

PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW
Stewardship Report – Treasury
WEEKLY COLLECTION

<u>Budgeted Amount:</u>	\$5,000.00
<u>Sunday Collection – 12/17/17</u>	\$3,184.00
<u>Retired Religious Fund Collection – 12/17/17</u>	\$ 116.00

Please support St. Monica’s Church by contributing to our Annual Campaign. Forms are located at the Church and Hall exits. We thank you for your generosity.

Campaign Statistics as of 12/6/2017

Total # of Households:	444
Total # Pledged:	70
% of Participation:	15.77%
Total Amount Pledged:	\$21,945.00
Total Amount Paid:	\$18,523.34
Average Pledge:	\$313.50
% of Pledges Collected:	84.41%

We are very grateful to those who have made a pledge to our Annual Campaign. As you can see from the report above, we are halfway to our goal of \$40,000. We hope that those who have not sent in their pledge would consider doing so. This campaign is vital to our parish each year in meeting our expenses and assessments. Whatever you can give is always greatly appreciated and we are sincerely grateful.

The Sanctuary Lamp is given this week:
In Memory of: All deceased family members and friends
Given by: The Vernacchio Family

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

12/25	MON:	9:00a	<u>FOR ALL IN WHOSE MEMORY FLOWERS HAVE BEEN PLACED AT THE ALTAR</u>
12/26	TUES:	9:00a	Edward & Josephine Krol
12/27	WED:	9:00a	No Mass Today
12/28	THU:	9:00a	People of the Parish
12/29	FRI:	9:00a	Jack Hingel
12/30	SAT:	5:00p	Ann Naused (LIV) Jack Hingel Hilary Battaglia Victor DiGerolamo
12/31	SUN:	8:00a	Elise & Ella Rodriguez (LIV) People of the Parish
		10:00a	Sr. Mildred Zanetti Hilary & John Battaglia Bertha Giaguz
		11:45a	Joan Adams Steve Bartos

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 24, 2017

WEEKLY/MONTHLY PARISH EVENTS

COFFEE & DONUTS – are served after 8:00 a.m. Mass on the first Sunday of each month in the Church Hall. All are invited to join us.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION –Wednesdays at 6:30pm in the Rectory Meeting Room. Weekly reading/ reflection of the Sunday Scriptures – fellowship time & refreshments follow.

ST. MONICA’S LEISURE GROUP - There will be no meetings of St. Monica's Leisure Group during the months of January and February. Meetings will resume beginning Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 12:00 noon in the Church Hall. We take this opportunity to thank our members for helping to make the Leisure Group a success during the past year, and look forward to getting together again in March.
 --- Grace and Mike Casalino

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Rectory Meeting Room. The current book is entitled, “God of the Fairy Tale.”

Helping Hands meets the second Tuesday of every month in the Rectory Meeting Room at 7:30 p.m.

SPECIAL DEVOTIONS AT ST. MONICA’S

Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal – every Tuesday after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

Chaplet of the Divine Mercy - Every Friday after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – First Friday of the month after the 9:00 A.M. Mass until 10:00 A.M.

ST. MONICA’S CHURCH – Contact info

Phone # 973-875-4521 Fax # 973-875-7538

Parish office hours: 9:30– 1:30pm Mon-Fri

Website: www.stmonicasussex.org

Email: stmonica@ptd.net

THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25.

Deadline for bulletin submissions: Tuesday of each week for information to be printed on the following Sunday. Email to stmonica@ptd.net

READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Sunday - 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

Monday - Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25

Night: Is 9:1-6; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14

Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20

Day: Is 52:7-10; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Tuesday - Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22

Wednesday - 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Thursday - 1 Jn 1:5—2:2; Mt 2:13-18

Friday - 1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:22-35

Saturday - 1 Jn 2:12-17; Lk 2:36-40

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS:

MASS ATTENDANCE – It is a very important and an integral part of your son/daughter’s faith journey as they prepare for the reception of Confirmation. We ask that you make every effort to attend each week.

CALENDAR:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	YM Class – beginning with the 5pm Mass, followed by a light dinner, then class Phase I & II –
Sunday	Jan 7th	Make-up class – 6:30 to 8:30 – no dinner

GRADES 7 & 8

CALENDAR:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	Rel. Ed. Class – beginning with the 5pm Mass Followed by a light dinner then class 7 th & 8 th Gr.
Sunday	Jan. 7 th	Make-up class – 6:30 to 8:30 – no dinner

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Grades 1 and 2:

Sunday,	Jan. 14 th	Class – 9:30am to 11:30am
Sunday,	Jan. 28 th	Class – 9:30am to 11:30am

Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	Class – 9am to 11am
Saturday	Jan. 20 th	Class – 9am to 11am

WE WISH ALL OUR FAMILIES A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN – This is celebrated every Sunday at the 10am Mass. We encourage all families with children in Grades 1 to 4 to have your son/daughter participate in this as part of their faith formation. If anyone is interested in helping to teach our children in this important ministry, please call the rectory.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS 2017

Sunday, December 24th – CHRISTMAS EVE (Evening Masses)

5:00 pm – Family Mass – Nativity Pageant

8:00 pm

10:30 pm – “Midnight Mass” – St. Monica’s Choir

Though traditionally associated with the actual stroke of the clock at 12:00 midnight, the term “Midnight Mass” refers more to the title of the Mass - with its own specific scripture readings and prayers. Here at St. Monica’s all the Masses celebrated on Christmas use the “Mass at Midnight” because in it are the Christmas stories with which we are most familiar. The Mass at 10:30 pm will in fact be the “traditional” Midnight Mass but rather than begin at Midnight, it will end before Midnight.

*Parking in the Presbyterian Church parking lot is permissible **except for 5:00pm and 8:00pm Masses on Christmas Eve.** The Presbyterian Church begins their Christmas Eve service at 7:30pm and needs its parking facility while our 5:00 Mass is still going on.*

Monday, December 25th – CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 am and 11:45 am (No Mass at 8:00 am)

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Saturday, December 30th - 5:00 pm

Sunday, December 31st - 8:00 am, 10:00 am & 11:45 am

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Monday, January 1st - 10:00 am

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday, January 6th - 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 7th - 8:00 am, 10:00 am & 11:45 am

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

King David plans to build a temple to honor God. But God tells Nathan the Prophet that instead he will give David rest from his enemies, and ensure that both his house and community will be protected forever.

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

In this letter of Paul to the Romans, he explains that the gospel reveals the mystery that had been hidden for many ages. Now it has been made known to all, so that they may believe, obey, and give glory through Jesus Christ forever.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

The Virgin Mary is approached by the angel Gabriel, who tells her that she has been chosen to bear the Son of God. Mary is first afraid, yet shows her unquestioning faith when she simply says, "Let it be done to me as you say."

HIS WORD TODAY by Rev. William J. Reilly

Fourth Sunday of Advent

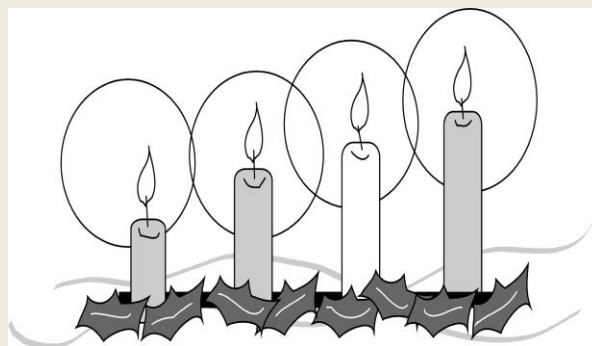
December 24, 2017

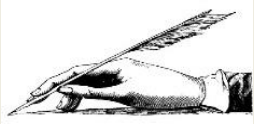
"Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a son, and give Him the name Jesus. Great will be His dignity and He will be called Son of the Most High."

The great moment in the history of salvation, began with the visit of the angel Gabriel and the invitation to be the mother of Jesus. It is not surprising that Mary hesitated, questioned and then consented. Wouldn't you? Her response 'I am the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say' redirected the course of human history.

The celebration of the Bethlehem event tonight, allows us not just to recall what happened, but to imitate Mary and permit the Lord to touch our lives in a truly special way. Our traditions and customs are rich as we relive Jesus' entering our lives again. The Simbang Gabi celebration of Filipino Catholics or Las Posadas of Latin Catholics lead us to the stable cave to meet and adore the Lord of history, the Lord of today. We have been praying 'Come Lord Jesus' for the four weeks of advent. Today, we welcome Him with joy.

As we celebrate this special night, may we be ready to open our door, not just to Joseph and Mary, but Christ who comes to us.





... *FROM THE DESK OF FR. JAN*

On Christmas we celebrate what we have been waiting for in 'joyful hope' for whole season of Advent! We celebrate that day when Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, became one of us and one with us, finding a home in our homes and in our hearts. On Christmas we commemorate the incarnation of God on earth!

The birth of Jesus Christ celebrates the grace given us, the fact that God in his love and compassion has come down to earth to dwell among us. The human birth of the Savior celebrates the fact that the boundless God had crossed over inconceivable and unknown borders and has personally bound and humbled Himself to dwell with us as a man. Christmas, in other words, celebrates the fact that the infinite God, at a point in time, crossed an unimaginable border and personally entered our world.

Why did God have to come in person to enter our world? In order to repay a debt he did not owe because we owed a debt (original sin) which we were unable to pay. God sought us out in our dire need and, finding us, chose to dwell among us. The birth of Jesus Christ is the incarnation of God's love and desire to save us, to be with us and to have us be with him. But from what has Jesus saved us? The Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles make it clear that Jesus has come to save us from the power of darkness and from slavery to sin. Sin enslaves us to the power of darkness and evil, and results in death. Sin is not just a rejection of God's laws and teachings, but sin is a rejection of God's love, His goodness, and what's more, sin is a rejection of a life united with God, who is our only source of life. Without God there is no life, there is only misery of darkness and death. So God seeing our misery promised to save us. He did so by sending His Son, Jesus, to become one of us, who took all of our sins upon Himself, and after paying the price of sin which is death, Christ conquered the power of sin and death and restored life.

So Every Christmas when we celebrate the birth of Baby Jesus, we commemorate the birth of the Savior of the world. When we see Christ as he truly is – the Savior of the world- Christmas comes alive with celebration of love and joy, peace and hope that never ends.

The Christmas image of Jesus is that of a light shining in the darkness. In Christmas we celebrate the fact that when Jesus entered our darkened world light and hope also entered. What Jesus was to the world of his time, He wants us to be to the world of our time. We too must be a beam of light in the midst of darkness. We too must be a ray of hope in the midst of despair.

Christmas is an invitation for each one of us to be for the world what Jesus was to his world. Like the Son of God, we are born to love and to serve as he did. Do we truly love our neighbor? Do we wish to be with him/her and help him/her? Each one of us has something valuable to give. May each one of us learn how to love our neighbor and to use things in service of that love. May we learn from Jesus to relate to one another in the power of love and not in love of power.

The gift of Christmas is Christ Himself. And it's not only once a year that he makes himself available. He is there for us always and in all ways. Let us always strive to share this message of salvation to all and to spread his consoling love especially to those who fail to recognize what Christmas truly means. If Jesus is to be born into today's world, it must be through us. We must be the beam of light in the midst of darkness. We must be the ray of hope in the midst of despair.

On behalf of our entire staff I wish you and your family a Blessed Christmas. May your Christmas be filled with love, peace, and joy.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL!