



CHURCH OF ST. URIEL THE ARCHANGEL

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COMMUNIO ✚ COMMUNIO ✚ COMMUNIO ✚ COMMUNIO

bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. 4:2-3)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

As I write this Christmas epistle to all of you, we have just entered into the Church's season of Advent. As our new liturgical year unfolds, we are filled with joy and great expectations at the prospect of the Church's new year. Thus, season of Advent resounds with the sounds of great joy.

We have just completed a twelve week course on St. John's book, *Revelation*. When at the conclusion of the course, I asked the question, "Having now studied the *Book of Revelation*, how has this course impacted your life?" One person very quietly said, "I am not afraid anymore." Where upon another person responded, "Ditto." And then people all began to nod their heads as if to say, "Yes. Me too. I am no longer afraid."

John's records for us the words of Jesus, Jesus, "I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you." *John 14:3* That is what the betrothed does; he goes to prepare a home for his bride. This is preciously what Jesus does upon His return to the Father following His glorious ascension. He goes to prepare a place for His bride to live. Jesus tells us, "it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.." *John 14:2*

Yes, we are the Bride, the beloved of Jesus and He is our bridegroom. He lifts the veil from our face

and we are now His beloved. That is what is revealed in the *Book of Revelation*.

The book of *Genesis* begins with a tree in the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Life. At the mid-way point in time, the Church proclaims that the Tree of Life is the Cross. As the Roman soldier pierces the side of Jesus, blood and water comes forth. That blood and water, becomes for us the signs of baptism and Eucharist. That, is the fruit of the Tree of Life. The Eucharist, in its fullness is the *fruit* of the Tree of Life. It is in the blessed Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist that we participate fully in Him.

And finally, we discover in *Revelation* that again, there is the Tree of Life, at the end of the story, no longer guarded like it was back in *Genesis*, but now is there for us to live eternally with our eternal Bridegroom. This is the joy and expectation which the Christian lives in throughout our live. This is our Advent joy celebrate throughout the year.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelic Gaudium*, Pope Francis wrote, "The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ, joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy...." It is out of our great joy in Christ that we can in the word of Pope Francis, "... 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'".

What better way to enter this beautiful season when we do not so much go to meet the Lord, but when in the Incarnation, His birth amongst us, He comes to meet us.

On behalf of Cynthia, Lindsay, Elizabeth, Jamie, Audrey and Jake; and on behalf of all the priests, our deacon, and lay staff of the parish, I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and to thank you for all your love and support during my 11 years as your Rector. May this be a time of great joy for all of you and your families.

Yours in the Incarnate Lord,
Fr. Russell A. Griffin, SSC
Rector

Immaculate Conception

Tuesday – December 8,
9:30AM Mass [Lady Chapel]

Third Sunday of Advent

5PM Saturday – December 12,
Contemporary Mass
Sunday – December 13
8AM and 9:30AM Mass

St. Thomas the Apostle and Martyr

Monday – December 21,
9:30AM Mass [High Altar]
Priestly Anniversary Ordinations of:
Fathers Crothers, SSC, Myers, SSC, Griffin, SSC

Confessions: As scheduled or contact Fr. Griffin for
appointment.

CHRISTMAS LITURGIES

Christmas Eve

Thursday - December 24
5PM Mass

Christmas Day

Friday - December 25
10AM Mass

THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

Saturday – December 26
9:30AM Mass (High Altar)

Holy Family

St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

Sunday – December 27
8:00am and 9:30AM Mass

Holy Innocents

Monday – December 28
9:30AM Mass (High Altar)

The Holy Name of Jesus

The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God

Friday - January 1, 2015
9:30AM Mass (High Altar)

The Feast of the Epiphany

Wednesday - January 6, 2015
9:30AM Mass (High Altar)

Baptism of our Lord

Sunday - January 10, 2015
8AM and 9:30AM Mass

Annual Parish Meeting

Monday, January 25, 2015
6PM Mass and 7PM Meeting

Christmas Flowers

In order to have the names of loved ones included on the memorial list, please have flower memorials to St. Uriel's by Thursday, December 18th.