

Siena Circular



December 4, 2007

What Christians mean...by this word "Advent"...is: God is there. He has not withdrawn from the world. He has not left us alone. Even though we cannot see him or touch him as we can the things that surround us, he is still there and, what is more, he comes to us in many different ways.

Pope Benedict XVI

Dear Parents,

While visiting one of the first grade classrooms last week and observing a fantastic math lesson which involved using M&M's for data gathering and presentation (creating tally charts and bar graphs and identifying the range, mode, and median!), I overheard this conversation between two budding mathematicians:

"I am going to save all the green ones [M&M's] for my brother – green is his favorite color."

"My sister's favorite color is yellow – I am going to save all the yellow ones for her."

Call me sentimental, but I wanted to cry for joy at witnessing the spontaneous actions of these two little ones of remembering the presence of their siblings in their lives and sharing a treat with them.

I would like to think this incident was a gift from God to remind me of the meaning of Advent. Advent, Pope Benedict points out, means "presence"; it is a time for recognizing the Presence of God amidst the seeming darkness of our life. The Pope writes: "Advent reminds us...that God's presence in the world has already begun, that He is present though in a hidden manner...and we, the faithful, are the ones through whom He wishes to be present in the world. Through our faith, hope, and love He wants His light to shine over and over again in the night of the world."

Truly, I believe those two first graders were inspired by God to teach us that, though He may seem far away, He is always present to us and wants us to think of Him spontaneously through our day and offer Him (not M&M's) but similar little acts of love. I pray that especially during this Advent when, like Mary during the nine months of Christ's silent growth in her womb, we will nurture the growth of the Presence of Christ in us by various simple acts of love: responding with a kind word to someone who rubbed us the wrong way, spending extra time in prayer, receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Prayer Corner

Please pray for:

- Pope Benedict's general intention for December: For those suffering from AIDS – that society may care for those stricken with AIDS, especially women and children, and that the Church may help them feel the Lord's love.
- Pope Benedict's missionary intention for December: For Asia – that the Incarnation of the Son of God may help the peoples of Asia recognize Jesus as God's Envoy, the only Savior of the world.
- Victims of the Bangladesh cyclone
- Recovery from surgery for Archbishop Gregory
- The Taylor Family (Mr. and Mrs. Mark Taylor)
- The McNally Family

Calendar at a Glance

Wednesday, December 5

- School Mass (5B); * parent coffee for 5B and 5A

Thursday, December 6

- Academic Fair (Awards Ceremony) @ 6:30 p.m. – 3rd Grade Boys Basketball practice is cancelled for this day.

Friday, December 7

- 1st Friday Exposition in school chapel (8:30-2:30)
- Scrip orders due @ noon

Wednesday, December 12

- School Mass (8A)

Friday, December 14

- 2nd Quarter midterm reports distributed
- Scrip orders pick up from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

* The Geography Bee is changed to Friday, January 11th, 2008.

SCRIP

Wal-Mart Scrip is now available! Please consider purchasing Scrip to benefit SCS (and so that your child's class may win out-of-uniform passes!)

VISITORS

A friendly reminder: For the safety of all students, all visitors should sign in and out at the front desk and put on a name tag when entering the school building during the school day. Thank you.

ARCHDIOCESAN POLICY MANUAL

The newly approved and published Archdiocesan Policy Manual, which contains some updated and/or new policies for all archdiocesan Catholic schools, is now available in the Media Center. Parents are welcome to access the manual by visiting the Media Center.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year's Christmas parties for all classes will take place on the last day of school before the Christmas holiday on Friday, December 21, from 10:30 – 11:45. Noon dismissal will follow. The exception will be the kindergarten classes, who will have their Christmas party on Thursday, December 20 in conjunction with their Polar Express Day lessons.

FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

Parents are invited to drop by the school chapel on First Fridays for Adoration. Each class spends some time praying in the presence of Christ exposed in the Blessed Sacrament on First Fridays. What an excellent way for parents to model prayer and devotion to the Eucharist to our students. Our next First Friday Adoration will be this Friday, December 7, from 8:30 – 2:30. Please contact Claudia Chandler (hcchandler@yahoo.com) for more information.

CHOIR

In order to prepare better for Advent and Christmas music, Ms. Khan will be holding extra, *optional* SCS School Mass Choir (grades 4-8) practices. The practice schedule for the next few weeks will be as follows:

- Thursday, November 29 (*regular practice*)
- Friday, November 30 (*optional practice*)
- Thursday, December 6 (*regular practice*)
- Friday, December 7 (*optional practice*)
- Thursday, December 13 (*regular practice*)

Angel Choir will be cancelled on Wednesday, December 19.

2nd Grade Angel Choir members will be singing with the SCS School Mass Choir this Wednesday, December 5 at 9:00 a.m.

Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic School unites with family and community to provide an excellent academic and religious education, developing the whole child while encouraging individual talents and abilities in a Christ-centered environment.

In imitation of Saint Catherine, faithful daughter of the Church, we provide a formation grounded in truth through which we engage the culture, setting the world ablaze with the love of Christ.