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Good News!

December 11, 2016
 Third Sunday of Advent
 Is 35:1-6a, 10, Jas 5:7-10, Mt 11:2-11

John came to announce a savior, but in his difficult imprisonment, he and his disciples began to wonder if the one he announced was truly the one. It is easy to doubt when difficulty comes our way and life doesn't treat us as we think we deserve.

In this painting, a young John the Baptist is accompanied by an angel who points up the hill. John is shown kneeling in prayer, referencing the months he spent in the desert preparing himself as well as preaching conversion. Even with this long and fruitful preparation, John's heart is tempted to doubt. Yes, even saints struggle.

John sends his disciples to ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. It does us much good to bring our concerns and doubts to Jesus directly! Jesus responds as he often does. Rather than just answer, "I am he"—which could easily be considered an empty claim—he invites them to look at the evidence. He fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 35:5: "The eyes of the blind shall see, and the ears of the deaf be opened," the poor shall find a new reason to hope.

Jesus' mission is to change lives and to save us from the blindness of egoism, the deafness of a hardened heart, and the closed mind that cannot accept the other. He is the savior of those who let themselves be saved.

Saint James' exhortation could have been meant for John the Baptist or anyone who finds it hard to persevere in trusting and following Jesus: "You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand" (5:8).

For Reflection: What doubts about God arise in my heart? How do I deal with these moments of uncertainty?

Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

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Please feel free to copy the form as needed

Your Name (Please Print: _____)

Address: _____

City/St/ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

To designate your gift be in Memory/Honor/Gratitude of someone special, complete the following information. It is our desire and pleasure to send a post card notifying a loved one or friend of your special recognition.

In Memory / Honor / Gratitude (please circle)

1. Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____
i.e. of your Mother, Name: Jan

Person to notify: _____ Relationship to honoree: _____
(if other than yourself)

Address: _____ City/St/ZIP _____

In Memory / Honor / Gratitude (please circle)

2. Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____
i.e. of your Mother, Name: Jan

Person to notify: _____ Relationship to honoree: _____
(if other than yourself)

Address: _____ City/St/ZIP _____

The angels may be picked up at St. Albert School after Christmas Eve Mass and thru Jan. 8th or at the parish office beginning Jan. 10 to Jan. 31. Remaining angels will be donated.

Number of angels purchased _____

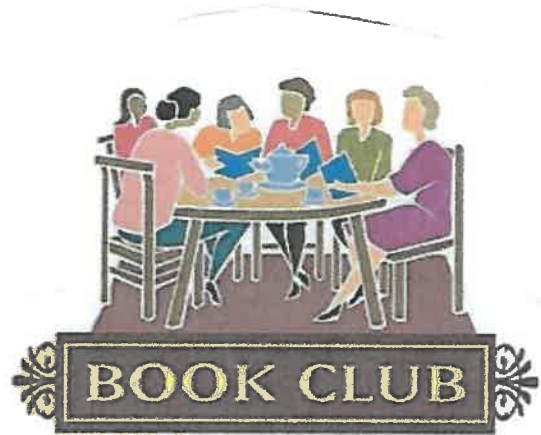
Enclosed is my payment of \$15 per Angel: Cash \$ _____ Check #: _____ Payable to St Patrick Parish

Thank you for your support to the St. Patrick Parish Angel Tree Program

Mail form to Yvonne Willadsen, 16 Norwood Ct, Council Bluffs, IA 51503 Phone: 402-980-6994



Women's Book Study



The purpose of St. Patrick's Women's Book Study is to grow spirituality, foster friendships, and build community among the women in our parish by reading and discussing current Catholic literature. The Book Study is expanding and open to additional members.

Groups are forming now for the 2017 semester; you may join an existing group or form your own. Groups consist of 5 to 10 women who meet biweekly either during the day or in the evening. The 2017 sessions will begin the week of January 9.

The next book is "Walking with Purpose" by Lisa Brenninkmeyer; followed by "Life's Greatest Lesson" by Allen Hunt. Our first book "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World" by JoAnna Weaver will be offered again in a daytime session.

If you have questions, please call Jeanette Kenny at (712) 328-8330 or email at stpatrickswomen@gmail.com.

You may also sign-up after the Masses in the lobby next weekend, December 17 and 18.

PRAYER REQUEST

WE ARE HERE TO PRAY FOR YOU



We have made some progress on the expansion of the prayer chain for St. Patrick's parish. Mary Ann Wager has agreed to continue as leader of the phone prayer chain. She and 27 volunteers have been doing amazing work, and we are very fortunate to have had this ministry all these years. As Mary Ann said, "We have had some miracles happen through prayer."

Since we had 19 recent volunteers from the "Time & Talent" brochure, Father Glen agreed that it makes sense to have TWO systems: phone and email. If you wish to volunteer for phone chain, call Mary Ann 712-322-6718. If you prefer the email system, notify Jeanette Kenny at stpatrickswomen@gmail.com. A coordinator will pass prayer requests to both systems for more prayer power.

Any parishioner may make a prayer request by calling the church office, or Mary Ann. You may also request prayers on our website under "contact us" tab, or the streaming banner at the bottom of the home page.

"The earnest prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available."
James 5:16