

DECEMBER 24, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2 SAMUEL. 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14a-16. I will fix a place for my people. I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance.

PSALM 89. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

ROMANS. 16: 25-27. To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever and ever.

LUKE. 1: 26-38. Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2017

OFFERTORY	\$3,781.75
ONLINE GIVING	\$50.00
CHRISTMAS 2017	\$261.00
CHRISTMAS 2016	\$11,641.56
SALARY/DUES	\$340.00
CARE & ED/PRIESTS	\$70.00
FLOWERS	\$25.00
GOOD SAMARITAN	\$17.00
RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT	\$66.00
SECOND COLLECTION	\$214.00

WEEKLY ENVELOPE STATISTICS:

\$1.00-\$5.00=83

\$6.00-\$10.00=59

\$11.00-\$20.00=60

\$21.00-\$30.00=35

OVER=14



MERRY CHRISTMAS

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TOTAL ENVELOPES USED=251

FROM 627 MAILINGS

CHILDREN'S= 14 FROM 125 SETS

WEEKLY DUES STATISTICS:

ABOVE \$5.00=2

\$5.00=54

BELOW \$5.00=4

TOTAL ENVELOPS USED=60

FROM 627 MAILINGS

MASS INTENTIONS

INTENTIONS FOR OUR WEEKLY LITURGIES

SAT. 4:00 P.M. Thomas Walsh (The Family)

SUN. 8:00 A.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

SUN. 10:30 A.M. Tillie Docalovich (The Family)

VIGIL OF CHRISTMAS

SUN. 4:00 P.M. People of the Parish

SUN. 9:00 P.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

MON. 10:30 A.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

TUES. 9:00 A.M. Curtis J. Nicolio (The Family)

St. Stephen, The First Martyr

WED. 8:00 A.M. Mike Stachura (Wife, Ann Marie & Family)

St. John the Apostle, Evangelist

THU. 8:00 A.M. Decd of the Joseph Petorak Family (The Family)

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

FRI. 8:00 A.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

St. Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr

SAT. 4:00 P.M. Mary Tochelli (The Family)

SUN. 8:00 A.M. People of the Parish

SUN. 10:30 A.M. Alan & Paul Morcom (The Family)

SUN. 4:00 P.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

MON. 10:30 A.M. Christmas Novena Intentions

WORD OF LIFE: "An unexpected pregnancy can be difficult and

frightening time, and it's important that your friend knows you are thinking

of her and supporting her. ...Your support might be the only support she

receives. Even if we never know how, the smallest things we do can change

~Ussb Secretariat of pro-Life Activities

FOOD PANTRY: A new location for bread Basket of Northeastern

Pennsylvania has been established

at the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

Center, 425 Church Street, Archbald.

This site serves those residing in the

following zip code areas: 18403, 18433, 18411.

The food Pantry is opened every Tuesday from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00

Noon.

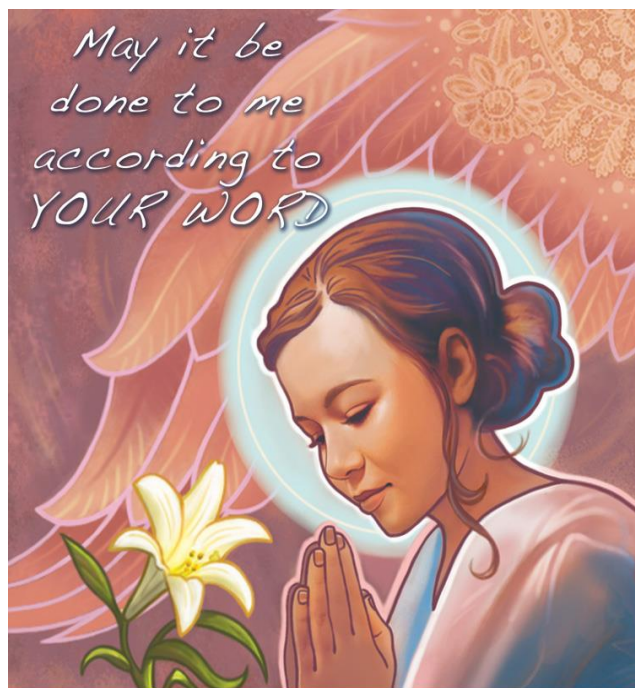


Food Pantry

TO ALL MINISTERS OF COMMUNION, LECTOR'S AND

ACOLYTES: The New schedule is available to be picked up in the

Sacristy.



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SPIRITUAL ADOPTION:

Your spiritually adopted baby is growing quite beautifully now. His weight is approaching 2 pounds.

Babies born prematurely at this time have a very good chance of surviving. The medical advances in caring for extremely small newborn infants are extraordinary indeed!



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE

OF THE SOUL OF:

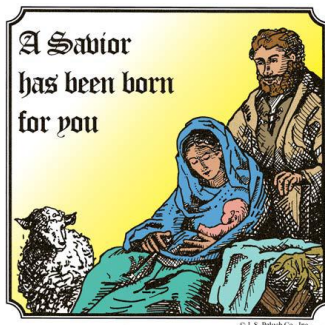
Jean McDermott, a parishioner who died this past week. *Eternal Rest Grant to her Oh Lord and may perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.*



GOD'S PROMISE:

The lengthy passage from Samuel is a wonderful exposition of God's promise to the house of David: that his throne would forever be gloriously occupied by his descendants. Hidden

in the mystery of the prophecy is the promise of the Savior, the Messiah, Son of God and Son of David. The prophet Nathan, speaking in God's name, poetically turns around David's plan to build a house for God, announces God's plan to build a "house." That is, a dynasty for David. From this house of David will come the Messiah, the Christ, not in kingly splendor as David rules, but as a humble man, destined to rule forever and over all. When God gives a gift, it's amazing what we are given—so different from what we ever could have imagined.



CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE

SUCCESS: Our annual Christmas Cookie Sale once again was a success! We were able to raise for our Parish **\$1,858.00**. There is no way this could have been accomplished without the help of so many. Our bakers are phenomenal! You always come through for us. Our volunteers are fabulous!! You give up precious time to help us. It is amazing to see how efficiently these women weigh, plate and wrap cookies, then clean up as if no one was there! It really is a joint effort to make this sale so successful. Thank you for all your support in baking, assembling the plates and purchasing the cookies.

~The Christmas Cookie Committee



CHILDREN'S ENVELOPES: These are discontinued since not enough of our young children are using them. The envelopes are a great cost to the parish.

CHRISTMAS NOVENA ENVELOPES: These are found in your packets and are for any of your Christmas Intentions. They will be placed on the altar for you intention to be celebrated in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

WALL CALENDARS, 2018: Special Thanks to Battenberg Furniture and Funeral Home for sponsoring our Wall Calendars for 2018. They are also available on the tables at the entrance of the Church.

BOLD CHOICES RETREAT:

(Finding Your Passion and Living It Fully)

Join us for a young adult (18-35) retreat at Saint Gabriel's Retreat Center, Clarks Summit January 5-6. The 24 hour retreat will include presentations and interactive sessions on prayer, making choices based on faith, finding your passion, the art of discernment, small group discussion & more. Cost is \$65.00. For more information and/or to register, visit vocations.dioceseofscranton.org or call 570-207-1452.



WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS:

The Women's Guild recently celebrated "The Joy of Christmas"-on December 11th with **32** members participating and Msgr. Tressler & Deacon Pat as our guests. Festive decorations, seasonal music, good food & great company were enjoyed by all. Thank you to all who braved the weather and especially to all who helped: Emilene-who bought the poinsettias, Annette & Ann Marie who coordinated reservations and funds. Beginning next year, 2018 you will be receiving your Annual Dues envelope. Although the dues is usually **\$5.00**, we would like to raise it to **\$10.00** so that we can better serve different activities that we put on throughout the year. So, if you can help support us by the slight increase, we would **GREATLY APPRECIATE IT!**



DIOCESAN CERTIFICATE IN LAY MONISTRY PROGRAM, 2018

The Office for Parish Life encourages parish leaders to consider application for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry for January, 2018! The Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry is a ministry formation program designed to equip and advance the servant leadership capacities of individuals serving their parish in areas such as:

- Pastoral Council,
- Director of Religious Education and Catechist,
- Liturgical Coordinator,
- Parish Staff,
- Volunteer Ministry teams,
- And others!

Through independent online study with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation, as well as regional workshops and opportunities for prayer and reflection, Diocesan Certificate candidates enrich their knowledge base, while also learning practical tools for effective parish ministry in their faith communities. The Office for parish Life anticipates welcoming new candidates into the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry program in the New Year. Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact Kitty Scanlan, Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation, at 570-207-2213, or by email at Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org for application information, materials and application submissions. Deadline to apply is Monday, January 15, 2018.

CHRISTMAS WAFERS: These are also available on the tables at the entrance of the Church. The donation is \$3.00.



VALLEY BLOOD COUNCIL:

Valley Blood Council of the American Red Cross will host a blood drive on Thursday, December 28, 2017 from 12:00 to 5:00 at VNA Home Hospice, Delaware Street, Olyphant. Lions, American Legion, St. Cyril & Methodius Church, Olyphant, Holy Cross Parish, Olyphant, First Catholic Slovak Union-St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 10, Olyphant and Valley Blood Council. Donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh 110 lbs.



LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 30/31
THE HOLY FAMILY
E. MINISTER
LECTOR
ACOLYTES

SAT. 4:00 P.M.
 Mr. Joseph Esgro (Chalice)
 Mrs. Julie Rzucidlo (Chalice)
 Mr. Ted Prusinski (Host)
 Mr. Michael Serniak (Host)
 Mrs. Ann M. Prusinski

SUN. 8:00 A.M.
 Mrs. Ann Selvenis (Chalice)
 Mr. Greg Selvenis (Chalice)
 Mrs. Keti Hosie (Host)
 Mrs. Mary Malec
 Thomas Pidgeon
 Michael Pidgeon

SUN. 10:30 A.M.
 Deacon Pat Massino (Chalice)
 Mrs. Ann M. Kitchura (Chalice)
 Miss Peg Trently (Host)
 Mrs. Mary Vadala
 Meghan Fawcett
 Grace Fawcett

DECEMBER 31/JAN 1
SOLEMNITY OF MARY
THE MOTHER OF GOD
E. MINISTER
LECTOR
ACOLYTES

SUN. 4:00 P.M.
 Deacon Pat Massino (Chalice)
 Mrs. Judy Hine (Chalice)
 Mr. Paul Carachilo (Host)
 Miss Annette O'Bell (Host)
 Mrs. Janice Joyce

MON. 10:30 A.M.
 Mr. Vince Bullet (Chalice)
 Miss Mary Golden (Chalice)
 Mr. Tony Spataro (Host)
 Mrs. Marie Spataro (Host)
 Mr. Charles Barlow
 Antonio Spataro
 Giovanni Spataro
 Dominico Spataro

PRESENTERS OF GIFTS

DECEMBER 30/31
THE HOLY FAMILY

SAT. 4:00 P.M.
 Tochelli Gam.

SUN. 8:00 A.M.
 OPEN

SUN. 10:30 A.M.
 Morcom Fam.

DECEMBER 31/JAN 1

SAT. 4:00 P.M.
 OPEN

SUN. 10:30 A.M.
 OPEN

FAILED MARRIAGES AND HEALING:

When marriages fail, Catholics may be unclear about their relationship to the Church.

"I am civilly divorced and not sure whether I can continue to receive the Eucharist or be a part of the parish Community."

"I am not sure about the status of my marriage." "It would be helpful to talk to someone who could explain it to me."

"My spouse and I would like to explore having our marriage blessed by the Church." "I don't know what an annulment really is and why I would want one. Also, I've heard their expensive." Do any of these voices sound like you or someone like you or someone you know? In the Diocese of Scranton, the Annulment Process is no more "user friendly" than you might expect, and there is no longer a processing fee. Please contact the Diocesan Tribunal Office (570-207-2246) to begin a conversation. It is possible to get clear answers to the answers to these questions and to renew your connection to the Church.



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS: His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton, and the Office for Parish Life wish to invite couples celebrating their 25th or 50th Wedding Anniversary in 2018 to a Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass **on Sunday, June 10**. The event includes a 2:30 P.M. Mass at St. Peter's Cathedral followed by a reception. Requests for an invitation, with a mailing address, should be made through the Parish Office before **March 12th**.



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2017

The child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. —
Luke 1:35

THE RECTORY OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, CHRISTMAS DAY. THE RECTORY OFFICE WILL BE OPENED TIL NOON ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD:

Reflecting on God's Word:

It's Christmas. And once again we choose to rejoice. Like the rejected couple and the poor shepherds in the Gospel reading, like the besieged and frightened Israelites, we choose to sing Christmas Carols and glorify God for the birth of the Savior, the light in our darkness. How can we rejoice in the face of all the trouble that surrounds us? And yet, how can we not rejoice when we remember all that God has done in Jesus? Jesus showed us the depth of God's passionate zeal for us. God's powerful passion for us brought the Lord of Hosts to share our trials as the poorest of the poor and to save us from our suffering by his suffering. We choose joyful hope because we believe that what God has done once, God is doing now and will do again. God is with us to save us here and now, no matter how troubled the world may be, in Jesus Christ. Confident in God's passionate zeal for all creation, we join "heaven and nature" in rejoicing over the "wonders of his love."



ADVENT PRAYER:

Let us rejoice for the imminent coming of our Redeemer
 And share this joy with others,
 Giving comfort and hope to the poor, the sick,
 And to people who are lonely and unhappy.
 Let us welcome the Lord who always comes
 And knocks at our door knocks at our heart,
 In order to draw near to us.
 He invites us to recognize his footsteps
 Among the brothers and sisters who pass beside us,
 Especially the weakest and most needy.
 Help us to hear God's voice in prayer
 And to serve God with compassion
 In our brothers and sisters,
 Especially the weakest and most needy,
 So as to be prepared for our Christmas appointment
 Preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus. ~Pope Francis