



Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
<b>Monday 1/1</b> <i>Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; LK 2:16-21</i>	No Mass	
<b>Tuesday 1/2</b> <i>1 Jn 2:22-28; JN 1:19-28</i>	7:30am	In Honor of the Butler Family (Ann Vayansky)
<b>Wednesday 1/3</b> <i>1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Jn 1:29-34</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Nancy Diebel (Patrick & Catherine Lannak)
<b>Thursday 1/4</b> <i>1 Jn 3:7-10; Jn 1:35-42</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Kent Mann (Grab Family)
<b>Friday 1/5</b> <i>1 Jn 3:11-21; Jn 1:43-51</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession In Memory of Our Parents & Grandparents (Den & Adele Young)
<b>Saturday 1/6</b> <i>1 Jn 5:5-13; Mk 1:7-11</i>	8:15-8:30am 9:00am 4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confession In Memory of Matthew & Florence Waclawik (Family) Confessions In Memory of Robbie Butler (Frank & Ida Dziengowski)
<b>Sunday 1/7</b> <i>Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3,5-6; Mt 2:1-12</i>	8:30am	All Living and Deceased Members of St. Peter's Parish

## The Week Ahead

### SUNDAY, December 31, 2017

No Religious Education Classes

### MONDAY, January 1, 2017

Rectory Closed

### TUESDAY, January 2, 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, January 3, 2017

Finance Council Meeting – 8:00am, Rectory

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

### THURSDAY, January 4, 2017

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

### FRIDAY, January 5, 2017

Rectory Closed

### SUNDAY, January 7, 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

Virtus Training – 1:00pm, 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.)*

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

This week's Sanctuary Candle is offered in Memory of Deceased Members of St. Peter's Parish

## Ministers of the Altar Schedule

### January 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>

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

Servers: A.Banik, E.Hazelton, I.Hazelton

Lectors: C.Evert, D.Sherman

E. Min.: E.Evert, T.Straniere, G.Brown, I.Dziengowski

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

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

Lectors: D.Gordon, L.Gordon

E. Min.: T.Gamble, N.Ostapowicz, D. de Guzman, A.Singer

## 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.

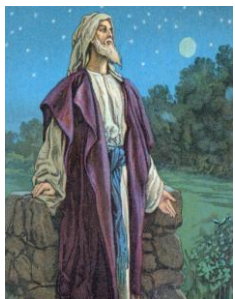
**Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults (R.C.I.A.)** - The R.C.I.A. prepares unbaptized adults for reception into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person and prepares them for full initiation into the faith. Contact the Rectory for more information.



## Liturgical Reflection

Feast of the Holy Family

**FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3**



The readings for this Feast of the Holy Family take us back to Jesus' roots in the family of Israel. We hear of the "first" Jewish parents, Abraham and Sarah, who received their son, Isaac, as a child promised to them in their old age, the reward for their fidelity to God. From them countless descendants as numerous as the stars have come forth.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 105**

God remembers his covenant forever. So it was when he remembered his promise to Abraham and Jacob, Abraham's grandson, with whom God renewed the covenant. The psalm is one of thanksgiving, not only in the house of Israel, but among the nations (Gentiles) as well.

**SECOND READING: Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19**

Once again, our focus is on Abraham and Sarah, this time from the Letter to the Hebrew's account of their fidelity and trust in God. We also hear of Abraham's total obedience and complete trust in God even to the point of offering his son Isaac in sacrifice, the very one on whom the fulfillment of God's promises depended.

**GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40**

Mary and Joseph are righteous Jews, faithful in their observance of the law. We see them here in the Temple in Jerusalem for the dedication of the child and the ritual purification of his mother in accord with the law of the Lord. We meet also the righteous Simeon and Anna the prophetess who encounter the child and his parents in the temple. Note Simeon's reference to the child as a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. Simeon also recognizes the oppositions the child will encounter and the sorrow his mother will bear. Anna speaks a prophetic word about the child to all who awaited the redemption of Israel. The Gospel reading ends with a summary statement about Jesus growing up in his hometown of Nazareth: "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom and favor of God was upon him." Luke is filling in one of the major gaps or time in Jesus' life – the time from his birth and infancy to the age of twelve. Nowhere else in the New Testament are details offered about the boy Jesus.



## Parish Activities and Information

### RECTORY CLOSED

The Rectory will be closed on Monday, 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.



### 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.



### 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.

## 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.



## Stewardship

There is no Financial Report this weekend, due to an early printing of the bulletin. A complete report will be in next weekend's bulletin.

## USCCB News

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF EASTER AND THE MOVEABLE FEASTS

The proclamation of the date of Easter and the other moveable feasts on Epiphany dates from a time when calendars were not readily available. It was necessary to make known the date of Easter in advance, since many celebrations of the liturgical year depend on its date. The number of Sundays that follow Epiphany, the date of Ash Wednesday, and the number of Sundays that follow Pentecost are all computed in relation to Easter.

Although calendars now give the date of Easter and the other feasts in the liturgical year for many years in advance, the Epiphany proclamation still has value. It is a reminder of the centrality of the resurrection of the Lord in the liturgical year and the importance of the great mysteries of faith which are celebrated each year.

Each year the proper dates for Ash Wednesday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, and the First Sunday of Advent must be inserted into the text. Those dates are found in the table which is included with the introductory documents of the Roman Missal. The form to be used for announcing each date is: the date of month, e.g., "the seventh day of April." On the Epiphany of the Lord, after the singing of the Gospel, a Deacon or cantor, in keeping with an ancient practice of Holy Church, announces from the ambo the moveable feasts of the current year according to the following text.

*Know, dear (brothers and sisters), that, as we have rejoiced at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so by leave of God's mercy we announce to you also the joy of his Resurrection, who is our Savior.*

*On the fourteenth day of February will fall Ash Wednesday, and the beginning of the fast of the most sacred Lenten season.*

*On the first day of April you will celebrate with joy Easter Day, the Paschal feast of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*On the tenth day of May will be the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*On the twentieth day of May, the feast of Pentecost.*

*On the third day of June, the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.*

*On the second day of December, the First Sunday of the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is honor and glory for ever and ever.*

*Amen.*

## That's The Way It Is!



The New Year 2018 is upon us. Have you ever wondered why we celebrate the New Year and why the New Year begins on January 1? I mean why not February 1? Why not March 1? Interestingly enough, New Year's Day is a civil holiday. The day is not fixed by any seasonal event. There is nothing particularly unique about January 1. It is just the day that was chosen to celebrate the New Year. Why?

Celebrating the New Year has its roots in pagan Rome. The god Janus was a god of new beginnings. Depictions of this god would have two faces: one looking forward and one looking back to the past. The name of the month of January comes from the name "Janus." We experience the shortest day of the year on December 20-22—depending on the exact time of the solstice. Though the day with the earliest sundown comes around December 8, the day with the shortest amount of light comes on the solstice. The sun has moved as far south of the equator as it will. The day after the solstice, the sun begins to move north again and our days get longer. January, therefore, seems to make the most sense as the month where we celebrate new beginnings.

In the history of mankind, there were different dates that different cultures celebrated the New Year. Some cultures celebrated the New Year on March 20. Other cultures celebrated the New Year on September 20, still others on December 20. The original Roman calendar was lunar based. There were only 10 months. This is why September means "7" even though today we record it as the ninth month. October means "8" but it is the tenth month. Numa Pontilius introduced January and February. The original New Year was March 1. The New Year was changed to January 1 as the civil New Year because that was the day the newly elected members of the Roman council took office. Julius Caesar introduced the beginnings of the solar calendar we use today. It was more accurate than the old lunar calendar. He decreed that January 1 would be the civil New Year in the Roman world.

Over time, this calendar began to become inaccurate. This is because Julian did not account for the fact that it does not take exactly 365 days for the earth to make one orbit around the sun. It actually takes a slightly longer time. Within four years, the calendar would be off by one day. Over time this built up and created problems. It was Pope Gregory who fixed this problem and introduced the modern calendar we all use today. Pope Gregory created the Leap Year. Every four years an extra day appears on our calendar in order to catch up the one day the calendar was off.

The Gregorian calendar was slow to catch on. The Protestants refused to follow it because they believed the anti-Christ pope was tricking them into worshipping on the wrong days. Even in the 13 original colonies the

Protestants still celebrated the New Year on March 1. The Easter Orthodox church did not adopt the calendar until 1917 and even today in their Liturgical calendar use a revised version of the Julian Calendar. This is why Eastern Orthodox Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter do not always correspond with the dates celebrated in the Catholic Church. Eventually, the Gregorian calendar was accepted by the majority of nations and people and we still use this calendar today.

The beautiful tune "Auld Lang Syne" is the traditional New Year's song. The song is sung at the conclusion of the old year and the beginning of the New Year to symbolize new beginnings and wishes for health and happiness in the New Year. The word "auld" means "old" "Lang Syne" means "long since." In English we might put it this way "Back in the day" or "Long, long ago."

I wish everyone a happy and healthy 2018. May God bring you blessings and love.

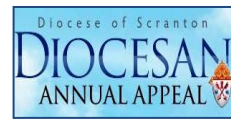
That's the Way it is!

The Reverend David W. Bechtel

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## Diocese of Scranton News

### DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL



St. Peter's annual appeal goal is \$46,500. We currently have raised \$48,261.50 and have met our goal!

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## Pro Life News

### PRIESTS FOR LIFE

The family is the "Sanctuary of Life" and the basic cell of society. The Holy Family, of course, is unique. One member is God, another is sinless, and the third is a saint. But the great lesson of today is that although God could have come into the world in any way he pleased, he chose to become a member of a family, obedient to his earthly parents, and yet totally devoted to the Heavenly Father's will, as we all must be.

He also shared the vulnerability that comes with being a member of a human family. "Herod is going to search for the child in order to destroy him." St. Joseph here plays the unspeakable role of protecting God. His readiness to do so, in the person of his child, speaks to every father about the role of protector, and to our whole society about the need we have for good fathers. The culture of life depends just as much on fathers making the right choices as on mothers doing so.

Strong families are an integral aspect of the Culture of Life. Today's preaching can focus on that fact. It is precisely the breakdown of family structure that increases the temptation to abort, or to resort to euthanasia or a lack of proper care for the elderly. On the other hand, the communion of persons that comes from giving oneself away to the other in selfless love is what creates the proper context for saying a generous "yes" to life. A helpful lesson to point out from the very word "family" is that it stands for "Forget About Me; I Love You."

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## News from the Vatican



### CHRISTMAS CAN LET GO OF GRUDGES, COMPLAINTS

Leave behind grudges and complaints, and let yourselves be consoled by the Lord. Pope Francis gave this reminder, during his daily morning Mass in his residence Casa Santa Marta, as he

reflected on the day's first reading from the Prophet Isaiah, who says God comes to give us peace.

The Pope observed that we — similar to the first disciples— have trouble letting ourselves being consoled by the miracles God performs in our lives, just like they had trouble immediately accepting the Resurrection.

What is easier for us, the Pope noted, is to console others, rather than to let ourselves be consoled.

“So often, we are attached to the negative sins and scars in our hearts and we prefer to remain there on our sick bed, like the paralyzed man in St Luke’s Gospel,” the Pope lamented, saying we do not want “to hear Jesus telling us to ‘Get up and walk!’”

We prefer, Francis suggested, to bear grudges and “to stew in our own juice” because then we remain masters of our own “hard hearts.”

“Like the paralyzed man,” the Pope explained, we prefer the ‘bitter root’ of original sin than the sweetness of God’s consolation.”

This bitterness, the Holy Father observed, always leads us to complain, “with a constant whining as the soundtrack to our lives.” The Pontiff recalled the prophet Job “as the Nobel prize winner of whiners,” who complained about all that God did.

Faced with our complaining, the Church, the Pope underscored, says we must have courage.

Pope Francis concluded, urging those present to let God give them peace, and to look into their consciences and hearts, to let go of the bitterness, sadness, and complaints.

### Apostleship of Prayer - Papal Intention for January

*Evangelization: Religious Minorities in Asia* – That Christians, and other religious minorities in Asian countries, may be able to practice their faith in full freedom.

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## CHRISTMAS SEASON

December 25 - January 8

Christmas is a privileged opportunity to meditate on the meaning and value of our existence. The approach of this Solemnity helps us on the one hand to reflect on the drama of history in which people, injured by sin, are perennially in search of happiness and of a fulfilling sense of life and death; and on the other, it urges us to meditate on the merciful kindness of God who came to man to communicate to him directly the Truth that saves, and to enable him to partake in his friendship and his life. Therefore let us prepare ourselves for Christmas with humility and simplicity, making ourselves ready to receive as a gift the light, joy and peace that shine from this mystery.

Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. It is the feast of the incarnation, the feast of God becoming flesh (the Latin "in carne" means "enfleshment"). It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. Because of this belief, God is not only Transcendent, but also wholly Immanent, Emmanuel (God-with-us). While remaining Transcendent (meaning we must rise above our present condition to reach Him), He is at the same time Immanent (meaning He is with us as we rise toward Him). Every Eucharist is like Christmas where the bread and wine are transformed into His flesh, His Body and Blood, and, in a sense, He is born anew on the altar.

The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts, and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him...including the fact that he was born to die for us.

The Christmas tree and the Nativity scene are popular symbols of the season and a tradition in many Christian homes. It is also traditional to exchange Christmas gifts with family and friends as a way to honor God the Father's gift of his only son to the world. Having received the gift of Christ, we naturally want to pass that gift along to our loved ones.

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*“If the dream of a peaceful world is shared by all,  
then humanity can become more and more a universal  
family and our earth a true common home.”*

*Pope Francis 2017*

*January 1<sup>st</sup> is the World Day of Peace!*



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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.*