

Advent 2014

# St. Pius X Parish WellSpring

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## Praying Advent with Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel

Advent can be a great time to reflect upon the first part of the message of Pope Francis' exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*. The heart of what Pope Francis says is contained in the opening sentence of the exhortation:

The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. [1]

Pope Francis is sharing with us the Good News itself and encouraging us to be filled with the joy which can come from believing the Gospel. It is this joy, which will change the way we live and the way we are perceived by others, which will animate our sharing of the Gospel with others.

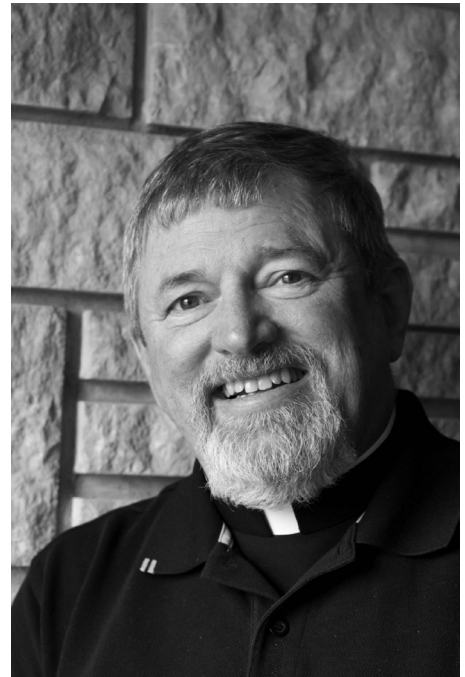
Pope Francis begins by warning us about how our culture impacts us and robs us of our joy and our compassion:

The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a

*Thanks to and credit given to Creighton University's Online Ministries from which this Advent reflection is excerpted.*



**H**ere it is Advent 2014, the beginning of a New Liturgical year. We will hear from the Gospel of Mark the first two Sundays of Advent and throughout the year as we move to the Year B cycle of Sunday readings. I always feel sorry for the season of Advent. It is caught between the tension of what it “wants” to be and what it “needs” to be. With Christmas stuff being out in the stores before Halloween it seems like a losing battle. But complaining against the commercialism that overshadows the religious observance of Advent is futile at best. I think what we need to do is recognize the fullness of this complex season and celebrate that fullness amidst all that is going on around us. Let us all remember the center of all this is Christ, the Word that came and dwelt among us. It is a time to celebrate God’s love for us. Advent is a time of joyful anticipation. It is not a mini-Lent even as it has a penitential element about it. Let us not then get dragged down about all the commercial stuff around us; but, rather let us see all the decoration and lights as a pre-celebration of the real celebration of how the Light of Christ came to shine on us and show us The Way. Let us greet one another with the traditional Advent phrase “MARANATHA”: Come Lord Jesus Come!



***Father Wayne***

*Praying Advent with Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel, continued:*

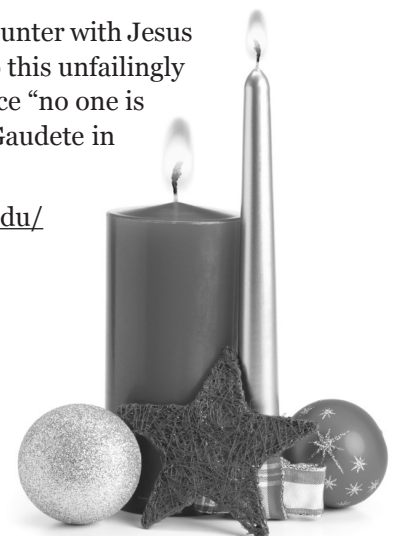
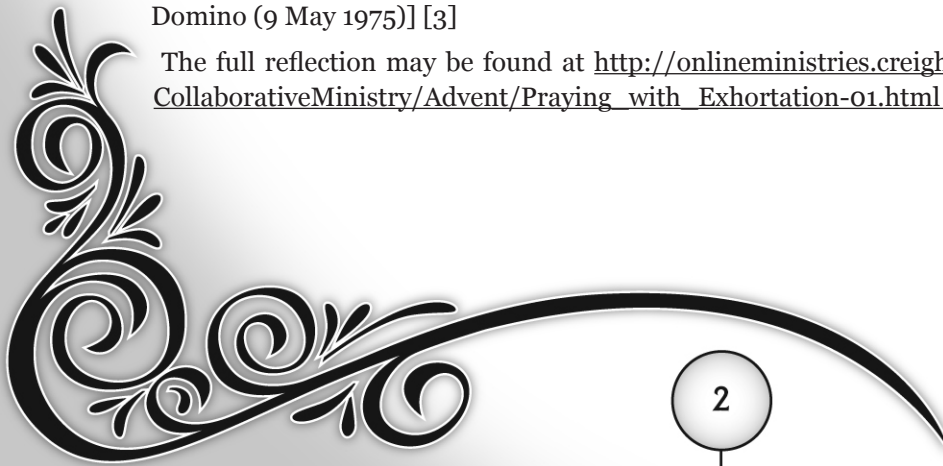
complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God’s voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades. This is a very real danger for believers too. Many fall prey to it, and end up resentful, angry and listless. That is no way to live a dignified and fulfilled life; it is not God’s will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of the risen Christ. [2]

Then, Pope Francis offers the remedy for this danger - our personal relationship with Jesus:

I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”. [ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete in

Domino (9 May 1975)] [3]

The full reflection may be found at [http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/Praying\\_with\\_Exhortation-01.html](http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/Praying_with_Exhortation-01.html)



# Advent Communal Penance Services for Billings 2014

**December 3 - 11 a.m.** Mary Queen of Peace  
**December 10 - 7 p.m.** St. Bernard's  
**December 11 - 7 p.m.** St. Pius X  
**December 16 - 7 p.m.** St. Patrick's

## Christmas Eve & Day Mass Schedule

**Nov. 30** First Sunday of Advent Masses 9am & 11am  
**Dec. 11** West End Penance Service – St. Pius X – 7pm  
**Dec 24** Christmas Eve – Masses 4pm, 6:30pm, 9pm  
**Dec. 25** Christmas Day – Mass 10am  
**Jan. 1** Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God – Mass 10 am



*Above: Parishioners partake in the parish picnic following 11am Mass on Back to Church Sunday Left: Students from St. Francis Intermediate approach the altar for Eucharist at a recent Thursday 8:30am school & parish Mass.*



# ST. PIUS OPERATIONS BUDGET

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 with budgeted amounts for the 2014 / 2015 fiscal year

	2013/2014	2013/2014	2014/2015
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Revenue:			
Parish Collections	\$1,135,516	\$1,188,344	\$1,199,461
Stipends & Stole Fees (A)	\$8,000	\$10,357	\$9,000
Other (B)	\$5,400	\$7,179	\$5,700
Total Revenue:	\$1,148,916	\$1,205,880	\$1,214,161
Expenses:			
Salaries & Benefits (C)	\$531,405	\$524,362	\$541,329
School Support (D)	\$210,861	\$210,861	\$210,902
Occupancy (E)	\$163,400	\$189,926	\$163,000
Tithing (F)	\$56,600	\$50,032	\$67,000
Care and Share Shortfall (G)	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Diocesan Tax (H)	\$56,900	\$54,145	\$84,000
Priest Retirement Fund (I)	\$19,000	\$23,931	\$30,630
Youth Formation Ministries	\$32,500	\$32,298	\$33,800
Liturgy and Music	\$49,000	\$50,984	\$50,600
Other (J)	\$24,250	\$25,429	\$27,900
Total Expenses:	\$1,148,916	\$1,161,968	\$1,214,161
Excess Revenue over Expenses (K)		\$43,912	

**Capital Improvement account balance as of 6-30-2014** **\$336,145**

**Cemetery Endowment account balance as of 6-30-2014** **\$333,976**

**Ministry Endowment account balance as of 6-30-2014** **\$213,769**

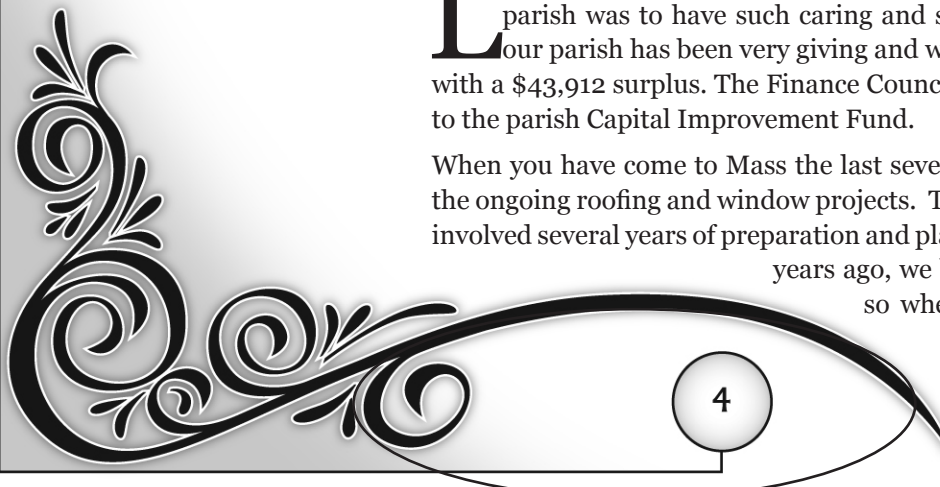
**Fr. Steve Tokarski Scholarship Endowment on 6-30-2014** **\$38,685**

**Total Endowed Funds as of 6-30-2014** **\$586,430**

Last year when I made my report to the parish, I mentioned how blessed our parish was to have such caring and supportive parishioners. Once again our parish has been very giving and we ended the June 30, 2014 fiscal year with a \$43,912 surplus. The Finance Council has taken this surplus and added it to the parish Capital Improvement Fund.

When you have come to Mass the last several weeks you have no doubt noticed the ongoing roofing and window projects. The roof project is an expense that has involved several years of preparation and planning by the Finance Council. Many years ago, we began setting aside annual surpluses so when the day came to pay for the new

*Continued on pg. 5*



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# ANNUAL BUDGET INFORMATION

- A. Offerings for weddings, baptisms, funerals and Mass Intentions.
- B. Fees for baptism / marriage preparation, fellowship hall rental and interest income.
- C. We currently have 21 full and part-time employees on our parish staff.
- D. Our parish assessment for the Billings Catholic Schools.
- E. Utilities, maintenance, supplies, taxes and insurance for our church, the parish center and the youth center.
- F. Support for Peru Mission, assistance to needy families, local appeals and other charitable causes.
- G. When the Diocesan Care & Share assessment is not met by donations from parishioners, the shortfall must come out of the parish operations budget. Thanks to your support of Care and Share we were able to meet our assessment this year without affecting the operating budget.
- H. The diocese has a 7% tax on parish income for diocesan operations.
- I. The diocese has implemented a parish assessment which funds the retirement plan for all priests of the diocese.
- J. RCIA, baptism / marriage preparation and parish life activities.
- K. Thanks to your generosity, we ended the fiscal year with \$43,912 in surplus which we were able to deposit into our Capital Improvement Fund. Our Capital Improvement Fund ended the fiscal year with a balance of \$336,145 which enabled us to plan payment for much needed replacement of the church roof and repairs to the sanctuary windows without having to borrow funds. The work on these two big projects will be completed by the end of the year and be fully paid for!

***Thank you for your generosity!***

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roof the funds would be available. As mentioned in the Annual Budget Information, that planning has paid off and the funds are available to fully pay for this large expense in addition to paying for the necessary repairs to our windows.

Of course, no amount of planning would be effective without funds being available. The truth is, it is the generosity of the St. Pius parishioners that have made this a possibility. On behalf of the Finance Council, thank you for your continued support, it is very much appreciated.

God Bless,

***Dan Miller***, Finance Council Chair

# EDUCATION COMMISSION TRANSITION UPDATE

**F**our years ago Father Steve commissioned former St. Pius the X staff member, Karyn Haider to form a task force that confronted the immediate and long term goals of parish formation opportunities. The parish education commission was inactive at the initiation of the Task Force. Members of the Task Force included staff, parishioners and Billings Catholic Campus Ministries. Father Wayne continued the Task Force after Father Steve passed away. The need for the Task Force was to focus on immediate issues like parent involvement in sacramental prep and the overwhelming need for adult faith formation. The Task Force's mission concluded in the spring of 2014 after interviewing the parish on the needs of the community through a guided process. Those interviews acted as a compass for the Task Force's transition into the current Education Commission.

Our current commission has been working hard to align the goals of formation with the greater parish vision. Some of our immediate tasks include updating the parish library with new and contemporary materials, assisting parish groups with identifying formation materials and developing a commission mission statement. Current members of the commission include Ryan Davis, Cheri Smithlin, Jennifer Mack, Jessie Rohrer, Judi Pike, Kim Komar, Mary Beth Brotzel, Mary Flynn, Vicki Langlinais and Don James.



*Father Wayne takes a pie in the face during the youth group kick-off.*

## MISSION STATEMENT EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Education Commission is responsible for the religious education and formation of all parishioners. It is the liaison between the Parish Pastoral Council and those persons or bodies within the parish structure responsible for the various aspects of total parish religious education. Adult faith formation should be the primary focus. "An adult community whose faith is well formed and lively will more effectively pass that faith on to the next generation. In addition, adult faith formation should serve as the point of reference for catechesis for other age groups. It ought to be, 'the organizing principle', which gives coherence to the various catechetical programs offered by a particular church." (Quote from *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States USCCB*)

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# THE DARKER SIDE OF “TIS THE SEASON”

**A**s a people we are hopefully becoming more aware of the painful reality that the holiday season from Thanksgiving through New Years can be a time of deep depression for friends and loved ones. We hope that the stories of our parish community's life can be ones of joy and thanksgiving. Yet often our stories include pain. So what can we do to help one another? The following information is provided by our Parish Nurses:

Your sister wants you to come over so she can give you her cherished Beatles record collection. A fellow worker declines a second invitation to watch the Broncos game with you. Should you be concerned? Maybe. Giving away prized possessions and choosing not to interact with others, MAY be a sign that a person is considering suicide. If you are concerned, it is appropriate to ask if the person is considering suicide or hurting her or himself; asking the suicide question does not increase the risk of suicide. Should the person respond, 'yes' please stay with the person. If the threat is imminent call 911; otherwise call the Mental Health Center at 252-5658 or the National Lifeline at 800-273-8255.

There are other more subtle signs that a person may need help. Montana ranks high in the incidence of depression, and depression is one of the leading causes of suicide. Some signs of depression include: loss of energy, hopelessness, persistent sadness ( without another explanation), persistent fatigue, persistent guilt, irritability, inability to concentrate, decreased interest in day to day activities, significant change of body weight, inability to get some sleep or excessive sleeping. Should you see these in others or in yourself please suggest they talk to their health care provider or seek counseling from a mental health professional. Help is available. You can call Billings Clinic Behavioral Health at 252-8550; St. Vincent Healthcare Behavioral Health at 237-3585 or the Mental Health Center at 252-5658.

Sometimes no matter what we do a friend or family member follows through and commits suicide. It is important that we forgive ourselves. It is equally important that we find someone with whom we can talk about our feelings. That person can be a friend or relative or a mental health professional.

Some history of suicide in our state:

Did you know that Montana has ranked among the top five states for completed suicide for decades? Montanans commit suicide at nearly twice the national rate. Military veterans, American Indians, senior citizens and teenagers are more likely to commit suicide than others in the general populations.

Have you ever wondered why so many Montanans attempt and complete suicide? There are four major reasons: social isolation, incidence of depression, method used and high alcohol use. For the full details on these four aspects and more statistical data, please check the parish website:

<http://www.stpiusxblgs.org/how-we-serve/outreach-ministries/parishnurses>

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## ***Watching the Sunrise During Dark, Mornings of Advent***

“...It is hard getting up these dark mornings, Lord, and yet you gift me with a sight that I miss at other times of year, when the weather is warmer and the sun rises before I get up. I stared out the window at the red and purple light, gloriously framed by the gold of the rising sun. "Be still, and know that I am God" was the only thing that came to me. I watched in silence, filled with a sense of your presence in my life...

*The full version of this prayer and more Advent prayers: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/>*





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## Mark Your Calendars:

- Nov. 22 – Dec. 7..... Christmas Angels
- Nov. 28 until sold out ..... Knights of Columbus Tree Lot
- Nov. 23..... Bread of Life Mass 11am
- Nov. 24..... Senior Fellowship – 7pm FH
- Nov. 26..... Vigil Thanksgiving Mass 7pm
- Nov.27-28 ..... Parish Offices Closed for Thanksgiving
- Dec. 5 ..... Youth Ministry Disco Bowling – Jr. High
- Dec. 6 ..... Youth Ministry Toys for Tots – High School & Jr. High
- Dec. 6 & 7 ..... Food Bank Weekend
- Dec. 6 & 7, 13&14 ..... St. Anthony’s Religious Items for Sale in FH
- Dec. 8 ..... Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation) 7pm
- Dec.11 ..... West End Penance Service – St. Pius X 7pm
- Dec.13 & 14..... Catholic Daughters Bake Sale – FH
- Dec.14..... 9am & 11 am Masses – Baptisms
- Dec.15..... Family Fun Night & Prayer Service – FH & Sanctuary
- Dec.22 ..... Senior Fellowship FH
- Dec.24 Noon - Dec.26..... Parish Offices Closed for Christmas
- Dec. 28 ..... Bread of Life Mass 11am



### 2015

- Jan 1..... Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation) 10 am Mass
- Jan. 1 & 2..... Parish Offices Closed for New Years
- Jan. 3 & 4 ..... Food Bank Weekend
- Jan. 25 – Feb 1... Family Promise Host Week
- Jan. 25..... Bread of Life Mass 11am
- Jan. 26 ..... Senior Fellowship 7pm FH
- Feb. 1 & 2..... Food Bank Weekend
- Feb. 9 ..... Family Fun Night - FH
- Feb. 18 .....Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 18 – Mar. 28 .....Lenten Small Group Study  
“Living the Eucharist”

