday, December 5 & 12
We are in need of people to provide cookies and bars for the socials following the Advent Reconciliation Service and the Advent Reflection. Volunteers are also needed to help with set up, serving, and clean up. If you are able to assist with any of this, please contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

Women’s Club Christmas Brunch
December 9 at 11:00 AM at Tinucci’s
All women of St Pascal’s Parish are invited. BUY your tickets (only $23) this weekend—our reservation must be made by Monday, December 4! Don’t miss our fun-filled brunch and enjoy fellowship and share the Christmas spirit! Questions call Ellen Aeling at 307.8241.

Women’s Club Christmas Bake Sale
December 16 and 17 after all Masses
Necessary: Baked Goodies and of course Christmas goodies buyers! Calling all bakers to make your favorite Christmas treat. Baked goods can be dropped off before all Masses. Everyone—please come check out our fantastic array of Christmas treats! Questions please call Ellen Aeling at 307.8241.

Baptized in Christ

We welcome into our community of faith

Alexa Rose LeMay
child of Michael and Briana

who was recently Baptized in our church.

May God bless this household of faith.

Living Faith Devotional Books for January-March 2018
Booklets are now available for $1.25 each. They can be picked up in the parish office or on the usher’s stand outside of the worship space.
Thank you for your generosity.

**OUR SCHOOL**

**Thank you for your support during Give to the Max Day**—together we raised $10,225 for St. Pascal's School. Your gifts make it possible for us to continue to provide a quality education focused on academic excellence, high moral standards, and faith development for our students. Thank you for your generosity.

**Spaghetti Dinner Thanks** We raised more than $1200 from the Spaghetti Dinner November 19. Proceeds will help to offset costs of the 7/8th grade trip to Washington D.C. in the spring. Thank you for supporting our students!

**Merrick Community Services Annual Toy Drive—Now through December 11** Brighten the season for families struggling with poverty by taking part in the toy drive—new to St. Pascal's this year. You can place new, unwrapped toys and gifts for children and teens in the bin located in the gathering space area outside the church. The toys will be distributed to families in need on St. Paul's eastside. Thanks for your generosity.

**Santa Shop for St. Pascal's School Students**

*Tuesday - Thursday, December 5, 6, & 7*

**We need volunteers** to help students shop and cashiers. Any amount of time you would like to spend helping is greatly appreciated.

**The Santa Shop will be open for shoppers on:**

- Tuesday, December 5 from 12:30 - 3:30 PM
- Wednesday, December 6 from 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- Thursday, December 7 from 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

For more information or to sign up, please contact Barb Odhiambo (1st Grade teacher) at barb.odhiambo@stpascals.org or Sarah Mathis at the Welcome Desk at sarah.mathis@stpascals.org or 776.0092.

**Women's Book Club Holiday Gathering—Monday, December 11 at 7:00 PM**

The ladies will share some Christmas goodies and a discussion of A Christmas Guest by Anne Perry in the Staff Lounge. All parish women are invited to join the group for its monthly discussions. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month. Contact Toni Baker at 731.7763 or toni@bakers.us for a list of the 2018 selections or for more information. Make a New Year's resolution to join the group on January 8 and get yourself reading. Feel free to start early by coming this month!

**Advent Reflection with Fr. Mike Byron: Where is Jesus in the Old Testament?**

*Tuesday, December 12 in Brioschi Hall from 10:00 AM - 12 Noon OR 7:00 - 9:00 PM*

Two options! Choose the best for you.

Christians claim that the Word of God, Jesus Christ, existed before time began (John 1). And yet we also claim that he was born of Mary in a specific moment in history, in Israel about 2,000 years ago (Luke 1). It raises an interesting question as to who, how, and where this Jesus-Christ-Word was in the meantime. As part of our Advent reflection, we will explore some of the ways that the Church has tried to come to grips with this deep Mystery, and how we have come to recognize him in some of the literature of the Hebrew Bible.

Please contact the parish office by **Monday, December 11** if you plan to attend so we can prepare appropriately for hospitality. You can also sign up online from the parish website or go to stpascals.weshareonline.org.

**FAITH FORMATION**

**Confirmation I—9th Grade Families**

Recently, a mailing was sent to families of 9th graders regarding registration for confirmation. If you have 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. Registration forms are due Monday, December 18.

**Mission Trip Fundraiser: Davanni’s Night! Eastside Davanni’s (310 White Bear Ave.)**

*Monday, December 11 from 4:00 - 8:00 PM*

A group of youth and adults from St. Pascal’s and Blessed Sacrament will be travelling to Nashville for a mission trip through Catholic Heart Workcamp in July 2018.

Come enjoy dinner out and help us get to Nashville! With a ticket, 20% of your total order (before tax) will go to support our youth and adult participants. Dinner tickets will be in the December 10 bulletin, and available at the welcome desk, parish kiosks, and on the parish website. For more information contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

**Parish Communication**

**Bulletin Notices**

Please email notices to the parish office by 3:00 PM Monday—hard copy notices must be in by 2:00 PM. Email to thea.munoz@stpascals.org.

Inserts are limited to 3 inserts per weekend and are included at the discretion of the pastor.

**Mass Announcements**

Direct to Sharon Balcom by 3:00 PM on Wednesday.
Heart Questions

God is faithful; by him you were
called into the fellowship of his Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

Adults: How do you know when
you’re following Christ and living his
teachings faithfully?

Kids: What good thing might God
be asking you to do right now?

REMEMBER SOMEONE IN A SPECIAL WAY
THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

You may purchase a plant or make a donation (any amount) in
honor of a family member, loved one or someone who is ill or
homebound. 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!

Stewardship of Treasure

Financial Gifts – July-October, 2017

For fiscal year July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Parish (July - October)

Income $534,545.17
Expenses $444,670.06

(Parish expenses do not include school support)

School (July-October)

Income $248,793.95
Parish Support $188,198.64 (not to exceed $251,000)
Expenses $436,992.59

Thank you for your continued support.

Questions? Please let me know.

—Theresa Ruttger, Parish Administrator

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Mass Times & Intentions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 05</td>
<td>7:30 AM</td>
<td>Donna Raley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 06</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Terry Lemke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 07</td>
<td>7:30 AM</td>
<td>Mary Ann &amp; Harvey Schaefer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, December 08</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>People of the Parish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, December 09</td>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Patricia Kurtz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 10</td>
<td>8:45 AM</td>
<td>People of the Parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Tom Genza</td>
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</tbody>
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Readings

December 03, 2017

Sunday:
Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2b-7
Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
1 Cor 1:3-9
Mk 13:33-37
Monday:
Is 2:1-5
Ps 122:1-9
Mt 8:5-11
Tuesday:
Is 11:1-10
Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday:
Is 25:6-10a
Ps 23:1-6
Mt 15:29-37
Thursday:
Is 26:1-6
Ps 118:1-8, 9, 19-21, 25-27a
Mt 7:21, 24-27
Friday:
Immaculate Conception
Gn 3:9-15, 20
Ps 98:1-4
Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Lk 1:26-38
Saturday:
Is 30:19-21, 23-26
Ps 147:1-6
Mt 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8
Next Sunday:
Is 40:1-5, 9-11
Ps 85:9-14
2 Pt 3:8-14
Mk 1:1-8

Today’s readings may not be what you expect as this season of hope and longing begins. Two general themes unfold during Advent: the first two Sundays invite the Church to reflect on the Second Coming of Christ, while the final two Sundays direct our attention more specifically to the Incarnation. Along with the readings, be attentive to the Collects, or Opening Prayers, during the next few weeks, to notice these themes.

The overarching theme for today is “Keep alert.” The First Reading, a communal lament (63:16b–17, 19) and a prayer (64:2–7), focuses our attention on a hurting world. When there is suffering, it is easy to complain or become cynical and forget God’s faithfulness. St. Paul is telling us that in Christ we have already received the gifts we need to remain faithful during this life, this in between time. This is important information as we look to the Gospel. Jesus is very clear that we do not know the day or time of the Second Coming. Like the servants whose master is away, we have been charged to continue preaching the Good News, to keep our “house” in good working order.

We must remain watchful so that at that final hour, we may be found ready to give all glory and honor to the living God. This week, as you prepare your Jesse tree, consider the ways our ancestors were watchful and remained faithful. What might help you remain vigilant?

Waiting

O God, you are the maker of heaven and earth, the potter who fashioned all of creation. Come and rouse our hearts from despair and fill us with the light of faith as we await your return. Grant us patient perseverance during this period of waiting so that, having been enriched by Christ Jesus, we may joyfully and faithfully live in this world. Keep us vigilant in our daily living. Wipe away all darkness so our hearts may be made holy and pure.

Like our ancestors in faith, we cry out to you to come and save us! Filled with hope, we trust that all creation will be made new on the day of your return. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Monday, December 4
Peace
At the beginning of Advent, the Church invites us to ponder the Reign of God. The First Reading paints an image of God gathering and instructing the nations. God’s instruction leads the nations to unity and peace. Our world continues to be divided so we must continue to pray for peace and strive to make known the Reign of God. Also, do you notice a familiar text in the Gospel? We say this prayer before receiving Holy Communion. At dinner, take some time to discuss this phrase and its relation to the Eucharistic table. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 2:1–5; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4b, 4cd–5, 6–7, 8–9; Matthew 8:5–11.

Tuesday, December 5
Jesus Revealer of the Father
In today’s Gospel, we see Jesus rejoicing over what God has revealed to the disciples. To understand the reference the reader needs to read verse 17 of the chapter, which describes a battle between good and evil. Like the disciples, we must be watchful, work for justice, and fend off evil. Those who have seen Christ know the Father. Today, create a Jesse tree with your family and discuss Christ’s role in salvation. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Luke 10:21–24.

Wednesday, December 6
St. Nicholas
The message of the First Reading and Gospel helps us understand St. Nicholas’ desire to serve the poor and needy. Jesus, whose love is overflowing, inspired Nicholas to give generously to others. Instead of seeking gifts today, read about St. Nicholas and decide how your family might share its resources with the poor. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 25:6–10a; Psalm 23: 1–3a, 3b–4, 5, 6; Matthew 15:29–37.

Thursday, December 7
St. Ambrose
Advent invites us to look into our hearts to discern our willingness to listen and to respond to God’s call. The readings today tell us that only the just will enter God’s Kingdom and stand firm amidst adversity. Is your heart open to the Father’s will? In what ways do you struggle to listen and respond to God? Take time today to journal and name ways you are living the Father’s will. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 26:1–6; Psalm 118:1 and 8–9, 19–21, 2–27a; Matthew 7:21, 24–27.

Friday, December 8
The Immaculate Conception
Today’s solemnity celebrates God’s grace working in Mary that kept her free of sin from the moment of her conception. The Gospel passage helps us understand that throughout her life she cooperates with God’s grace. Confronted by the angel Gabriel, she puts aside her entire self and says yes. She is the New Eve, the mother of all the living. Unlike Eve in Genesis, Mary humbly and obediently accepts God’s will and brings forth life in Jesus. After dinner, sing the Magnificat and discuss the powerful images. Today’s Readings: Genesis 3:9–15, 20, Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12; Luke 1:26–38.

Saturday, December 9
Discipleship
Jesus, in today’s Gospel, commissions the disciples to “cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons” as part of their mission to proclaim the Reign of God. In Baptism each of us was commissioned to live in such a way that our lives proclaim the Good News. What does it look like to “cure” the sick or “drive out” demons today? Jesus is calling us to go to the margins and proclaim God’s Reign. Today, consider celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 30:19–21, 23–26; Psalm 147:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Matthew 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6–8.