



Advent 2025

# Our Lady Queen of Peace Spirit

Volume 33, Number 1



**Advent: Letting the Gratitude Flow**  
is the theme of this issue of the Spirit Newsletter

**SEE INSIDE FOR:**

- Our Lady Queen of Peace Events ..... 2
- Capitol Christmas Pageant . 2
- A Night in Bethlehem ..... 2
- Connecting With Our Immigrant Neighbors..... 3
- Coming to America to Learn and Serve Others..... 4
- The History of the Our Lady Queen of Peace Church Building ..... 5
- Planted (and Growing) in God's House ..... 6-7
- Music, Praise, and Prayer.. 7
- Father Brian's Message ..... 8

## Advent: Letting the Gratitude Flow

*Submitted by Caleb Mitchell, Director of Liturgy & Pastoral Music*

As the trumpets and joy of the feast of Christ the King fade and the relatives have all gone home from our Thanksgiving feasts, we look to a new Advent season and a new liturgical year. It is no coincidence that the Advent Season begins the weekend after Thanksgiving in 2025. Thanksgiving allows us to really focus on what we are grateful for – family, friends, shelter, food, warmth – the list goes on. This Advent Season, let's focus on the theme of gratitude as we await Emmanuel, God-with-us, who is the focus of our gratitude.

Advent can be a “holy pause” for us amid the hustle and bustle of life all around us, a chance to revel in hope, wonder, and expectation. How can we express our gratitude during this season? Perhaps we could take extra time to just simply be with God in the silence of the season. What is God calling us to do? What do we need to hand over to God in this season? What can we thank God for? We know that God holds all of us, our parish community, our ministries, our prayer, our families, our workplaces, and our world together. How grateful can we be for that?!

As we continue to await Emmanuel, we can be reminded of new beginnings that Advent brings – not in the same way that Easter brings the ultimate new beginning in the Resurrection, but that we can begin anew as people of gratitude. We are given this short season to prepare our hearts to receive the Christ Child and be grateful for that gift. In a humble manger, our Redeemer was born for us – ALL of us! We get to share that great gift when we gather as a community to pray and to be in communion with each other.

This Advent, how can we grow in gratitude for what we experience here at Our Lady Queen of Peace? We are so blessed with this great community, the people who are around us, our vibrant liturgies, our programs and groups, and so much more. Here's the challenge: keep gratitude at the heart of this Advent season – our “holy pause” before the celebration of Christmas.



By day and by night, and through the circle of the seasons, you keep watch over us. O God of all hope, we praise you for this Advent season as we prepare for the coming of Emmanuel. May our Advent candles mark our waiting as they grow brighter and scatter the darkness. Around the candles we shall keep watch for your Promised One, who comes to comfort our fears and who is the reason for our gratitude. All glory be yours, O God, now and forever. Amen!

**OUR LADY  
QUEEN OF PEACE**

**ADVENT &  
CHRISTMAS  
SCHEDULE 2025**

**Advent Daily Masses**

Weekdays: 8:30 am in the Chapel  
Additional Mass Wednesdays at 5:30 pm

**Advent Weekend Masses**

Saturdays: 5:00 pm  
Sundays: 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:15 am

**Advent Private Reconciliation**

Saturdays: 3:45-4:30 pm  
Wednesdays: 4:45-5:15 pm  
Saturday, December 20: 9:00-10:00 am

**Advent Contemplative Prayer**

Wednesdays: 7:00-8:00 pm in the Chapel

**Advent Lectio Divina**

Saturdays: 9:30 am in the Chapel  
(November 29, December 6, 13, 20)

**Immaculate Conception of Mary  
Monday, December 8**

*A Holy Day of Obligation*  
6:30 am, 8:30 am\*, 7:00 pm  
\*school children will not be present

**Advent Taizé Prayer**

**Thursday, December 11**  
6:00 pm in the Chapel

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Wednesday, December 24**

- 4:00 pm: Cherub, Children's, and Contemporary Youth Choirs
- 6:30 pm: Contemporary Group With Parish Instrumentalists
- 9:00 pm: Adult Choir and Handbell Choir

**CHRISTMAS DAY\***

**Thursday, December 25**

- \*There will be no 8:00 am liturgy.
- 9:30 am: Adult Choir With Brass
- 11:15 am: Cantor With Winds

**MARY, MOTHER OF GOD**

*A Holy Day of Obligation*  
**Wednesday, December 31, at 5:30 pm**  
**Thursday, January 1, at 9:00 am**

**You are Invited to the 101st  
Capitol Christmas Pageant!**  
Sunday, December 7, at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm

Join us for this beautiful, free family-friendly event that shares the story of the Nativity with music and beauty ... featuring students from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish!



*A Night in Bethlehem*



Celebrate the coming of the Christmas Season with Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish and School at a market of Christmas activities on December 13th following the 5pm Mass and Christmas Pageant!

*Saturday, December 13*

Mass: 5:00pm

Pageant: 6:00pm

Night in Bethlehem: 6:30pm.



Our Lady  
QUEEN OF PEACE

# Connecting With Our Immigrant Neighbors Through “Journey’s Across the World: A Catholic Look at Immigration”

By Laura Green

This spring the Catholic Multicultural Center (CMC) teamed up with the Our Lady Queen of Peace and St. Thomas Aquinas parishes’ Racial Justice Committee to host a study called “Journeys Across the World: A Catholic Look at Immigration.” Over 50 participants came to this two-part series, which featured stories from CMC immigrant staff members and reviewed letters written this year by Pope Francis and the Wisconsin Bishops. “What I want to achieve is awareness in the non-immigrant community about what our immigrant brothers and sisters are going through,” said Antonio Quintanilla, CMC staff member and series co-coordinator. “At the same time, inviting people to learn about the current situation so that it’s not just something you hear about, it is something that you can see and listen from real people who are affected.”

Antonio and former CMC staff members Linda Ramirez and Jeliel Peña de First connected with parishioners to share each of their unique immigration stories and the challenges they faced as newcomers to U.S. society, and to explore immigration from a broader view. They asked the audience to reflect on the question: “For what reason or cause would you be willing to sacrifice your family, integrity, freedom, your belongings, or your cultural and religious identity?” This question, they say, is one almost all immigrants ask themselves before making the tough decision to migrate. They also shared data from a report co-authored by USCCB earlier this year stating that one in five Catholics in the U.S. currently are at risk or live with someone at risk of deportation.

Mary Malloy participated in the study and is a member of the Racial Justice Committee. “As someone who volunteers at the CMC food pantry, hearing from two people with whom I had interacted at the CMC – Antonio and Linda – made it much more personal,” Mary explained. “Linda particularly impacted me when she spoke about the difficulty of being away from family, and now feeling like family [back in Mexico] could not come visit [due to safety concerns].” Mary added that in the food pantry, she has noticed that some Hispanic mothers with young children haven’t stopped by in a while. She is concerned about whether they have left, if they are fearful to go out now, or if something has happened to them. She was grateful for the opportunity to better understand her immigrant neighbors through the lens of the Catholic faith.

“[This study] reaffirmed to me that Catholic Social Teaching is in line with what I felt in my heart,” said Mary. “I am happy with the way Pope Leo, the U.S. Bishops, and the Wisconsin Bishops continue to speak about immigration. However, I do wish we would hear it more within our own churches, including at Sunday Mass.”

QP parishioner Mary Pat Berry also attended the study series. She explained that, “This program was very helpful to me for [linking what is going on nationally] to stories here in Madison. This puts the Gospels we hear every week in a new perspective.”



Mary Pat has been a long-time advocate, volunteer, and board member for initiatives related to health and education. Through this work, she sees how Hispanics and other immigrants are being negatively impacted by recent policy changes. She explained that reading the letters by Pope Francis and the Wisconsin Bishops helped her grow in faith by looking at the Gospels in a new way. “Christ Himself was an immigrant, and I hadn’t really thought about that,” Mary Pat reflected. “He and his parents left because there was a risk to life. I feel like it’s not for me to judge [someone’s situation], but for us to make a way for people to be welcomed.”

Mary Pat said the study reminded her of her own family’s heritage. “We were all immigrants – I remember the stories my mother and her brother told me. At the German-American school they went to as kids, they were called ‘the Irish kids’ (and it wasn’t said in a positive fashion). It is important for us to think of migrants today through the lens of human dignity.”

Antonio added that he hopes that initiatives like this one intended to foster connections between recent and generations-past immigrants at local parishes will help people discern the reality about immigration in our community. “If my neighbor comes to my parish, and I go the extra mile to get to know them, then I can make my own judgment – not based on what I heard [in the news], but on what I see. My interactions with my immigrant neighbor will tell me the real story.”

Based on the success of this series at QP, CMC is working with several other area parishes to replicate this study in early 2026. In addition to studying treatment of immigrants through a Catholic lens, CMC is also conducting initiatives to bring awareness to the many positive ways that recent immigrants help and enrich the lives of those of us who have been here for multiple generations. See Babatunde and Sabi’s story on page 4 to learn about their journey to the U.S. and how they are supporting young adults with special needs through their business, Community Employment and Days Services.

**For more information on how you can get involved or become an immigrant ally, visit this CMC resource page:**  
<https://cmcmadison.org/actforimmigrants/>

**For additional details about this and future Catholic Look at Immigration studies, contact Laura at the CMC:**  
[lgreen@ccmadison.org](mailto:lgreen@ccmadison.org)

# Coming to America to Learn and Serve Others:

## The Story of Two West African Immigrants

By Laura Green

Babatunde and Sabi P. moved to the US in 2017 to become fluent in English and explore new career options. In their home country, Benin, the couple had degrees in law and computer science, respectively. After applying to and being selected for a lottery visa program, they took the plunge and started a new life in Madison, Wisconsin.

Despite their advanced degrees and speaking three languages (Yoruba, French, and English), becoming established was still challenging. Sabi decided to study full time to become a nurse, and Babatunde worked three part-time jobs to support her and their two children.

“I had a professor have the audacity to tell me I didn’t belong in nursing school because of my accent,” said Sabi. “But I showed him that I earned my place there and I was dedicated. We didn’t come here [to the U.S.] to play.”

Meanwhile, Babatunde began working his way up through the home healthcare field to learn about providing supportive services for adults, because he and Sabi wanted to start a business to help people with disabilities. “I love business,” said Babatunde. “So I said, how about we open a business where not only we can feel the joy of helping people, but at the same time give back to the community?!”

Now, the couple owns and operates Community Employment and Days Services to assist recent high school graduates in finding employment and offering on-the-job support. Their offices are located in Sun Prairie to fill a gap in services that are readily available in Madison, but difficult to access from Sun Prairie. Sabi is now a registered nurse who works both for their business and for the State of Wisconsin serving adults with intellectual disabilities.

“Someone without a disability can look for a job for themselves when they graduate,” explained Babatunde. “But people with certain disabilities cannot do this on their own. We help them find a job they like and help them keep the job.” He added that for clients who are not looking for traditional employment, they “help them be in the community, socialize with people, and do volunteer work – including at CMC.”

The couple is proud to have earned new degrees, started a business, and bought their first home all within only six years of arriving. They explained that they had to work twice



as hard as native-born English speakers to get the same opportunities, education, and job promotions. “You have to prove yourself, every time,” said Sabi, despite all the valuable things they have to offer: from their education and skills to their entrepreneurship to their language and interpreting capabilities.

**“Immigrants, if you give them the opportunity to come to the U.S. legally, and you give them the tools to succeed, they can positively impact the community,” assured Babatunde. Sabi added, “I believe if more immigrants are given this opportunity, they could bring a lot of value to their society. My story [of coming here wanting to help people] is not unique. There are a lot of people who have similar stories to mine.”**

To learn more about Community Employment and Days Services, visit:

<https://communityemploymentanddayservices.com/>

If you would like to get involved or offer your support to Community Employment and Days Services, contact Babatunde at:

[contact@communityemploymentanddayservices.com](mailto:contact@communityemploymentanddayservices.com)

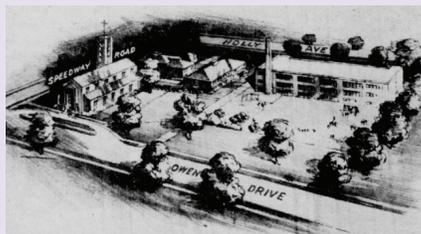
# The History of the Our Lady Queen of Peace Church Building

Tom Martinelli, Parish Historian

The 5½ acres for the Our Lady Queen of Peace parish campus at the corner of Mineral Point Road and S. Owen Drive was purchased by the Diocese of Milwaukee in November 1945. (The Diocese of Madison was formed in January of 1946.) The parcel was formerly a part of the nine-hole Westmorland Golf Course. Fr. Bernard R. Doyle, pastor St. Mary's parish in Pardeeville for three years prior, was appointed the first pastor of Queen of Peace parish, the first Madison parish since the end of World War II, on December 8, 1945.

The first organizational meeting for the parish was held at the Edgewood High School auditorium on January 18, 1946. A general outline of the campus and building plans were discussed and a committee was formed to begin a financial campaign with a goal of raising \$100,000. It was decided that the first building to be constructed would be a school to accommodate the education of 200+ children from the neighborhood.

A plot plan for the Queen of Peace campus was prepared by Joe Weiler of the Madison architectural firm Weiler & Strang. A sketch of the plan appeared in the *Wisconsin State Journal* on October 12, 1947, and showed a Gothic-style church aligned parallel to Mineral Point Road with a main entrance on S. Owen Drive.



Original sketch of the Our Lady Queen of Peace campus showing the church parallel to Mineral Point Road and the entrance facing S. Owen Drive, *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 12, 1947

Tragedy struck the parish on October 16, 1947, when Fr. Doyle was killed on Hwy. 30. His vehicle left the road and crashed into a large oak tree while returning from Milwaukee where he had spent the day visiting his ailing mother. Fr. Francis L. McDonnell, formerly the pastor at St. Paul's parish in Mineral Point, was appointed the new pastor by Bishop William P. O'Connor on November 21, 1947.

Plans for the new parish school proceeded in 1948 and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on July 18, 1948, with Bishop O'Connor and Fr. McDonnell presiding at the ceremony. The school opened to students on September 12, 1949.

After the school opened, efforts turned to the design and construction of the parish church. Planning for the new church building began in 1953. Weiler & Stang were again hired to prepare design plans for the church and a \$200,000 fundraising campaign was inaugurated on October 25, 1953. The design for the church building changed drastically from the original sketch



Model of Our Lady Queen of Peace church, from Weiler & Strang architectural firm, 1953

of a Gothic-style building in 1947. The new church design was to be of a more contemporary design in line with other churches that were being built at that time.

It would be the first Catholic church built in Madison in more than 20 years and the first built after World War II, thus the "Our Lady Queen of Peace" name.

At that time, church architectural design had evolved with cost being a major factor as well as church capacity. It is not known exactly who influenced this major change in the design of the Queen of Peace Church, perhaps the architect, the parish members, or the pastor. We have to assume that Fr. McDonnell had the final say in the more modern design. (Also occurring around this time, Fr. McDonnell was elevated to the rank of Monsignor by Pope Pius XII on April 8, 1954).

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 20, 1954, the church cornerstone was placed on December 8, 1954, and the dedication and first Mass in the new church was held on August 14, 1955. The stone bell tower of the church was completed later that year.



Queen of Peace church groundbreaking ceremony with (left to right) altar servers Dick Snyder, Jerry Zimmerman, and Norbert Schmelzer; Pastor Monsignor Francis McDonnell; architect Joe Weiler; and builder Marshall Erdman, June 20, 1954

The opening of the church was followed by the construction of the priest's rectory in 1955-1956, and the Sinsinawa Dominican sisters' convent in 1958-1959.

*The following comments were provided by Dennis McKinley (Parish member from 1966-1998, and again from 2020-present; director of various parish choirs; parish council and liturgy commission member; and a member of three sanctuary renovation committees) based on a talk given by architect Joe Weiler to one of the Queen of Peace committees formed to redesign the church sanctuary in the late 1970s or early 1980s:*

Weiler designed the bell tower purposely to be taller than the school smokestack.



The floor plan was made by starting with a square, cutting a 5x12x13 triangle off the right and left sides of the square, and reversing them resulting in a 6-sided, fan-shaped building.

Every angle in the building is based on one of the angles found in that triangle. This included the aisle ends of the pews, the structure and design of the communion rails, the altar, and the original stained-glass windows.

While the building had a south-to-north positioning rather than a more typical west-to-east positioning (so that the congregation and priest would face east during the Mass), the orientation allowed Weiler to do some inventive architectural features.

Clerestory windows positioned at the top of the southside of the church, above the balcony, allowed sunrays to shine directly on the suspended crucifix in the sanctuary at noon on Christmas day.

The reredos (wall behind the altar) was built so that the priest and servers could enter the sanctuary in procession directly from the sacristy.

# Planted (and Growing) in God's House

By Cheryl Horne, Pastoral Associate

*I was thinking recently about our theme for the year: Planted in God's House and it seems to me that the whole idea of being planted is to GROW, right? To reach out, to grow, and to bear fruit – to produce a harvest. Even in the cold winter months ... even during a season of waiting (like Advent) ... we seek to grow.*

So, I wanted to share with you a few of the ways our ministries have grown, how they continue to grow and bear fruit, and make a difference in the lives of many in our faith community.



## Luke House, The CMC, and St. Vincent dePaul Growing by reaching out

Our Lady Queen of Peace serves a meal twice a month during the day on the 3rd Tuesday and in the evening on the 4th Sunday at Luke House. This group of disciples continues to grow and thrive as they prepare and serve food for our neighbors in need. And, since it's Luke House, everyone takes a turn sitting down with the guests and enjoying the meal as well! Tim Eisele, who has been running our Tuesday morning Luke House group for years, said, "We are always eager to welcome new volunteers to help provide, prepare, and serve."

And Gretchen Brace, who runs our 4th Sunday Luke House Dinner, continues to welcome donations from families of all ages – who also come together to serve! Our CMC bins continue to overflow and the offerings are transported to the Catholic Multicultural Center at least once a month by John and Laurie Hyklma. Additionally, our Parish provides a "Breakfast Burritos for Dinner" meal monthly for our friends at the CMC!



Recently, the St. Vincent dePaul Big Truck collected 1,500 pounds of food and household goods from our parish. Supported by our 5th grade Bag Staplers and our middle school truck workers, our St. Vincent dePaul Conference continues to serve our neighbors in need with food throughout the year, with community through home visits, with books for the children in the homes they visit, and countless other services.



## Team Jesus Growing in faith

When Noah Gonring (our Youth Ministry Associate) was a junior in high school, we brought back Team Jesus: a group of high school upperclassmen who serve as small group leaders for our Freshman Faith Formation & Confirmation preparation students. The group this year is bigger than it has been since Noah was in high school – and they are all dedicated to serving and witnessing

their faith to others. In reflecting on the way his own faith life has grown since he was a member of Team Jesus in high school, Noah said, "Although serving others is naturally done for the sake of others, it can help the servant, too. Serving as a witness to the faith on Team Jesus, I felt my faith grow and really become my own, and I see this happening among the members of Team Jesus that I get to lead now. In guiding the students on their faith journeys, the Team Jesus members have a wonderful opportunity to embrace their faith, which they so often do."



## Choirs and Ministry Leaders Letting our gifts bear good fruit

Our choirs and liturgical ministries continue to reach out and reach up in harmony. All of these ways to get involved at Mass and grow in God's house together have grown exponentially in number and in faith over the past few years. Young and old journey together in these liturgical ministries, inspiring and helping all of us to pray in word and song together.



## Men's Spirituality Group Growing in wisdom and strength

Deacon Mark continues to lead men from our parish in exploring a wide variety of faith-based topics on living the faith. Men of a wide variety of ages meet to explore different topics on living our faith in the world.

## Bible Study Groups

### Growing in understanding

Our Bible study groups continue to learn and to grow as we explore God's word. We have three Bible Study groups that meet at QP or on Zoom and one that meets at All Saints Community. Together we seek to read deeply and gain understanding of how God's word continues to work in our lives and help us grow in faith.



## Gardens

### The harvest is abundant – and so are the laborers!

Between the Lacy Garden and the Schulte Garden this year, there were over 21,000 pounds of produce provided by over 240 volunteers for the food pantries at St. Vincent dePaul and the Catholic Multicultural Center. Planted in God's House – and blessed by Fr. Brian and Msgr. Jim Uppena – our gardens provided an abundant harvest for those in need!

These are just a few of the ways Planted in God's House has become so real for me – examples of how members of our parish family are growing in faith.

This Advent Season, as we wait for the coming of Jesus. It is still a time of growth – as evidenced by our many Advent activities including Bible Studies, the Capitol Christmas Pageant, Project Angel Tree, and Advent by Candlelight.

**How can you, planted in God's House as you are, continue to grow in faith this holy season?**

# Music, Praise, and Prayer

Joy Dohr, Prayer Network Representative

Singing the Gloria at Mass is known to all of us. Caleb Mitchell, Director of Liturgy and Pastoral Music, recently introduced a new musical version to *Glory to God* that flowed so prayerfully and brought forth added awareness to praising and giving thanks for Jesus Christ. It touched my heart. I hoped the Lord heard our voices and knew we were present to actively worship in that hour and to be one with Christ and our faith community. Since then, thoughts remain regarding prayer, praise, and singing. We readily say scriptural prayers – as The Our Father – and prayers of petition with hope forthcoming. Prayers of praise might simply be, seemingly with less urgency or claim. I ask: Do we give energy and voice to let God know we truly hallow His name; are we thankful in all circumstances as written by St. Paul; do we hold God as centering us?

In *An Introduction to Prayer*, Bishop Robert Barron wrote about Adoration and Right Praise. He stated, “One could read the liturgical prayer – *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will* – not only as a word of praise, but also as a kind of formula: when glory is given to God above all things, then peace breaks out among us.” Singing the Gloria lets us praise; in it we sing, “receive our prayers...You alone are the Holy One. You alone are the Lord. You alone are the Most High.” These latter phrases express our adoration. In addition to Sunday's adoration, members at Queen of Peace also commit to come hourly on Tuesdays to adore Christ in the Eucharist. They quietly pray. They contemplate the Lord's love and strength present in the Blessed Sacrament. Surrounding them are meanings of this love – the Crucifix, the Stations of the Cross, light through stained glass, 60 candles lit on behalf of another, and ultimately holding Jesus. One simply grows in understanding and acknowledgement of God's generosity to us for life.

Praising of God keeps us placed well. And often in acclaiming good, we want to sing as so expertly arranged by our liturgist. Scripture and Psalms encourages us to “*make a joyful noise unto the Lord ... come before his presence with singing ... it is He who made us and not we ourselves.*” Singing glory to God is a practice of joy, giving energy to us. Pastoral music sets the Lord before us. It has power of grace. It helps us pray. Many find it allows heartfelt, deep expression of joining with the Holy Spirit when it's difficult to express one's own thoughts. These are times when you are thankful for another's talents of voice. It might even be a time when you didn't realize that you needed a musical tone or prayer. A popular writer described a difficult time in her life and finding her belief. She said a saving grace was being drawn to church just to hear the music, hoping to grow in deeper faith. Music also reminds us well of past worship ... one hears a hymn and remembers people and times of blessings. Singing *Be Not Afraid* brings back the presence of my earthly father, as well as our heavenly father, telling me to trust, to be prepared, to believe. Tears come. I don't leave the song without thanking God for the love going before me.

Music gives sound and voice to praise. Praise gives voice to thanks. A thanks becomes a prayer giving voice to the Holy Spirit. With a smile, our parish keeps us in tune. It's music, praise, and prayers that enrich our faith and being. Barron summarized, “If you feel that your spiritual life has grown a bit dry ... I might recommend that you open up the Church's songbook and sing.”

**“If you feel that your spiritual life has grown a bit dry ... I might recommend that you open up the Church's songbook and sing.”**

– Bishop Robert Barron



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## Father Brian's Message



Dear Friends:

We are happy to provide you with a copy of our most recent Queen of Peace *Spirit* newsletter. It contains valuable information on parish happenings and initiatives. Please read it and share it with others you know who may have an interest.

Advent has a two-fold character. It is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas. It is also a time for our hearts and minds to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons Advent is a period of expectant and devout delight.

While we can all become focused on preparations for Christmas, do not neglect Advent. The Church gives us this holy season as a time of meditation and preparation for the spiritual aspects of the season which can easily be lost. It is my hope that when Christmas arrives, we can all say that we are better prepared because of our Advent experience.

Have a blessed Advent. Blessings to each of you.

*Rev. Brian J. Wilk*

Fr. Brian Wilk



Special thanks to the staff and parishioners of Queen of Peace for their contributions to this newsletter.