

Second Sunday of Advent ~December 10, 2017

*Lord God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming
of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and
dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin.*

St. Peter's Church

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901
Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322
Religious Education Office: 570-724-9789
Website: www.stpeterswellsboro.org ~ Email: stpch@ptd.net

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – Dbechtel100@yahoo.com
Secretary: Connie Spang – stpch@ptd.net
Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – stpadm@ptd.net
Directors of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier & Melissa Mann –
stpreled@ptd.net
Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

Schedule of Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am

Reconciliation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am -12:00noon;
Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm; By appointment by calling the Rectory.

Mission Statement

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

Emergency Contact

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

Pregnancy Support

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310
Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS
Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

Religious Education and Formation

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12th grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12th begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. To register, please contact the Religious Education Office at 570-724-9789 or the Rectory at 570-724-3371.

Welcome to St. Peter's Church!

If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for worshiping with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us and invite you to become part of our church family. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

Request for Parishioner Registration Form

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Advent Prayer

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in
welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from
receiving Christ with joy, so that we may share his
wisdom and become one with him when he comes in
glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Parish Contact Listing

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360
St. John Neumann's Prayer Group – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085
Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047
Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023
Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216
Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175
Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Lasko 570-439-7706
Mary Beth Sampson 570-724-2953
Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360
Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591
Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529
Fundraising Dinners – Tara Gordon 570-439-0006
Paul Urner 570-723-9970
Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,
Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427
Samaritan House – Daria Guelig 570-724-3030
Youth Group – Maureen Poirier/ Melissa Mann 570-724-9789
Eucharistic Adoration – Rhonda Gooch 570-724-3092
Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056
Parish Council – Rectory 570-724-3371
Worship Committee – Rectory 570- 724-3371
Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470
Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047
Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371
ChristLife – Norb Josten 570-724-9095
Prayer Shawl Ministry - Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2017

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
Monday 12/11 <i>Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26</i>	No Mass	
Tuesday 12/12 <i>Zec 2:14-17; Lk 1:26-38</i>	7:30am	In Honor of Heather Deveney
Wednesday 12/13 <i>Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Lewis & Lenora Bowers (Joan Getgen & Family)
Thursday 12/14 <i>Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Teddy Sykora (Don & Lucy Whitney)
Friday 12/15 <i>Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Lydia Milano (Husband, Joe)
Saturday 12/16 <i>Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Mt 17:9-13</i>	4:00-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confession In Memory of Parents of Frank & Ida Dziengowski (Frank & Ida)
Sunday 12/17 <i>Is 61:1-2, 110-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28</i>	8:30am	In Memory of Ruth Knapke (Tom & Ginny)

The Week Ahead

SUNDAY, December 10, 2017

Religious Ed. – Pre-School:8:30-9:30am; K-12th:9:30-10:40am

R.C.I.A. – 9:30am, Parish Center

Carmelites – 12:30pm, Parish Center

MONDAY, December 11, 2017

Advent Penance Service – 6:30pm

TUESDAY, December 12, 2017

Adoration – 8:00am-7:00pm; Benediction 6:45pm

Women's Bible Study – 9:00am, Adult Ed Room

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

WEDNESDAY, December 13, 2017

Broad Acres Mass – 10:30am

St. John Neumann Group – 1:00pm, Parish Center

Green Home Mass – 2:00pm

THURSDAY, December 14, 2017

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

SUNDAY, December 17, 2017

Religious Ed. – Pre-School:8:30-9:30am; K-12th:9:30-10:40am

R.C.I.A. – 9:30am, Parish Center

GOODIES FOR OUR TROOPS - This month's Goodies for our Troops items are: *Hand and Feet Warmers, Beef Jerky, Slim Jims, Homemade Cookies and Fudge & Personal Notes (cards, letters, drawings from children.)*

Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS - This month's food pantry items are: *Creamy Peanut Butter & Grape Jelly.*

Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

ST. THOMAS/ST. CATHERINE MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, St. Catherine, Westfield - 7:00pm

Sunday, St. Thomas, Elkland – 11:30am

This week's Sanctuary Candle is offered in memory of
Mary Cleveland (Sharren Hummel & Gladys McElligott)

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

December 16th/17th

5:00pm

Servers: L.Singer, Z. Singer, B.Levindoski

Lectors: T.Sampson, D.Sherman

E. Min.: A.Singer, C.Lannak, B.Butler, I.Dziengowski

8:30am

Servers: K.Kramer, J.Grab, W.Feil, W.Steinbacher

Lectors: T.Reindl, N.Bickham

E. Min.: M.Sampson, M.Bialas, T.Gamble, L.Whitney

Sacramental Information

Baptisms - Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend instructions classes before the birth of their child. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed. Contact the Rectory to schedule.

Confirmation - Confirmation is administered every year to all 8th grade students in our Parish Religious Education program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

Marriages- In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

Anointing of the Sick - Please contact the Rectory whenever a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized.

Monthly Visitations - Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults (R.C.I.A.) - The R.C.I.A. prepares unbaptized adults for reception into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person and prepares them for full initiation into the faith. Contact the Rectory for more information.



Liturgical Reflection

Second Sunday of Advent

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

The Word of God addressed to the people has a twofold message: God directs an unknown group of people to bring comfort to people, and then directs the whole people to prepare “the way of the Lord!” The instruction to make a highway for God indicates that the Lord will come in glory. This adventus of the Lord is to be proclaimed to all peoples. The Lord will arrive in the image of a shepherd; he will feed his flock and gather the lambs “in his bosom.” This gives us an insight into the meaning of Advent, for it is a time of penance and conversion that will lead us to great joy.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 85

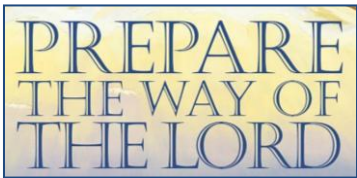
This psalm celebrates the peace that the Lord will shower upon the earth. There is a sense from the words of the psalm, especially from the refrain, that the people are waiting for the Lord to reveal himself to them. They are confident that their Lord is “near indeed and that the hoped for encounter will not be long. It will be a meeting of heaven and earth, of God and God’s people, of truth and kindness, of justice and peace.

Lord, let us see
your kindness,
and grant us your
salvation.

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-14

The author of this reading makes an alarming prediction: the day of the Lord will come like a thief. In rhetorical fashion the author asks “what sort of person ought you to be in the meantime?” He suggests that a life of holiness and devotion is needed as they await “a new heavens and a new earth.” As we wait for the Lord’s return, we should use the time carefully, in order to be ready when the end does come. The theme of Advent is clearly underlined in this reading.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8



Today’s Gospel and that for the next Sunday, present the preaching and mission of John the Baptist. It is clear that the expectation of the people is high as they stream out into the desert to hear John’s message. John appears in the guise of the great prophets; is it possible that he really is announcing the advent of the Messiah? They do not want to miss it; they readily repent in anticipation. Even though John attracted a large following, he was only a messenger, a herald for the one mightier than himself. The way of the Lord proclaimed by John is a journey of discipleship to Jesus Christ, Son of God. John’s reference to the one who will come after him is further explained in next Sunday’s Gospel.

Parish Activities and Information

BREAD PUDDING BOOTH

Thank you to everyone who helped at this year’s Dickens bread pudding booth. A special thank you to Sue Sticklin for chairing the event. A profit of \$3,003.51 was raised to support the parish.

Income (sales & donations): \$3,810.00

Expense (supplies, fees, taxes); 806.49

Profit \$3,003.51

RITE OF ACCEPTANCE MOVED TO JANUARY

The Rite of Acceptance for Kristina and Scott Zimmerman has been moved to January. Please give Kristina and Scott and also Karon Swendrowski and Gary Dillman who have also embarked on a faith journey, your prayerful support as they continue towards becoming full members of Catholic Church.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

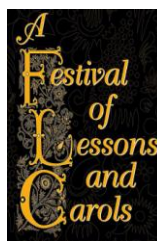


The Social Concerns Committee extends a special thanks to those who generously supported this year’s Giving Tree project! Your gifts will make Christmas a little merrier for local children and nursing home residents and will help Seeds of Hope respond to community needs during the coming year. **Reminder: Deliver the gifts for the nursing home residents in person, by December 24th**

ADVENT MATERIAL

There is a wide selection of free Advent material on the handout table on the side of the church to enrich your Advent season. Please feel free to take a few for your family. *Advent* **DEVOTIONALS**

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS



Please join us on Sunday, December 17th at 6:00pm for The Festival of Lessons and Carols. This festival is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. In this service, we listen to nine Scripture lessons which recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each lesson is followed by a carol or other song that reflects on the lesson’s message and a brief prayer.

SANCTUARY CANDLES

A candle is kept burning day and night wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in Catholic churches or chapels. It is an emblem of Christ’s abiding love and a reminder to the faithful to respond with loving adoration in return. Sanctuary candles are available to remember or honor your loved ones.

**Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord.
Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ST. PETER'S



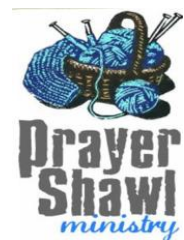
Are you going to be by yourself this Christmas? Are you not feeling up to cooking a big dinner? Would your family enjoy being with others this Christmas? Everyone is invited to share a meal and fellowship on Christmas Day. Dinner will be served at 12:00pm in the Parish Center. Meat and beverage will be provided. Kindly bring a dish to share. If you do not cook, bring an item that can be served cold. Reservations are requested by Tuesday, December 19th by calling Betsy and Dan Gordon at 570-724-7259 or email danbg77@gmail.com. Reservations should include name, # attending, and the dish you are bringing.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION MOVIE NIGHT

On Wednesday, December 20th starting at 6:30pm in the Parish Center, we will be screening the 1948 black and white classic film *The Miracle of Bells*. This is an inspiring story of individual and societal redemption, starring Fred MacMurray, Alida Valli, and Frank Sinatra playing a humble pastor in Coaltown, PA. Refreshments and discussion to follow the film. All are welcome!



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



St. Peter's Prayer Shawl Ministry creates beautiful, prayer shawls to help comfort and warm those in need. They comfort the sick, the bereaved, shut-ins, nursing home residents, or people experiencing loneliness and emotional distress. The shawls are like being wrapped in prayers and love. If you know of anyone needing a shawl, please call Jan Bernethy at 307-267-0677.

MESSAGE ABOUT YOUR WEEKLY ENVELOPES

In order to ensure that your contribution to the parish is correctly recorded, please make sure that the amount of your donation is denoted on the front of the envelope. This is a great help to our counters.

2017 STATEMENT OF DONATIONS

The 2017 financial statements will be prepared upon request. All donations must be received by December 31st to be included on your 2017 statement. If you would like a 2017 statement, please call the rectory or write "send statement" on your weekly offering envelope.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIAL



Each Christmas, the flowers in the church during the season, memorialize deceased loved ones. If you would like to contribute to this year's Christmas flowers in memory of a loved one, please use the envelope found in your monthly packet and place in the collection basket.

CHRISTMAS MASS INTENTIONS

Special Christmas Mass Intention envelopes can be found in your monthly packets to remember both living and deceased family members and friends. The envelopes will be placed on the altar during all of the Christmas Masses to remember your intentions. Please place your Christmas Mass intentions envelopes in the collection basket.

2018 CHANGE IN RECTORY HOURS



Beginning in January 2018, the rectory hours will be open Monday through Thursday, 8:00am – 2:00pm; closed Friday. This change is occurring for a couple of reasons. One, the survey requested the rectory hours accommodate those who work. While we cannot stay open until 5:30pm or later, we are opening an hour earlier at 8:00am, so those working can stop in before their work day begins. Another reason for the change in hours is to better utilize our staff resources more efficiently.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Refresh and expand your understanding of what being a follower of Jesus means by attending the 7-session "Following Christ" course in St. Peter's Parish Center Wednesday evenings, from January 10th through February 28th from 7:00-9:00pm. There will also be a Spirit-filled Retreat on Saturday, February 17th.



Following Christ helps those who are hungry to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ to better understand and respond to the Lord's call. This is accomplished through the grace of God by praying together, teaching, and supporting one another in some of the basic disciplines and truths practiced by Christians since the early Church.

Following Christ consists of seven sessions and a retreat day. The weekly sessions include four components: prayer, video teaching, fellowship, and small group discussion.

- Prayer - The prayer time is an opportunity for participants to grow deeper in their response to God's love together in group prayer.
- Video Teaching - The teachings provide practical ways to grow in relationship with the Lord and include foundational disciplines and truths important for maturing in Christ.
- Fellowship - The time of fellowship over drinks and desserts comes after the teaching as people transition into their small groups.
- Small Groups - The small groups are a place to freely discuss the teaching content, as well as a place of accountability for completing the action items encouraged in each session.

Session Topics: Daily Personal Prayer, Hearing God in Scripture, The Power of the Sacraments, Forgiving One Another, The Spirit-Empowered Life, Retreat - The World, The Flesh, The Devil, and Advancing the Mission of the Church.

To register or for more information, contact Norb Josten at 570-724-9095 or norb.josten@gmail.com. A satellite course will also be hosted at the deGuzman residence in Keeneyville for those interested.

Religious Ed. & Youth Group News

UPCOMING YOUTH GROUP EVENTS

Here's what's coming up for St. Peter's Youth Group:



- December 17th – Christmas Activity – 10:45am-12:15pm

For more information, please contact the Rel. Ed. Office.



Youth Group parking cars for Dickens

That's The Way It Is!



This year, as many know is the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Perhaps one of the most important areas of contention between Protestants and Catholics is the meaning and purpose of Holy Communion. It is not uncommon to attend a Protestant church service and find out that the church invites everyone to Holy Communion regardless of Faith affiliation. They have what is known as "open communion." If you are at a Presbyterian Church service, for example, and they have open communion that means you don't have to be Presbyterian in order to participate in Holy Communion. You can be Baptist, Lutheran, Catholic, Non-denominational, whatever. Everyone may participate.

Catholics on the other hand do not have open communion. Only Catholics may receive communion, and Catholics may not receive communion in Non-Catholic churches, even if invited to do so by that church. Many times, even before I became a priest, because I was an organist at so many Protestant churches I would have to politely decline to receive Holy Communion. This teaching can be a sticking point for Protestants and Catholics alike. I did not enjoy declining communion and causing offense. I do not enjoy denying Non-Catholics communion when they are present at funerals or weddings. But I am Catholic. That is a fact. As painful as this policy is, it reminds people that Protestants and Catholics are not united in Faith, Life and Worship. We are especially divided on the meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper and Holy Communion.

It is because of this division that Catholics do not have a policy of open communion, and why Catholics may not receive Holy Communion in a Protestant church, even when invited or encouraged to do so by that Church. We recognize that Non-Catholic Christians are our brothers and sisters in Christ. While we respect our differences and celebrate our common Baptism, we cannot deny our disagreements and pretend they do not exist. Even Pope Francis does not compromise on this point. I think we can

all agree that if any pope were to compromise on this point, it would be Pope Francis.

I need to be clear that Catholics do not have a policy of open communion because they think they are better than Non-Catholics. Catholics have this policy because of the sad divisions that exist between Protestants and Catholics that began with the Reformation 500 years ago. Before we even talk about the finer points of Transubstantiation, and debate whether Transubstantiation is a Scholastic invention, something we cannot believe because modern "Science" has overthrown Aristotelian metaphysics and the concept of accidents and substances, we have to understand what the act of receiving Holy Communion says. Catholics believe that the act of reception of Holy Communion says something.

When Catholics go forward to receive Holy Communion, they are saying "I believe and profess all that the Holy Catholic Church teaches to be revealed by God. I assent to these teachings, and am united in Faith, Life, and Worship with the universal Catholic Church." Reception of Holy Communion is serious business; it is not something to be taken lightly. Back in the day, the fact that not everyone in the Church would get up to receive communion reflected the seriousness with which Catholics understood communion. What has changed today is not whether Holy Communion is serious business, what has changed is that Catholics are far less discerning when they receive Holy Communion. Catholics today take the act of reception of Holy Communion far more casually than they ought. How many of us actually ask ourselves whether we really do assent to the teachings of the Holy Roman Catholic Church when we go up to receive Holy Communion? How many of us treat the reception of Holy Communion with the seriousness and the dignity that it demands? How many of us realize that what we are receiving is not bread and wine, it is not a symbol of Jesus Christ, it is not a spiritual presence of Christ, or even the presence of Christ coupled with and joined with the bread and the wine, but the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ under the signs of bread and wine?

All people who desire to embrace and profess the Faith of the Catholic Church may receive Holy Communion. Those who are Catholic, but only profess the parts of the Catholic Faith that they happen to personally like, or those parts that resonate with their personal whims and ideology ought to think more seriously about what it means to approach the Sacrament. Our Protestant brothers and sisters who are pained by the fact that they cannot receive Communion in a Catholic Church or that Catholics cannot receive Holy Communion in their churches, even when invited or encouraged to do so, should know that I am just as pained by this reality. I pray, and I invite our Protestant brothers and sisters to pray that the sad divisions between us may cease and that we may one day be one in Faith, Life and Worship.

That's the Way it is! The Reverend David W. Bechtel

Stewardship

Sunday Collection for November 26, 2017	\$ 5,298.60
Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses	\$ 5,750.00
Difference	\$ (451.40)
Year to Date Budget Variance	\$ 44.41
Care & Education of Priests	\$ 681.39

We are very grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries.

Diocese of Scranton News

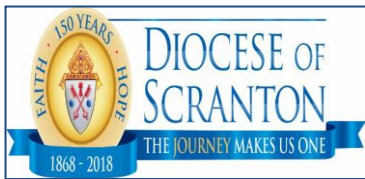
DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL

St. Peter's annual appeal goal is \$46,500. We currently have raised \$46,711.5 and have met our goal!

Thanks you to all who supported this year's appeal..



150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DIOCESE



The year-long celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Scranton began on the First Sunday of Advent,

December 3rd. During the year there will be numerous annually occurring and specially focused events that will be spotlighting our Anniversary Year and the history of our Diocese. In periodic issues of *The Catholic Light*, a special center section will highlight various aspects of our history. Special segments will also be aired on the CTV program "Our Faith, Our Diocese," beginning with the December show. A special Anniversary Year page has been posted on the Diocesan website, and WVIA-TV is producing a documentary that will air in March. *For all the parishes of the Diocese of Scranton: May this 150th Anniversary Year inspire us to herald the glad tidings of God's coming to gather and comfort all people, we pray to the Lord.*

Pro Life News

PRIESTS FOR LIFE

The theme of repentance again is stressed in today's readings. As John the Baptizer prepared the people for the coming of Christ by proclaiming repentance, so the Church prepares the world for his second coming by likewise proclaiming, and opening the way, for repentance. The Church not only gives the message of repentance, but gives us all the grace we need to live it out. Here, the building of a Culture of Life is central. It is, in its essence, a preparation for Christ's coming. We make straight the way for welcoming him by welcoming all who are created in his image, particularly the poor, the marginalized, and the unborn. We strive "to be found without stain or defilement, and at peace in his sight" (2nd reading) by being at peace with all our brothers and sisters, including the unborn, and not stained with the sin of rejecting them.

Mass Schedule

4th Sunday of Advent, Christmas,
Holy Family, & Mary, the Holy Mother of God

4th Sunday of Advent, December 24th

Saturday ~ 5:00pm; Sunday 8:30am

Christmas Eve ~ 4:00pm & 6:00pm

Christmas Day ~ 10:00am

Holy Family, December 31st

Saturday ~ 5:00pm; Sunday 8:30am

Mary, Mother of God ~ 4:00pm Vigil

(Because the Solemnity falls on a Monday this year, it is not a Holy Day of Obligation. There will be no Mass on Monday, January 1st.)

News from the Vatican

THE MASS IS A MEMORIAL



What is the Mass essentially? The Mass is the memorial of Christ's Paschal Mystery. It makes us participants in His victory over sin and death and gives full meaning to our life.

Therefore, to understand the value of the Mass we must then understand, first of all, the biblical meaning of the "memorial." It is "not merely the recollection of past events, but in a certain sense renders them present and real. Thus, in fact, Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers, so that they may conform their lives to them. With His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, Jesus Christ has brought Passover to fulfillment. And the Mass is the memorial of His Passover, of His "exodus," which He carried out for us, to make us come out of slavery and to introduce us in the Promised Land of eternal life. It's not merely a recollection no, it's more: it makes present what happened 20 centuries ago. The Eucharist always leads us to the summit of God's action of salvation: the Lord Jesus, making Himself broken bread for us, sheds on us all His mercy and His love, as He did on the cross, so as to renew our heart, our existence and our way of relating to Him and to brothers. To take part in the Mass, in particular on Sunday, means to enter into the victory of the Risen One, to be illumined by His light, warmed by His warmth. Participation in the Eucharist makes us enter in Christ's Paschal Mystery, making us pass with Him from death to life, namely, there in Calvary. The Mass is to relive Calvary, it's not a show.

Apostleship of Prayer - Papal Intention for December

The Elderly - That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.



Beginning the Church's liturgical year, Advent (from, "ad-venire" in Latin or "to come to") is the season encompassing the four Sundays (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord. In this season, we recall two central elements of our faith: the final coming of the Lord in glory and the incarnation of the Lord in the birth of Jesus. The key themes of the Advent season are watchful waiting, preparation, and justice. In this new liturgical year, the Gospel of Luke will be the primary Gospel proclaimed.

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE



In the home the Christmas tree may be blessed by a parent or another family member, in connection with the evening meal on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time on Christmas Day.

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree. May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts. May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The lights of the tree are then illuminated.

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS MANGER OR NATIVITY SCENE

In its present form the custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas Eve of 1223. The blessing of the Christmas manger or nativity scene may take place on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time. When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another family member.



Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Patroness of the Americas Feast Day in the USA December 12th



At dawn on December 9, 1531, on Tepeyac Hill near Mexico City, Our Blessed Lady appeared to Juan Diego, an Aztec Indian (canonized on July 31, 2002, as Saint Juan Diego by Pope John Paul II). While on his way to attend mass he heard sounds of chirping birds and beautiful music, wondering where it was coming from and its meaning. Then he heard a voice calling him. There she revealed herself to him as "the Ever Virgin Mother of the True God," and made known her desire that a Shrine be built there to bear witness to her love, her compassion, and her protection. She sent him to Bishop Juan de Zumarraga in Mexico City to request her great desire.

The Bishop dismissed the humble Indian without paying attention to his story. Two more times Our Lady appeared to Juan, requesting him to deliver the same favor. He did as she asked and finally the Bishop asked for a sign. So, Juan reported this to her and she promised to grant a sign the following morning.

On December 12, while on his way to bring a priest to his dying uncle, Our Lady appeared to him for the fourth time. She assured him of his uncle's recovery and told him to gather fresh roses which he would find growing on the frosty summit of the rocky and barren hill. This done, she arranged the castilian roses in his tilma (cloak) and hurried him to the Bishop, giving him an account of their origin. This is what is known as "The Miracle of the pink roses."

To the Bishop's amazement, when Juan opened up his tilma before him there was painted upon it a miraculous beautiful image of Our Lady exactly as she had appeared on Mount Tepeyac. The Bishop prostrated himself in veneration and soon after began the building of the Shrine on the top of Mount Tepeyac. The Basilica in Mexico City is the most important Shrine to Our Blessed mother, under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe in all the American continents.

Juan Diego's cloak, marvelously preserved, can still be seen behind the main altar in the new Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which is near the original Basilica site she requested. Millions from all over Mexico and the world make their way to venerate Our Blessed Mother and to implore her intercession. She stated to Juan, "Am I not here as your Mother?"




December 11th – 6:30pm, St. Peter's
December 14th – 6:30pm, St. Thomas
December 15th – 6:30pm, Holy Child

December - The Month of Divine Infancy

December, the month of Divine Infancy, celebrates the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ. The pairing of words in this title is a reflection of the mystery of Jesus' nature. We each are one person with one nature. However, Jesus is one person with two natures. He is fully God and fully man, that is, He is 100% God and 100% man. Jesus' Incarnation is one of the most important moments in history and its memorial is prepared for in the liturgical season of Advent, a four week anticipation.

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A Gift in Your Will

We hope you'll consider including a gift to St. Peter's Church in your will or living trust. Called a charitable bequest, just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed. Share this sample bequest language for St. Peter's Church with your estate planning attorney:

"I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to St. Peter's Church, Wellsboro [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."

Parish Prayer List



PRAYERS
Needed For...

Nettie Mays, Nan Bowser, Trish Knowlton, Judy Nagel, Sue Evert, Valerie Tobin, Shirley Mekos Broughton, Donna Brennan, Bob Erway, Mary Mekos, Nick Cavagnaro, Antoinette Davis, Jonathan Hardman, Stephen Hurd, Stephanie Hemighauf, Suzie Alexander, Larry Sasani, Wendy Doan-Newcomb, Syler Sullivan, Adrienne Gilbert, Rita Grinnan, Bob Murphy, Sylvia Smith, Susan Cleveland, Tom Mohr, Carol Weatherby, Carol Shine, Teresa Pavlock, Jerry Pierce, Joann Black, Gabriel, Melissa & Daniel Espinoza, Lori Lopaz, Patricia Quattrone, Larry Jackson, Katie Seip, Lisa Jones, Grace Bickham, Floyd Williammee, Renee Kennedy, Gay Furlong, Elsa DiBernardo, Fran Rose, Christine Palmer, June Sherman, Kathy Smith, Tim Bogaczyk, Beth Valdez, Virginia Shaefer, Charles Barrett, Joe Engel, Darleen Kohler, Victoria Salerno, Tony Pranses, Bob Snyder, Don Brooks, Kathy Macensky, Paul Beuter, Jerry Eckert, Michael Liebner, Cole Salerno, Mark Kilmer, Margaret Barnett, Richard Nowak, Frank Dziengowski, Jr., Stephen Horvatch, Callie Cavanaugh, Fr. Paul Mullen, Jane Johnson, Gus Vargas, Helene Carpenter, Michele Bush, Clark Hewitt, Larry Mommicco, Loretta Nonnenmacher, Everett Dean Brown, Roberta Mahar, Bud Boyce, Mary Lou Bonk, Clare Vargas, Marian Coolidge, Kay Evans, Delores Scuderi, Colleen Rose, Elizabeth Payne, Ann Osgood, and Brenden Young.



Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.