

Catholic Information Center

Friends of the Center December 2021 Newsletter

catholicinformationcenter.org



Dear Friends,

The virtue of patience is not easily observed in our fast-paced culture. Everything seems to be pressing and rushed. Maybe it's the time of year. Christmas music began playing on some radio stations immediately after Halloween. But it seems more than just the season. As the pandemic ebbs and flows, schedules for many people have again become very busy. In the midst of this time, the Church sets aside these four weeks in December, four weeks of expectation and waiting that challenge us to grow in the virtue of patience.

The Advent season helps us to reflect, meditate and contemplate on the divine, to live in expectation for the three arrivals of Christ: God sharing our humanity more than 2,000 years ago, the present comings of Christ through God's various disguises in everyday living, and the second coming of our Lord in history, which can happen anytime. It is my experience that when we wait patiently for something (or someone), it is celebrated with much joy when it arrives. This season helps us realize that the deep longing in each one of us is one of Maranatha - O Lord, come!

The programs here at the Catholic Information Center this December can help us to celebrate the season with greater joy by offering us the necessary spiritual preparation. The Encore presentation, "Stories of God; Stories of Faith", the ecumenical "Evening in December", and the "Journey to Bethlehem" series are some of the programs offered this season. Setting aside the time to participate in any of these programs can help us to grow in our appreciation of how God enters our lives in various guises: through our care for the poor, sick, elderly, and vulnerable among us, through the reflection of the painful experiences that have helped us to grow in faith, and through our gratitude for the joys and blessings we receive. These are the encounters in life when we realize that we are loved by a merciful God who is Emmanuel - God among us.

We appreciate you keeping us in prayer and having us in mind as you consider a special end of year gift. To our Friends of the Center who gave generously to the Hope for the Future Capital Campaign, the Paulist Fathers are especially grateful. Together, we continue inviting hearts to slow down and to notice, to embrace the inexhaustible love of God for them and all creation. A grace-filled Advent and joyful Christmas to you and your loved ones!

Yours in Christ,

Very Rev. René I. Constanza, CSP
Executive Director of the Catholic Information Center
and Rector of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew

Pray for :

**Fred Bivins
+Mary Chapel
Billi Durst
Ezra Gearhart
Dr. Alvin Joseph
David Kasprzak
Patrick McGarry
Roger Moffat
Paiz Family
+Barbara Robinson
Katherine Sim
+Jude Rudolf Solomon**

**Need a quiet place
with Wi-Fi and good
coffee? The CIC café
area and office are
open:**

**Monday — Thursday,
9 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday — Thursday
6 — 8:30 p.m.**

**Friday,
9 a.m. — 1 p.m.**

**December Mass for
CIC Intentions:
Sunday, Dec. 12
5:30 p.m. at the
Cathedral**

*Please include your
prayer intentions with
your green envelope or
email them to
cicoffice@catholic
informationcenter.org*

Upcoming Program

An Evening in December: Maranatha
Thursday, December 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m. EST
Join us in person or online
A donation to attend is requested
Registration required

Recognizing our anxiety, loneliness, or frustration in this present season, we are still a hope-filled people. Our hearts cry "Maranatha" Come, Lord Jesus! Experience an evening of ecumenical reflection and dialogue this Advent on why we need Jesus now.



This ecumenical community wide event is sponsored by Bethlehem Lutheran, Cathedral of Saint Andrew, Catholic Information Center, St. Mark's Episcopal, Westminster Presbyterian, and Kaufman Interfaith Institute.

For information on this class or upcoming classes visit catholicinformationcenter.org or call the Center at 616-459-7267.

Your gifts through the Green Envelope make it possible for us to help adults learn, celebrate, live and pray their Catholic Faith.

Because of your generosity, many of our programs remain free and donation based.

Please consider signing up for regular monthly donations through online giving at bit.ly/CICGive

Thank you!

Hope for the Future Campaign

Thank you to everyone who has already made a commitment to the Paulist Fathers "Hope for the Future" capital campaign. Together, we are helping secure the future of the Paulist Fathers, from new seminarians to those in senior ministry. Every gift makes a difference!

As of November 22, we have received \$822,733 in gifts and pledges (91% of our \$896,000 goal) from 324 households (43.2% participation). Thank you to the generous donors who are partnering with us and our mission!



An exciting development is a major donor from Grand Rapids is willing to have their sponsorship of the Offices of the Paulist Evangelization Ministries (to be built in the House of Mission and Studies/new seminary) named in honor of the people of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew and the Catholic Information Center, Grand Rapids, when we reach our goal of \$896,000. **When we meet our goal, Grand Rapids will have a permanent place of honor in the new Paulist seminary.**

If you would still like to make a donation or pledge visit <https://paulist.org> or call the Catholic Information Center at 616-459-7267.



Follow us on Social Media for the latest updates and news.

Friendship Corner

Highlighting longtime CIC friends **Bob & Sandy Enders**

Biography Sandy (retired from Mel Trotter) and Bob's (retired from Herman Miller Inc. and Catholic Charities West Michigan) retirement days are primarily filled with volunteer work, helping their children's families, and enjoying their cottage. Their blended family consists of four children and eight grandchildren.

How did you get connected with the CIC? Sandy and Bob both individually attended a divorce recovery class at the Center over thirty years ago but after they married, their focus was the learning opportunities at their parish where they were married. In the past year, during the outbreak of COVID, they were looking for online spiritual growth opportunities. They reconnected with the Center after seeing a JustFaith course shared on Facebook. They have continued to attend classes because the quality and variety of programming continues to draw them to the Center to meet their needs in their spiritual journeys.

How does the CIC help you understand your faith? The Holy Spirit leads them both to the Center in helping understand their faith. "It's no coincidence that the center's programs and activities came to us when we were struggling with faith related questions, we see it is all part of God's plan," they said.

