

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday – December 23 – 9:00 a.m.

ALEX KRISTON (Joan & Ray Grapsy)

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CHRISTMAS EVE

Tuesday, December 24

4 p.m. - PARISHIONERS OF ST. JOHN'S

(Preludes 3:30 pm)

6 p.m. - PARISHIONERS OF ST. JOHN'S

(Children's Mass)

10 p.m. PARISHIONERS OF ST. JOHN'S

(Carols 9:30 pm)

CHRISTMAS DAY

Wednesday - December 25

10 a.m. - PARISHIONERS OF ST. JOHN'S

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Thursday, December 26 – 9:00 a.m.

JAMES & EMMA BURNS (Joe & Ann Burns)

Friday, December 27 – 9:00 a.m.

JANET GRECO, 1st Anniv. (Lorraine Dallatore)

HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Saturday – December 28 – 5:00 p.m.

ROBERT G. SCHAEFFER (Helen Schaeffer)

Sunday – December 29 – 8:15 a.m.

LAMBERT PAULY (Margaret Paul & Family)

Sunday – December 29 – 10:30 a.m.

SPECIAL INTENTION (Mestishen Family)

CANDLE INTENTIONS

BVM – Special Intention

St. Joseph - IMO John & Florence Bentz

by Sterling & Joanne Hepler

Tabernacle - IMO JoAnn Heller

by Joe & Barbara Wollyung

Sanctuary Candles All Sanctuary Candles ...

IMO JoAnn Heller by Heller Family

Guardian Angels

1 & 2. Special Intention

PRAY FOR OUR SICK / DECEASED

We remember in prayer those who are ill. We commend to our Divine Lord all of our aged people and those residing in nursing homes.

Sick: *Margie Glunz, Loretta & Harold Raybould, Dr. David Harvey, Fred Maskerines, Francis & Mary Burns, Juleanne Steffan, Bill Zaharis, Pat Fedorick, Harriet Pfeffer, Chuck Majestic, Fred Maley, Robert Lynn, Ray Grapsy, Joe Christ, Mary Alfonsi*



2014 CALENDARS: Church calendars for the New Year are available at the church exits. Please feel free to take one, but please make sure they are not wasted. We wish to thank the **James E. Humphrey Funeral Home** for taking care of this expense.

WEEKLY COLLECTION

December 14/15: \$2,161.50;

Imp. & Rep.: \$811.00

We thank our parishioners for their sacrificial giving.

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

In this Sunday's first reading from Isaiah, it says: "Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God; let it be as deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky!" But the king refused God's request to ask, and he had no clue just how he wearied God. God wants our hunger, sorrow and desires.

Should we ask God for signs? Do we hesitate to look for signs? We learn that what is unexpected always has a cause, even if we haven't discovered it yet. There is nothing new under the sun, we say. Yet Advent is a time of awaiting the remarkable.

Our lives are full of signs of beginnings. When the robin returns, spring is close at hand. A first cry means the baby is born. To build peace after years of struggle, the late Nelson Mandela extends a hand to his jailers. Pope Francis kneels and washes the feet of a Muslim girl.

God promised that a child will be born to show how "God is with us." Who would have thought a son of God would be conceived by an unwed mother, be homeless at birth, tortured and crucified as a criminal, only to return to his friends after the resurrection? There is much more to reality than what we expect.

When we find our place with the poor, the child, the single mother, with our enemies, we are the signs that God is with us. Pope Francis warns us not to close our doors to sinners and live in our own righteousness. He writes, "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security." God's kingdom is not a fortress. When we move outside the walls, we share in the freedom of God.

As we come to the end of this Advent Season, I wish to extend to all of you, the Parish Family of St. John the Baptist, a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy, Holy and Healthy New Year. May we always recognize the new beginnings that happen in our lives as signs for our God to move us ever closer to Him.

Yours in Christ,
Father Dave

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

All are welcome to stop by the Rectory during office hours on weekdays to see the beautiful decorations and Christmas tree.

SCHEDULE CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 p.m. – Tuesday – December 24th

Reader: Carol Lasco

Euch.Min.: Debbie Guers, Mary Modesto, Joe Rehnert, Sharon Snyder, Phil Markovich, Carol Forster, Mary Jean Morgalis

Servers: Anthony Wojciechowsky, Megan Dalton, Noah Lecher, Andrew Viduszynski

Cantor: Debbie Purcell

6:00 p.m. Tuesday – December 24th

Reader: Randi Dermo

Euch.Min.: George and Brian Forney, Andrew Kubick

Servers: Justice & Grace Scheidel, Sam Synnott

Cantor: Ensemble

10:00 p.m. Tuesday – December 24th

Reader: Robert Bechtel

Euch.Min.: Dan & Hermine Murphy, Kathy Vivic

Servers: Adrian & Evelyn Datte, Madelyn Consugar, Christopher Wollyung

Cantor: Suzette Joy

CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 a.m. Wednesday – December 25th

Reader: Michelle Ambrose

Euch.Min.: Michael Ambrose

Servers: Daniel Beruck, Lucy & Sophie Murray

Cantor: Dave Derbes

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HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

5:00 p.m. – Saturday – December 28th

Reader: Angelo Disabella

Euch.Min.: Bill Schweikert, Ray Petrilla

Servers: Dylan Bohorad, Isabella Myers, Ethan Meyer

Cantor: Mary Bound

8:15 a.m. – Sunday – December 29th

Reader: Rachael Kubick

Euch.Min.: Dave Smith, Joyce Gerace, Bill Gianfagna

Servers: Ashley Smith, Caitlynne Schatz, Grace Sadusky

Cantor: Karen Glunz

10:30 a.m. – Sunday – December 29th

Reader: Ian Hower

Euch.Min.: Sharon Snyder, Mary Modesto, John Ventura

Servers: Victoria Wagner, Patrick & Caitlin Coyle

Cantor: Dave Derbes

FAMILY MATTERS

Christmas Time – the true meaning. Jesus is the reason for the season. During this Christmas time

commit yourself to sharing the true meaning of Christmas with your family. God shared His love fully by becoming human. We too can share His love by being Christ to one another. May God bless you and your family during this season of good will.

You pray for my family and I'll pray for yours.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How can the coming celebration of Christmas nourish your holiness?

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a time of visiting, giving, helping and sharing. Christmas is a special feast for those who provide these and other services in their community. Parishioners are asked to reflect on the people and the circumstances of the first Christmas.

Whenever we recall the Nativity story, we are inspired by the birth of Jesus in such poor and difficult surroundings. We see the young couple, far from home, expecting a baby. We see crowds coming into town to register for the census. We see innkeepers and merchants busy with the influx of people. Amidst all the hubbub and the excitement, a child is born.

FINDING CHRIST

Poor shepherds were the first to hear about the birth of Jesus. An angel told them that a child was born and was to be found in a lowly manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. The shepherds hurried over to Bethlehem to see the Baby. Perhaps they brought some of the simple food they had to share. Later, Magi from the East travelled a great distance in search of the Child. They too, brought gifts to the "newborn king" – the one born in such a humble setting.

Finding Christ was not a difficult thing to do. Those sincerely searching for Him were guided along the way. Jesus made it very clear where He could be found. Among the poor, the needy, and the outcasts is where he lived His life. He fed the people who came to listen to Him teach. He healed those who suffered. While Jesus lived on earth, anyone looking for Jesus knew where He could be found.

This Christmas, if you are looking for Jesus, you know where He can be found. He is no longer a Baby in a manger. That Child is the Jesus who grew up and lived among the lowly and the humble. He worked and prayed with sinners and with those who needed healing and instruction. He told people, "Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me." If you are looking for Christ this Christmas, you know where to go.

BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS MEAL

Abba, Father, we gather at this table to celebrate the joy of Jesus' birth. We rejoice at being together and remember those who are distant; we recall with love

those who have died. We thank you for the gift each of us is to the other (family members name some special trait of other members, or something special one member has done for another since last Christmas). Hold us close to you and to each other, and help us to share your love with all we meet. We pray this in the name of Jesus, born this day. Amen.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Live Nativity Scene with live animals in Russell Building Parking Lot on Saturday, December 21st after 5 p.m. Mass.

CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

Tuesday, December 24

4 p.m. + (6 p.m. Children's Mass) + 10 p.m.

(German & English Carols at 9:30 p.m.)

CHRISTMAS DAY MASS

Wednesday, December 25 -- 10:00 a.m. only

HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY - MASS

Saturday, December 28 – 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 29 – 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

SOLEMNITY OF MARY MASS

Tuesday, December 31 – 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, January 1 – 10:00 a.m. only

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Sunday, December 22: 7:45 to 8:00 a.m.

Monday, December 23: 5:00 to 5:30 p.m.

(Last time confessions will be heard before Christmas. No Christmas Eve or Christmas Day confessions)

GOING TO CONFESSION



The Church designates this Advent Season of preparation as an important time to receive the sacrament of Penance also known as the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this sacrament, we examine our life and we seek forgiveness for those things, those actions that keep us from letting the Lord more deeply in our heart.

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS

Sharing the Gifts of the Season

When the song of the angels is stilled,

When the star in the sky is gone,

When the kings and the princes are home,

When the shepherds are back with their flocks,

Then the work of Christmas begins

... To find the lost ...

... To heal the broken ...

... To feed the hungry ...

... To rebuild the nations ...

... To release the prisoner ...
... To bring peace among people ...
... To make music in the heart.

*No treasure greater than a healthy body;
no happiness, than a joyful heart!
... Sirach 30:16*

A CHRISTMAS BLESSING OF WELCOME

We warmly welcome all who have come today to celebrate this glorious feast.

We welcome the stranger, the traveler and guest.

We welcome our students home from college for a good winter's rest.

We welcome parishioners who moved far away, but join us today as old friends and guests.

We welcome all who have not been active of late in their Catholic faith; and hope they will find new hope and inspiration this Christmas to come back again and again.

We welcome our faithful parishioners, loyal, true; may the Lord bless you for all you do.

Welcome to all. May our gathering this day gladden our hearts and deepen our bonds.

*We are after all, one People of God --
redeemed by the Light.*

*May we walk by the Light and live by the Light --
together in love.*

FIRST RECONCILIATION

We celebrate with the families of the children who celebrated their First Reconciliation on December 7th. This Sacrament is important to living in a right relationship with God, others and ourselves.



Cole Flickinger

Luke Garvey

Maya Golden

Stanley Gorski

Livia Hable

Chloe Heintz

Nicholas Kunstek

James Malek

Aliyah Peckman

Mickeallya Schatz

Leah Scheidel

Joshua Steffan

Alisha Weiss

Caleb Whalen

Blakely Whalen

Emma Wollyung

Madison Wright

PLEASE NOTE: The Rectory Office will be closed on the following days:

Tuesday, December 24th (12 noon)

Wednesday, December 25th

Thursday, December 26th

Tuesday, December 31st (12 noon)

Wednesday, January 1st

MID-SUMMER FESTIVAL
JULY 18 & 19, 2014
MARK YOUR CALENDAR !

A NOTE OF THANKS

A big and heartfelt **THANK YOU** to all the organizations and people who do so much to keep our parish alive and kicking. The following list is but a sample of what takes place in an organized way at St. John's. However, there are also a number of people who do the quiet, behind the scenes work. To all of them, our sincere thanks! We truly apologize if we missed any group.

Let us continue to grow in all ways and keep the spirit of St. John's Parish alive for all to see and hear. May God continue to bless us.

Father Dave

Adult Faith Formation

Altar Servers

Bakers

Building Committee

Bulk Mailing Crew

Cantors

Catholic Women's Union

CCD Program

Cemetery Committee

Children's Liturgy

Choirs

Choir Directors

Christmas Bazaar

Church Cleaning Crews

Collection Counters

Collection Posters

CYO Program

Decorating Committee

Dramatic Stations

Eucharistic Ministers

Family Guild

Finance Committee

Food Service

Giving Tree Helpers

Hospitality Ministers

Liturgy Committee

Mid-Summer Festival

Organists

OutReach Team

Over 50 Club

Parish Council

Parish Staff

Readers

Sunday Pre-School

Vacation Bible School

Youth Group

RETREATS AVAILABLE ...

First Friday Retreat Day: on Friday, January 3rd from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cost \$25.00 includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch.

Men's Retreat: "The Legacy of Dorothy Day" from January 10th to 12th. Presenter: Al Mascia, OFM – Donation \$165.

Women's Retreat: "Yearning for Home" from January 17th to 19th. Presenter: Dennet Jung, OFM, Donation \$165.

Mini Retreat "Why do Volunteers work? Is this part of the Gospel message?" on Monday, January 27th. Guest speakers: Dr. Carmina Chapp and Geraldine Pandaleon.

Begins with 6:00 p.m. dinner, concludes with night prayer at 9:00 p.m. Donation \$20 per person; \$35 per couple.

All the above Retreats are held at St. Francis Retreat House, 3918 Chipman Road in Easton. Call 610 258 3053 ex 10 or email stfranrh@rcn.com

THANK YOU DEPT.

GIVING TREE / COOKIES / CAROLING

You outdid yourselves! The packages under our "Giving Tree" were overwhelming and beautifully wrapped. You are so good to others. What a wonderful spirit of giving and caring. You have made Christmas happier for all, especially those receiving presents. Those helped were:

Our Communion Calls - 27; Gaudenzia House - 14 Catholic Social Agency - 37; Cloud Home - 5; Care Net - 93

We wish to thank *Gerry Schwartz* for organizing the Giving Tree, our *BLT Youth Group* for making cookies for our shut-ins, and everyone who volunteered to deliver these gifts in the name of St. John's Parish Family

Tim, Alyssa, Sage, Ethan, Lynn, Anastasia and Luke Garvey, Grace, Justice, Leah, Michael Scheidel, Carol Kramer, Laney & Trinity George, Sandy Clauser, Deb Herb, Darren DeArment, Tina & Ella Zanis, Bob & Sarah Hahner & puppy Eloise.

Thank you for giving your time, but mostly your smiles and Christmas wishes. God surely was smiling once again as you gave a little bit of yourself to others. God bless you!

ASSUMPTION BVM SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE

Come join us on **Sunday, January 26th** from noon until 2:00 PM for open house and early bird registration at Assumption BVM School. Assumption BVM faculty members and administration will be available to answer questions you might have that afternoon.

Mrs. Aimee Benulis, our wonderful kindergarten teacher, will offer a presentation on kindergarten readiness and preparing for a successful kindergarten year at 1:00 PM. All are welcome. Come and see what we have to offer your family.

For **new registrations**, please remember to bring your child's birth certificate, baptismal record, and immunization records. Register before April 1, 2014 and receive a \$15 discount on the new student registration fee. We hope you can join us!

Students **transferring** to ABVM from other schools in grades 2 through 7 are eligible for a \$1500 transfer grant: \$1000 for the 2014-2015 school year AND \$500 for 2015-2016 school year.

Thank you for your support! Call us for a tour or for more information at 570-622-0106.

CCD NEWS

When filling out the Mass slips for attendance, please include the child's First Name **and** Last Name.

Thank you!

WHAT'S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ?

1. The Pope is the _____ of Rome:
(a) Presbyter (b) Bishop (c) Director (d) Conductor
2. The Year of Our Lord, the Church's calendar year, begins on:
(a) payday (b) New Year's Day (c) Easter Sunday (d) the First Sunday of Advent
3. Saint _____ was the first to create a Christmas crèche (manger) to celebrate the birth of Christ:
(a) Nicholas (b) Mary (c) Joseph (d) Francis of Assisi
4. How did the magi find the baby Jesus?
(a) followed the GPS on their camels (b) found Bethlehem on Google Maps (c) followed the star (d) asked the locals for directions to the Church of the Nativity
5. There are _____ candles in the Advent wreath; all except one are the color _____.
(a) seven; white (b) four; purple/violet (c) twelve; pink (d) three; Christmas tree green
6. The Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph occurs during the season of:
(a) Christmas (b) Advent (c) Ordinary Time (d) Lent
7. Matthew 2:11 tells of the magi bringing gifts of gold, _____, and myrrh to the Christ child:
(a) cash (b) diamonds (c) frankincense (d) frankfurters
8. The angels and the heavenly hosts proclaimed: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth _____ to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).
(a) peace (b) blessings (c) happiness (d) prosperity
9. The angel _____ told Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus:
(a) from the TV show "Touched by an Angel" (b) Gabriel (c) Michael (d) Raphael
10. Which figurine in the family crèche might not appear until Christmas morning?
(a) the angel (b) the donkey (c) the magi (d) the Christ Child.

NATIVITY BVM HIGH SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE

We personally invite you to attend our Open House on **Sunday, January 12th from 1 to 3 p.m.**

- Meet our excellent Faculty, Staff, Students, Parents, Advisors, Coaches & Board Members
- Take a tour of our campus
- Learn about Tuition Assistance Opportunities
- Find out what Nativity has to offer YOU

- Register for your chance to win a \$250.00 Scholarship!

For more information, please contact Jenn at the Admission's Office at 570-622-8110 or jldaubert@nativitynbm.net.

May grace and peace be yours in abundance through knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.... 2 Peter 1:2

CYO BASKETBALL

Scheduled Games

Varsity Girls

Sunday, Dec. 22nd at Cardinal Brennan – 3 p.m.
St. John's vs St. Patrick's

Sunday, Dec. 29th at Cardinal Brennan – 5 p.m.
St. John's vs St. Nicholas

Biddy Girls

Sunday, Dec. 22nd at Assumption BVM – 3 p.m.
St. John's vs St. Patrick's

Varsity Boys

Sunday, Dec. 22nd at Nativity – 1 p.m.
SSPP vs St. John's

Saturday, Dec. 28th at Cardinal Brennan – 11 a.m.
St. Nicholas's vs St. John's

Sunday, Dec. 29th at Cardinal Brennan – 2 p.m.
St. Patrick's vs St. John's

JV Boys

Saturday, Dec. 28th at Assumption BVM – 1:30 p.m.
St. John's vs Fr. Ciszek

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

NANCY'S FANCY FLOWERS & FRUIT

136 SOUTH SECOND STREET, SAINT CLAIR, PA

BALLOON BOUQUETS - WEDDING WORK

FRESH ARRANGEMENTS - FRUIT BASKETS

Nancy Brahler - 429-1188

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Why Advertise In A Church Bulletin?

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- * It's Effective in Catching New Neighbors' Attention
- * It's Advertising Concentrated in Your Own Neighborhood
- * It Develops Good Community Relationships
- * It's Good For Developing Loyal Customers

OUTREACH MINISTRY

REACH OUT and TOUCH SOMEONE
St. John's OutReach Ministry can help with



light housekeeping, grocery shopping, transportation, meals, etc. Volunteers are always needed. Call **Margie Glunz at 622-3067** anytime with your needs and concerns.

HELP AVAILABLE. If you are no longer able to do your own snow shoveling, youth volunteers are available through Outreach. Please call Outreach Coordinator, **Margie Glunz at 622-3067.**



ANSWERS TO

‘WHAT’S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ’?

- 1.(b) as Bishop of Rome, the pope is the successor of St. Peter, the Apostle Jesus selected to be the rock upon which the Church would be build (Matthew 16:18).
2. (d) Unlike the civil calendar year, the Church begins her liturgical calendar at the beginning of Advent.
3. (d) On Christmas Eve in 1223, Francis recreated the birth of Christ in a cave with live animals and people. He hoped to inspire Christians to recognize Christ in their midst.
4. (c) Matthew 2:1-2 describes how the magi came to Jerusalem after seeing a star in the east that indicated the birth of a great king.
5. (b) Churches decorate for Advent with purple altar cloths, vestments, and candles. On Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, the candle is rose, signifying the joy of Christians awaiting the Messiah.
6. (a) The Feast of the Holy Family celebrates Jesus' family and every family. The Church calls the family a "domestic church," the first place of prayer, catechesis, and moral teaching. The family is where the gospel is brought to life. The feast of the Holy Family is celebrated between Christmas and New Year's Day.
7. (c) Gold represented Christ's role as King. Frankincense represented his divine nature, since incense was used to worship God. Myrrh represented his sacrificial death for the sins of humanity, since it is a perfume for embalming the dead.
8. (a) This angelic song anchors the Gloria we pray every Sunday Mass except during Advent and Lent, the seasons of penance in the Church.
9. (b) Gabriel appears in Luke 1 to announce the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Tradition suggests that Gabriel also was the one who spoke to Joseph in his dreams (Matthew 1:20; 2:13,19) and to the shepherds in the field (Luke 2:9-10).
10. (d) Some families do not place the figurine of the baby Jesus in their crèche until Christmas morning to build anticipation for the coming of Christ into their home.

WINTER COATS NEEDED ... In the words of St. John the Baptist ... *"If you have two coats give one away."* Donations of



winter coats can be dropped off at the Salvation Army
Office on **Sanderson Street ONLY.**

For more information please call Bob Hahner 640-4448.

*They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering
the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother.
They prostrated themselves and did Him homage. Then
they opened their treasures and offered Him gifts of
gold, frankincense and myrrh. Matthew 2:10-11*