I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals.

Luke 3:16
Zephaniah's description of God in today's first reading is quite striking. It is remarkable that after most of the book of Zephaniah paints a dark picture of God's judgment on the "Day of the Lord," we see God singing with joy, partying and celebrating, bursting with love for the Chosen People. Such is God's delight in us human beings.

In the scriptures, there seem to be two kinds of moments when God is especially delighted. First, during creation, when God creates something beautiful: not only the whole universe, but also individual human persons, made in God’s image. Second, after times of separation, when God celebrates the restoration of intimacy with God's beloved.

As Paul writes to the Church in Philippi, those on the path of faith might somehow get swept up in God's joy. Because in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, God continually speaks and listens to those in united in faith. We participate in God's delight in creation when we are creative ourselves, when we add to the world's beauty. We also participate when we join in the work of reconciliation and act to heal human divisions and restore relationships.

BEGIN WHERE YOU ARE

In today's Gospel, those who listened to John the Baptist's prophetic preaching were quite troubled, and moved to ask “What should we do?” Although John had given dire warnings about what might happen if they did not sincerely repent, he did not suggest drastic actions. He recommended that people begin where they are, and work within their daily circumstances. Share generously. Treat people fairly. Be content with what you have. These were perhaps small steps turning them, in God's time, toward deeper change.

A first step for us might be to learn, however slowly, to listen to God speaking within the context of our lives. We can respond with small concrete actions and perhaps learn what God wishes to say through them. We can then listen anew for the next step.

Today's Readings: Zep 3:14–18a; Is 12:2–3, 4, 5–6; Phil 4:4–7; Lk 3:10–18

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WEEKLY SCHEDULES

Lectors/ Eucharistic Ministers:
12/22 4:00 p.m. Dave Evans/ C. McDonald
12/23 8:00 a.m. C. Frame/ S. Kent
12/24 10:00 a.m. Paula Whitman/ Larry Freeland
12/24 4:00 p.m. Frizzell, Miller Family/ Taskalines
12/24 10:00 p.m. Paula Whitwam/ Mark Helfer
12/25 10:00 a.m. Rose Hess/ John Hess

Altar Servers:
12/22 4:00 p.m. Frizzell
12/23 8:00 a.m. Laberdeee
12/23 10:00 a.m. Blatt, Targosky
12/24 4:00 p.m. Miller/ Frizzell/ Swift
12/24 10:00 p.m. Kent Family
12/25 10:00 a.m. Whitelatch Family

Gift Bearers:
12/22 4:00 p.m. John & Loretta Niemiec
12/23 8:00 a.m. Mark Hitt
12/23 10:00 a.m. Carolyn Gordon

Sacristy Cleaners: Week of December 17, 2018
Joe Pavilkey

Greeters:
12/22 4:00 p.m. Phil Remke
12/23 8:00 a.m. Sherrie Kent/ Kitty Pazyk
12/23 10:00 a.m. Blatt Family

Bingo December 21, 2018
Raffle: John & Sherrie Leonard
Kitchen: Kathleen Naegele

 COLLECTION: December 2, 2018
Envelopes - $ 3,532.00
Loose Offering - $ 1,165.00
Electronic Giving - $35.00
Building Fund - $ 40.00
Xavier Hall - $517.00
Memorial Offerings - $ 35.00
Pennies for God - $ 6.62
Attendance - 277

The Church office will be closed Christmas Week. We will reopen on Thursday, January 3.

Holiday Baked Sale Pickup
Thursday, December 20
8:30 –10:00 a.m.  3:00– 5:00 p.m.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Dec. 16 - Decorate Church for Christmas 11:00
Dec. 18 - Mass and Christmas Carols at
Moundview Nursing Home 11:00
Dec 18 - Deadline for memorial flower orders
Dec. 20 - Pick up Holiday Baked goods
Jan 26 - World Youth Day

If you are wondering why you don’t see piles of white socks in the vestibule this Advent…..

Traditionally our parish has collected socks to give to the prisoners at Christmas. A few years ago the Moundsville Ministerial Association began helping with this project. This year our parish provided gift bags. Our CCD students with the help of a few parishioners decorated the bags. If you have left socks for prisoners - thank you! These socks will be given to those in need who request aid from our parish throughout the year.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES WEST VIRGINIA
ANNUAL APPEAL

We are all one in the Body of Christ and we must care for the suffering within the Body. Please support the good works that Catholic Charities West Virginia is doing on your behalf for the poor and suffering.

When you are thinking about presents this year, think about what Jesus would want for His birthday…

He told us what He wants:
— Love one another. Take care of the poor, the elderly, the widows and orphans, and the sick. Surely that would be the best birthday present we could give the One that gave everything for us!

Contributions may be made online at www.catholiccharitieswv.org, or mailed to 2000 Main Street, Wheeling, WV 26003, or put in the second collection on Christmas.

RELATIVES AS PARENTS
Coming to Wheeling
February 2019

This program is open to all relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) raising a child of a family member.

This new program is offered by Catholic Charities and is open to all. You will learn about:
- Finding resources for your child
- Food and Nutrition
- Navigating the school system
- Technology and social media
- Dealing with childhood trauma
- Self-care and stress management
- Budgeting

The program will provide:
- Transportation
- Interactive child care
- Meal
- Other incentives

Space is limited! Sign up by Jan. 15
Contact Diana Bell at 304-639-0086
dbell@ccwva.org, or stop by the Neighborhood Center at 125 18th Street

Program will be held at the
Catholic Charities Center
2000 Main Street Wheeling

HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Dec. 24 4 P.M. Children’s mass
Dec. 24 10:00 P.M. Christmas Eve mass
Dec. 25 10 A.M. Christmas mass
Dec. 31 4 P.M. New Year’s Eve
Jan. 1 10 A.M. New Year’s Day

PRAY FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS:

Prayer Request: John Mercer, Gregory “Shad” Fromhart, Don McCormick, Maggie Yeater, Gina Hoops, Dianne Hill, Miriam Kulavik, Kimberly Peffley, Bobby Kleinedler, Chris Colby, Richard Timko;
Homebound: Rodney & Rachel Kerekes, Semon & Phyllis Prado, Doris Murphy, Bob Tetrick;
Nursing Home: Gary Dobbs, Patricia Schmidt, Helen Remke, Thelma Gitlin, Barbara Meyer, Elizabeth Potts, Marilyn Neidhardt, Joe & Helen Cuchta.