

December 20, 2020

Dear Parishioners and Friends, Near and Far,

Praying you are staying safe and healthy and happy as we are just hours from Christmas. I am slowly recovering from the Browns loss to the Ravens on Monday night, but it was a respectable game for us!

The vaccine is on its way, however we still have to be very careful. The last pandemic in our country was a little over 100 years ago. But here is a [scientific phenomenon](#) that hasn't happened in 800 years! The "Christmas Star" will be visible on December 21. We can experience the same awe as the Three Wise Men when they looked to the sky and saw the "Star of Bethlehem". Jupiter and Saturn will appear to almost collide in a phenomenon scientists referred to as a "conjunction", making them look like an incredibly bright "double planet". This probably won't happen again until 2080! All of my priesthood years I have kept Three Wise Men figures in my room all year round to remind me and others that every day should be like Christmas.

One of my favorite quotes is from [John Ruskin](#), a British social critic who said, "You will know you have been in the presence of a Christian by the trail of light that they leave behind". I think of Mary as the first Christian and she sure leaves a trail of light behind! You notice that the Gospel this Sunday is the same as December 8, the Feast of her Immaculate Conception. Mary is always in the light! What if Mary had said "no" to the angel? When have we said "no" to God because it was uncomfortable or seemingly demanded too much change on my part? Advent, with just a few days left, invites us to reflect on how we will say "yes" to God in the coming year; to be born again. Jesus became incarnate in the body of Mary and showed us God's saving love. As we celebrate and receive the Eucharist physically or spiritually, may we also be the body of Christ for the world.

Just a reminder to be at a safe distance in church especially when receiving the Eucharist. We are not in a hurry! Thanks again to all who help us by ushering or sanitizing. Please keep your kneeler down when leaving the church.

A little weekend humor:

What happened to the man who stole an Advent calendar?
He got 25 days!

What kind of motorcycle does Santa ride?
A Holly Davidson!!

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
Frostbite!

Have a very blessed and happy Christmas from the staff and me!
Go Browns on Sunday night!!

With Him and His Mom,

Fr. Bob