



### **Third Sunday of Advent ~December 17, 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](http://www.stpeterswellsboro.org) ~ Email: [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

#### **Rectory Office Hours**

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

#### **Parish Staff**

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – [Dbechtel100@yahoo.com](mailto:Dbechtel100@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Connie Spang – [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – [stpadm@ptd.net](mailto:stpadm@ptd.net)

Directors of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier & Melissa Mann –  
[stpreled@ptd.net](mailto: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 – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12<sup>th</sup> 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

# Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
<b>Monday 12/18</b> <i>Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25</i>	No Mass	
<b>Tuesday 12/19</b> <i>Jgs 13:2-7,24-25; Lk 1:5-25</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Louis LuBera (Dio & Marilyn de Guzman)
<b>Wednesday 12/20</b> <i>Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Eugene David Getgen (Joan Getgen)
<b>Thursday 12/21</b> <i>Sg 2:8-14; Lk 1:39-45</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Mary Ann Greves (Don & Lucy Whitney)
<b>Friday 12/22</b> <i>1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Erma Mitchell (Wayne & Sue Singer)
<b>Saturday 12/23</b> <i>Mal 3:1-4.23-24; Lk 1:57-66</i>	4:00-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confession In Memory of Dan Walch (A Friend)
<b>Sunday 12/24</b> <i>2 Sm 7:1-5,8-12,14,16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38</i>	8:30am 4:00pm 6:00pm	In Memory of Eric Swendrowski (Joe & Carol Grace) Our Christmas Intentions Our Christmas Intentions

## The Week Ahead

### SUNDAY, December 17, 2017

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

R.C.I.A. – 9:30am, Parish Center

Youth Group Event – 10:45am, Parish Center

### TUESDAY, December 19, 2017

Adoration – 11:00am-7:00pm; Benediction 6:45pm

(*Note: Adoration will begin at 11:00am*)

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

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

### WEDNESDAY, December 20, 2017

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

Adult Faith Formation Movie Night–6:30pm, Parish Center

### THURSDAY, December 21, 2017

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

### FRIDAY, December 22, 2017

Rectory Closed

### SUNDAY, December 24, 2017

No Religious Education Classes

## 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

This week's Sanctuary Candle is offered in Honor of  
**Sophie & Henry** (Mike & Patti Knighton)

## Ministers of the Altar Schedule

### December 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup>

#### **5:00pm**

Servers: W.Poirier, J.Poirier, A.Banik, M.Bergen

Lectors: D.Bleggi, P.Walrath

E. Min.: G.Poirier, E.Evert, B.Chiamonte, T.Straniere

#### **8:30am**

Servers: A.Dunkel, J.Lubera, L.Gordon

Lectors: D.Gordon, M.Stirnman

E. Min.: N.Ostapowicz, M.Sampson, D.deGuzman, M. Stirnman

### December 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup>

#### **4:00pm (Christmas Eve)**

Servers: L.Singer, Z. Singer, M. Mann. W.Steinbacher

Lectors: A.Singer, C.Evert

E. Min.: V.Anthony, A.Singer, E.Evert, I. Dziengowski

#### **6:00pm (Christmas Eve)**

Servers: J.Gordon, L.Gordon, W.Feil

Lectors: H.Sampson, M.Sampson

E. Min.: D.Sherman, G.Brown, C.Lannak, M.Bialas

#### **10:00am (Christmas Day)**

Servers: A.Dunkel, L.Germeno, X.Tellgren

Lectors: P.Kramer, R.Kramer

E. Min.: K.Tellgren, T.Straniere, D.Stager, L.Stager

**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.) A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

**FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS** - This month's food pantry items are: **Creamy Peanut Butter & Grape Jelly.** A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

## ST. THOMAS/ST. CATHERINE MASS SCHEDULE

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

Sunday, St. Thomas, Elkland – 11:30am



## Liturgical Reflection

Third Sunday of Advent

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11**

It is not clear who the anointed one is that speaks this oracle. It may be a generic blessing of every prophet or of Isaiah himself. It is this passage that Jesus uses to initiate his public ministry after he reads it from the scroll in his hometown synagogue (Luke 4:16-20) and speaks of the Spirit of God being upon the Messiah. The mission of the anointed one is extended to those who are in special need of salvation, but the “year of favor” is clearly for everyone.

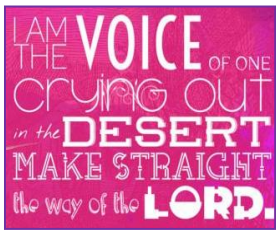
**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Luke 1:46-50, 53-54**

The text for the psalm is taken from Luke’s account of the Gospel, the words we know as the Magnificat. It is a hymn of praise uttered by Mary during her visit with Elizabeth. The theme echoes that of the First Reading; the Lord is praised for “great things” that have been done for those who are lowly. But the Lord will bestow blessings on the whole people, just as he promised. The fulfillment of that promise will be realized in the coming of the Messiah.

**SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

This part of St. Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians is called the paranesis. It is a section of last-minute instructions found at the end of most of Paul’s letters. Paul’s exhortation to the Thessalonians is in light of the future coming of the Lord. This is apocalyptic writing; the coming of the Lord in glory is the reason for living in a particular way in the meantime. His instruction is terse: rejoice, pray, give thanks. In these ways they will make good use of their gifts and be ready and blameless when the Lord comes.

**GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28**



This passage from John is a more descriptive account of John’s identity as the precursor of Jesus the Messiah. Although the focus of the question, “Who are you?” is on John, he makes it clear that he is not the one the people have been

waiting for. John regards himself as a messenger, a herald of great news. His mission is to prepare the people for the coming of the Light that would transform their lives, through conversion of hearts to justice and righteousness.

### PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday. It is a time to rejoice because our Advent journey had almost come to an end. It is also, however, a time to rejoice because we have been able to simplify our lives and draw our hearts closer to God’s way throughout Advent. This brings us true joy. Our society sometimes presents the message that the more we accumulate, the happier we will be. This is especially true in the shopping season before Christmas. True joy comes from the peace that we find when we become simple and childlike. Our turning away from sin and bad habits helps us to reach that state.

## Parish Activities and Information

### RECTORY CLOSED

The Rectory will be closed on December 22<sup>nd</sup> through 26<sup>th</sup> and December 29<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup>. In the event of an emergency, please call the emergency numbers found on the front of the bulletin. Fr. Bechtel will return your call as soon as possible.

### 2018 CALENDARS ARE HERE

The 2018 Catholic family calendars have arrived and can be found at each entrance to the church and on the handout table. Special thanks to Tussey-Mosher Funeral Home for their full sponsorship of these beautiful calendars.

### HOMELESS SHELTER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



**Thank you** to everyone who recently volunteered recently to staff the homeless shelter and prepare meals for guests! Your assistance to those in the most need in our community is appreciated! The schedule for 2018 has

been released. St. Peter's is on again next month, from January 7<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>. As a result we are again asking for people to encounter and minister to the needs of the poor in our area in a tangible way. Please consider signing up to help staff the shelter on Charleston Road from 5:00-9:00pm during this week, or preparing a meal for guests. To sign up or questions please contact Tara Gordon at 570-439-0006 or David Gordon at 570-439-0005. Signup sheets can be found on the hand out table on the side of the 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 24<sup>th</sup>**

### 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.

### A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Please Due to a problem with our organ, A Festival of Lessons and Carols has been **cancelled** for this year.

### SANCTUARY CANDLES

A candle is kept burning day and night wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in Catholic churches. 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. Please call the rectory to reserve a week.



## CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ST. PETER'S



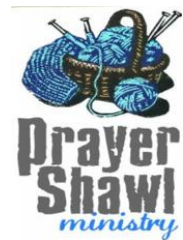
Are you going to be by yourself this Christmas? Are you not feeling up to cooking a big dinner? Would your family enjoy being with others this Christmas? Everyone is invited to share a meal and fellowship on Christmas Day. Dinner will be served at 12:00pm in the Parish Center. Meat and beverage will 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 19<sup>th</sup> by calling Betsy and Dan Gordon at 570-724-7259 or email [danbg77@gmail.com](mailto:danbg77@gmail.com). Reservations should include name, # attending, and the dish you are bringing.

## ADULT FAITH FORMATION MOVIE NIGHT

On Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> through February 28<sup>th</sup> from 7:00-9:00pm. There will also be a Spirit-filled Retreat on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>.



*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](mailto: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 17<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Activity – 10:45am-12:15pm

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

**Youth  
Group**



## Youth Group Service *Ringing the bells for the Salvation Army*

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## That's The Way It Is!



Why did Vatican II happen? Why are there conflicting interpretations about what the council intended and whether the council went far enough? Why are two of the most prominent and brilliant theologians who were present at the council, Hans Kung and Joseph Ratzinger

divided on the intentions of the council, the nature of the Church and pretty much everything else that came out of Vatican II?

I think the answer to this question boils down to the reason why there are conflicting interpretations of pretty much every document that was ever written—from the Bible to the US Constitution: the presuppositions in which one approaches the documents. Presuppositions are those assumptions that are not in the document itself. They are things that are assumed in order to interpret the document and make sense of the document. When it comes to the US Constitution, I am sure we have all heard about the Originalist interpretation vs. the pragmatic vs. the living breathing document approach.

These different and in some ways mutually opposed schools of thought are going to determine how a lawyer or judge reads and understands the Constitution. A justice of the Originalist school is going to tend to interpret the amendments very differently than a justice of the pragmatist or living breathing document approach. These conflicting interpretations depend on the presuppositions that the justices each bring to the document when they interpret the document and issue opinions.

When it comes to Vatican II, the same thing applies. In this case there are two mutually opposed schools of thought. The first school of thought is the Hermeneutic of Rupture. This school of thought sees Vatican II as having little to no relationship to what came before. It sees Vatican II as more of a revolution than a reform. It sees Vatican II

as making a definitive break from the past and marking new territory. It sees Vatican II as seeking to undo and throw out previous doctrine and re-fashion the Catholic Faith in the image of culture rather than the other way around. Theologians who follow this school of thought include Hans Kung, Richard McBrien and Charlie Curran. Many of these theologians believe either the council did not go far enough—and or—the bishops and pope failed to implement the council correctly.

The second school of thought is Hermeneutic of Continuity. This school of thought sees Vatican II as a development of Church tradition, a growth of Church tradition; Vatican II did not change church teaching, Vatican II updated the appearances of Catholicism and changed the way the Church speaks to and interacts with the world. Prior to Vatican II, Church teaching was presented in Scholastic and Neo-Scholastic language. Still reeling from the Protestant Reformation—even centuries after the Reformation had taken place, Church teaching was presented in a defensive reactionary way. This way of speaking and interacting with the world was useful when the times called for it. People, however no longer thought or spoke in this fashion in the modern world. Thus Vatican II sought to update and modernize her language of theology and the way she interacts with the world. Theologians of this school include Joseph Ratzinger, John Paul II, Yves Congar, Henri DeLubac, etc.

Even without an official teaching of the Church telling us which hermeneutic is authentic, we should be able to see that the Hermeneutic of Continuity is the proper approach to reading and interpreting the intentions of the council, the correct implementation of the council and the interpretation of the council documents. Church teaching does not change it grows, develops and matures. Church teaching does not evolve it develops, grows and matures. What is the difference? When something is said to evolve, something becomes something else; a fish becomes a bird for example. When something grows, develops and matures, the essence of what it is remains the same. The appearances it takes depend on what stage of development it is in; a fetus-infant-toddler-child-pre-teen-teen, etc. Human beings often bear little resemblance in appearance in their elderly years to when they were infants, children, young adults, etc. They are, however, the same person—just more developed or mature.

The Catholic Faith grows and develops in an analogous way that a human being grows and develops. The Faith ever remains the same, but the appearances of the Church, the way the Church speaks and interacts with the world are going to depend on cultural context in a given historical period. The Second Vatican Council, then, sought to update the appearances of the Church, the language of theology and the manner the Church interacts with the world. The Second Vatican Council had no intention of changing the essence of the Faith.

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

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## Stewardship

Sunday Collection for December 10, 2017	\$ 8,322.50
(Includes Immaculate Conception Collection of \$1,766.50)	
Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses	<u>\$ 5,750.00</u>
Difference	\$ 2,572.50
Year to Date Budget Variance	\$ 2,616.91
Retirement Fund for Religious	\$ 888.30

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

## Diocese of Scranton News

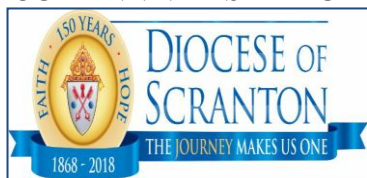
**DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL**  
St. Peter's annual appeal goal is \$46,500. We currently have raised \$46,711.5 and have met our goal!



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

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### 150<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup>. 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 150<sup>th</sup> 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 command to "rejoice always" may seem like a demanding requirement, given the fact that things do not always go our way, because of circumstances beyond our control. Yet this rejoicing is always possible, because it is based on the salvation which Christ has come to bring. This justice, manifested when God rescues his people (for example, from slavery in Egypt) has come to us in the Divine Child whose birth we are preparing to celebrate. We who are rescued must rescue the poor and weak among us, including the poorest and weakest, the unborn children. To celebrate the God who comes to free the oppressed, and has freed us, means to commit ourselves to ending oppression in our culture.

## Mass Schedule

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, Christmas,  
Holy Family, & Mary, the Holy Mother of God

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, December 24<sup>th</sup>

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

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

Christmas Day ~ 10:00am

Holy Family, December 31<sup>st</sup>

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 1<sup>st</sup>.)

## News from the Vatican

### WORRIED? FEARFUL? GO TO SUNDAY MASS



For the strength you need to get through everyday life, go to Mass. God waits to meet us on Sundays, to give us the weekly nourishment that will get us through every week, and the rest of our lives. The Pope recalled the important place of Sunday, the Feast of the Resurrection, since the time of the Apostles. "Brothers and sisters, the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the life of the Church. From the beginning, the first disciples met on the first day of the week, the day when Jesus rose from the dead, to live in communion with Him. The Risen Christ meets the baptized gathered on Sunday. Sunday is for us, one day sanctified by the Eucharistic celebration, the living presence of the Lord among us who comes to meet us. Participation in Sunday Mass gives the Baptized strength necessary to live as a Christian all week, until eternal life. Without Christ, we are dominated by the fatigue of everyday life, by fear of tomorrow. The Sunday encounter gives us the strength to live today with confidence and courage, and to walk in hope towards Sunday when we will live fully and forever with the Lord. "The Mass also tells us about this blessed rest to come. It is true that the quality of our Christian life is measured, first of all, by our capacity to love. But how can we practice the Gospel without going to draw, Sunday after Sunday, from the source of the Eucharist? But how can we really practice the Gospel without going to draw, Sunday after Sunday, from the source of the Eucharist?"

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### 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 Mark will be the primary Gospel proclaimed.



## The "O Antiphons" Of Advent

The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

**December 17 - O Wisdom** of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!

**December 18 - O Leader** of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!

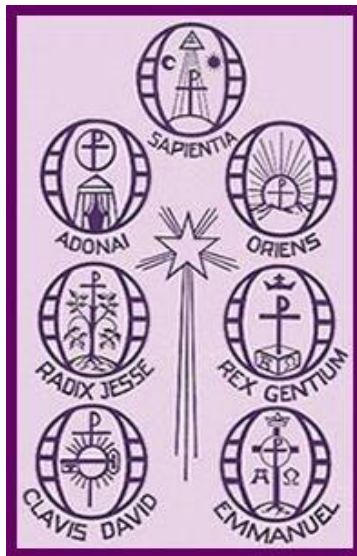
**December 19 - O Root** of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!

**December 20 - O Key** of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!

**December 21 - O Radiant Dawn**, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

**December 22 - O King** of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

**December 23 - O Emmanuel**, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!



## GAUDETE SUNDAY



"Rejoice: the Lord is nigh." As Christmas draws near, the Church emphasizes the joy which should be in our hearts over all that the birth of our Savior means for us. The great joy of Christians is to see the day drawing nigh when the Lord will come again in His glory to lead

them into His kingdom. The oft-repeated Veni ("Come") of Advent is an echo not only of the prophets but also of the conclusion of the Apocalypse of St. John: "Come, Lord Jesus," the last words of the New Testament.

The third Sunday of Advent (like the Fourth Sunday of Lent) is a day of joy in the midst of a penitential season. It is traditionally called **Gaudete Sunday**, from the Latin of the Entrance Antiphon for today: *Gaudete in Domino semper*, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice! The Lord is near" (Phil 4:4-5). The antiphon captures the mood of the entire liturgy as we move into the second part of Advent: there is a sense of joyful expectation, an awareness that the fulfillment of God's great plan for us is near. Like Lent, Advent is a penitential season, so the priest normally wears purple vestments. But on Gaudete Sunday, having passed the midpoint of Advent, the Church lightens the mood a little, and the priest may wear rose vestments. The change in color provides us with encouragement to continue our spiritual preparation—especially prayer and fasting—for Christmas. For this same reason, the third candle of the Advent wreath, first lit on Gaudete Sunday, is traditionally rose-colored. Gaudete Sunday has a counterpart in Lent: Laetare Sunday.

### 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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## 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.