

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

A few weeks ago I was visiting Williamsburg, Virginia. During that week the music programs highlighted a composer of that period, the famous George Frideric Handel. I'm sure we are all familiar with his famous "The Messiah" which expresses beautifully the message of Advent. The conclusion of the second part of his sacred oratorio is the soaring Alleluia chorus. It's sheer musical beauty almost demands that we rise to our feet, and by tradition we do so. This custom began in 1743 when King George II rose to his feet upon hearing the music. In those days when the King stood, everyone stood. The facts are lost to history, but many say the King stood because the music heralded a greater King than he. He may have been moved by the vision of the closing words of this Sunday's gospel "*And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*"

Yours in Christ,
Father Dave

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday – December 7 – 9:00 a.m.

PAULINE WILLIS

(Staff & Residents of York Terrace Nursing Home)

Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Monday – December 7 – 7:00 p.m.

GEORGE HOLLEY (Debra & Mark Purcell)

Tuesday – December 8 – 9:00 a.m.

MAUREEN KALYMUN (Kathy Vicic & Family)

Tuesday – December 8 – 5:15 p.m.

ROBERT ZUPPERT (Tom & Stephanie Wood)

Wednesday – December 9 – 9:00 a.m.

DOROTHY MYLNECK (Helen Tronosky)

Thursday – December 10 – 9:00 a.m.

SARAH JOYCE MOLIN (Alice C. Joyce)

Friday – December 11 – 9:00 a.m.

JACK JOYCE (Alice C. Joyce)

Saturday – December 12 – 5:00 p.m.

MATT NORKUS (Norkus Family)

Sunday – December 13 – 8:15 a.m.

CHARLES KUTCH (Mary Kutch Family)

Sunday – December 13 – 10:30 a.m.

MICHAEL & ANNA FEDOCK (Dot Ryan & Family)

CANDLE INTENTIONS

B.V.M – Special Intention by Larry & Ann Butz

St. Joseph – Special Intention

Tabernacle – IMO Joseph Kapsha by Sophia Kapsha

Sanctuary Candles

1. IMO John & Florence Bentz

by Sterling & Joanne Hepler

2,3,4. IMO Carol & Harry Nygren by Joseph Christ

Guardian Angels

1. IMO Al Majestic by Kathy Hughes

2. IMO Marie Majestic by Kathy Hughes

SCHEDULE

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

7:00 – Monday – December 7th

Reader: Paul Gombola

Euch.Min.: Virginia Visot

Servers: Michael & Rachel Ryan, Maeve Stoudt

Cantor: Dave Derbes

9:00 a.m. – Tuesday – December 8th

Reader: Mary Ann Schweikert

Euch.Min.: Bill Schweikert

Servers: Megan Ryan, Madison Buckingham,

Christopher Wollyung

5:15 p.m. – Tuesday – December 8th

Reader: Janet Daubert

Euch.Min.: Joe Rehnert

Servers: Alex Koinski, Paige Vandermeer,

Maecada Herring

Cantor: Dave Derbes

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5:00 p.m. – Saturday – December 12th

Reader: Chris Disabella

Euch.Min.: Leeann Smith, Sharon Snyder

Servers: Angelo, Alexandra, Samantha Disabella

Cantor: Lucilla Kochol

8:15 a.m. – Sunday – December 13th

Reader: Caitlyn McDemus

Euch.Min.: John Corbacio Mike Ambrose, Janet Daubert

Servers: Taylor Ross, Megan McLaughlin,

Samantha Weiss

Cantor: Tina Seiger

10:30 a.m. – Sunday – November 13th

Reader: Ian Hower

Euch.Min.: Justina Majestic, Paul Ziegler, John Ventura

Servers: Hannah, Jason, Celena Granito

Cantor: Ensemble

ATTENTION

All Readers, Servers, and Eucharistic Ministers ... your help is needed ... please let us know your plans for **January** and **February** so that we can get started on the schedule for those months. Please call Father Dave by Monday, December 14th to let him know when you are **NOT** available during these months. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

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: *Tina Dixon, Margie Glunz, Carolyn Foster, Francis King, Maryann Wychunas, Edward Wychunas, Donald Bound, Matthew Mazakas, Loretta Lonoskie, John Woznicki, Faye Cuchara, Joseph Tuite, Eleanore Forney, Loretta Raybould, Scott Rhoades, Charles Foster, Ben Roeder.*

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

In what ways will you use your voice to prepare the way of the Lord?

READINGS

Second Sunday of Advent (Dec. 4/5)

Reading I: Baruch 5:1-9

Reading II: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec.7/8)

Reading I: Genesis 3:9-15, 20

Reading II: Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Third Sunday of Advent (Dec. 11/12)

Reading I: Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Reading II: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

THE GIVING TREE

PLEASE DO NOT TAPE TAG TO THE PAPER



Thank you for doing so much for our children and our parish shut-ins. Our gifts are our way of reaching out to these beautiful people and saying we love them and wish them the blessings of Christmas.

GIFTS ARE DUE DECEMBER 12/13 WEEKEND

HELP NEEDED ... Our Giving Tree gifts are scheduled to be delivered on **Tuesday, December 15th at 4:30 p.m.** If you can help deliver these gifts, please call Sister Maryanne at the Rectory 622-5470.

FOOD COLLECTION

St. John's 7th & 8th grade CCD students will continue throughout the year to collect food donations from our parishioners. This will be an ongoing service project. Please help us reach out to the needy in our area.

Items Needed:

Stuffing Mix	Canned Fruit
Broth	Packaged Cookies
Coffee/Tea (instant)	Jelly
Hot Chocolate	Hot Cereal packages
Apple Sauce	Canned Sweet Potatoes
Peanut Butter	Beef Stew
Soups	Spaghetti
Spaghetti Sauce	Macaroni & Cheese

Kindly place your donations in the baskets at the rear and side entrances of the church. Thank you.

If you are a parishioner and experiencing hardship at this time of the year and would like a food basket for Christmas, please call the Rectory. All information will be kept confidential.

ADVENT

Preparing our hearts to recognize Christ now!

Be glad and exult with all your heart,

"The LORD has removed the judgment against you"

Name an instance in which you have felt forgiven, vindicated by God

Rejoice in the Lord always.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,

make your requests known to God.

Name an anxiety you have in a prayer to God asking for what you need and then thank Him.

"ADVENT EVENSONG OF LIGHT"

St. John's is holding an **"Advent Evensong of Light"** on **Wednesday, December 16, 2009 at 7 PM.**

Please plan to come to celebrate Advent together as a parish family. Refreshments will be served after the service in Longinus Hall.

CHILDREN'S ADVENT LITURGY

The *Children's Advent Liturgy* will take place during the **10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, December 14th.** Join us as we help them prepare for Christmas.

Cookies and hot chocolate will be served after this Mass.

RECTORY OPEN HOUSE

All are welcome to stop by the Rectory on **Sunday, December 13th from 2 to 5 p.m.** or during office hours on weekdays.

COOKIES --- COOKIES

We need volunteers to bake cookies for our Children's Advent Liturgy the weekend of **December 13/14.** If enough are received, we will not need donuts. If you are interested in baking cookies or bringing cookies, etc., please call the Rectory 622-5470.

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Eight grade parishioners attending Catholic, public or private elementary or middle school are invited to apply for a one-year \$1,000 scholarship to attend one of the eight Catholic high schools of the Diocese of Allentown. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of academic achievement, involvement in extracurricular activities, service to school, parish and community, and pastor, principal and teacher recommendations. Application forms are available at the parish office, school office or through the parish religious education program. **Completed applications must be submitted to the student's school by January 8, 2010**

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT CHILDREN'S CHOIR



All children in grades 1 through 6 are welcome to join the Children's Choir and Pageant for the 6:00 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve. (Smaller children are also welcome to participate -- ages 5 and older)

The rehearsals for the choir and the pageant are scheduled on the same evening so that the children may participate in both if they choose to do so.

If you are interested, please call **Pat Lombel** at the **Rectory 622-5470** or **Sandy Clauser 622-4603** for more information. This is a wonderful way to be able to bring the story of Jesus' birth alive to the parish community during that Mass.



Rehearsals

Tuesday, December 8th – 6 p.m.

Pageant rehearsal followed by Choir

Wednesday, December 16 – 6:00 p.m.

Pageant rehearsal followed by Choir

Tuesday, December 22 – 5:30 p.m.

(light supper) followed by

Dress Rehearsal for Pageant and Choir

CHRISTMAS WAFERS "OPLATKI"

What are Oplatki? For centuries on Christmas Eve, families in Poland, Lithuania, the Czech and Slav Republics have practiced a beautiful tradition. It is the breaking and sharing of the Oplatek – Christmas Wafer. Oplatek taken from the Latin word oblatum, meaning Sacred Bread, has been the symbol of Christianity and Jesus Christ our bread of life since the Last Supper.

The host or hostess leads in a special prayer and distributes an oplatek to the participants. Each person breaks off a piece of the other's oplatek and continues until they have exchanged good wishes and blessings with everyone. **Oplatki will be available beginning the week of December 7 at the Rectory.**

Need a Mass Card?

There are Sisters of St. Joseph Mass Cards available in the rectory for various occasions including Perpetual and Annual Memorial cards, Sympathy, Thank You, sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Wedding, Anniversary and Birthday etc. The cost is \$1.50; Perpetual Memorials are \$5.00.

Novena Christmas Cards are now available in the back of church after all Masses or at the Rectory during the week ... \$1.50 each.

Let us pray for young women in crisis pregnancies, that they may receive loving support and guidance, and consolation from our Blessed Mother.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S UNION CHRISTMAS PARTY

When: Wednesday, December 9th
Where: Pottsville Club
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Cost: \$20.00
Menu: Stuffed Chicken Breast or Top Round of Beef or One Crab Cake

We will also exchange a \$5.00 gift – for example, a wine or snack item you would serve for the holidays. Please be sure to wrap the item.

For more information or questions, please call Dorothy Hahner Stangl 624-7106.

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE

Homemade Christmas Cookies (sold by the dozen) to benefit St. John's Catholic Women's Union, will be available in Longinus Hall on the following dates:

Saturday, December 12th

4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 13th

8 a.m. until 12 Noon



GERTRUDE HAWK CANDY SALE

The Gertrude Hawk Candy Sale has begun. Brochures are available in the back of church. **Orders are due December 6th.**

Pick-up after all Mass the weekend of December 19/20.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

..... will take place in Longinus Hall after all Masses the weekend of December 12/13.

CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

Gift certificates for Giant, Waymart, and Weis Food stores are available at the rectory. Please call 622-5470 for more information. What a great gift-giving idea !!!

FAMILY MATTERS

Families with Children in Jail. They are very private about it. They carry the pain deep in their hearts. Those families with loved ones who are incarcerated need our prayers and support. This week we pray especially for these families.

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

And I tell you, ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.

... Luke 11:9

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, **December 8th**, is a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass times are as follows:

Monday, December 7th - 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 8th

9:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.

R. C. I. A.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Are you interested in deepening your own faith? Or do you know anyone who has expressed an interest in becoming Catholic? Please invite them to join us. Have them call St. John's Rectory, 622-5470, to register for the RCIA sessions. All are welcome to attend any or all of the sessions!

RCIA Schedule

December 10th – at St. Michael the Archangel

Mary and the Saints ... S.Catherine Therese

Responses at Parish Retreat

How do you see yourself responding to your mission?

- I need to get the after burners on
- Try to do more
- Grounded me
- This will get me back on track with my spiritual journey
- I took many notes. It will take time to absorb all that was said. But that in itself will strengthen my journey
- I will purify my motives when serving others, be humble and will read the Gospel
- I will take more time and be more consistent in my daily prayer
- I am really going to look at how I prepare for Liturgy and how I can do that better
- The ideas of others as to their daily walk are always helpful
- Growth
- Affirmation! Rekindle gifts of the Holy Spirit that I received at Confirmation

FAMILY PERSPECTIVE: Do you have a favorite custom for the Advent season? Have you considered starting a new tradition? Plan on using this activity as a way for your family to grow closer to Jesus in this time of preparation and waiting.

WEEKLY COLLECTION

November 29th: \$ 4,819.42; **Outreach:** \$794.00

We thank our parishioners for their sacrificial giving

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Retirement Fund helps senior religious. "As expenses continue to increase and economic difficulties tighten our income, we appreciate more and more the help of the Retirement Fund," notes a woman religious. Your tax-deductible donation supports the care of elderly and frail religious and helps to provide such basic necessities as prescription drugs and medical services. Please give generously to next week's second collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious. www.retiredreligious.org

MUSICIANS NEEDED

FOR CHRISTMAS EVE MASS



Now is the time for us to know if you would like to play your brass, woodwind or percussive musical instrument with the combined choirs for the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass. There are two or three rehearsals required. We welcome middle and high school age musicians (and older) who are comfortable playing in a band-type setting. Please contact Davis Derbes at 622-8804 or daderbes@yahoo.com for more information.

FREE CAREGIVING SESSIONS

PinnacleHealth Homecare & Hospice is offering an ongoing opportunity to network with other caregivers, learn about area resources, and take a welcomed "break" from your daily care-giving role. The free sessions will be held on the **First Monday of every month** from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Lazy Dog Bistro Coffeehouse, 18 E. Sunbury St. in Minersville. If you would like more information, contact Lori Rossochacy at 628-2290 or 800-222-5236.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

REACH OUT and TOUCH SOMEONE



Call Margie Glunz 622-3067

Volunteers are needed!

Call us if you need us.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Monday, December 7th

at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bethlehem

Registration is mandatory by calling 277-0123. **This workshop is necessary for any adult who will be working in any way with our youth.**

gEnEsiS 1 Update

Children's Advent Liturgy Volunteer

Who? Anyone in 6th-12th grade & adult helpers

What? Actors or Actresses, Readers, Gift Distributors

Where & When? St. John's on **December 13 @ 10:am**

To participate, the practice date is *Nov 29 after 10:30am Mass* in the church.

Christmas Caroling

... Genesis I would like to invite all of our friends and family to join us in an evening of Christmas Caroling on **Sunday, December 13**. We'll meet at 6:00 in The Upper Room and begin caroling around 6:15. Please call Debbie at 544-5646 if you plan on joining us. Donuts and Hot Chocolate will follow. Make this special evening a family tradition.

Christmas Dinner & Show Volunteers

(sponsored by the Alethia Club @ PAHS)

Who? Anyone in 6th-12th grade & adult helpers

What? Actors or Actresses, Servers, Kitchen Helpers, and Cooks

Where & When? At Foursquare Gospel on December 19 @ 5:30pm

Actors & Actresses practice TBA.

Christmas Ice Skating Party & Soup Kitchen

Who? Anyone in 6th-12th grade & adult helpers

What? Ice Skating @ Reading Bodyzone followed by Soup Kitchen volunteering

Where & When? Wednesday, December 30th, Meet in St. John's Parking Lot at 10 a.m.; then Soup Kitchen @ 4pm

RSVP by Sunday, December 20th

For more information, if you need a ride, or to sign-up for any event above, e-mail Rachael at genesis1yg@aim.com or call 570-581-6109.

RENEWING THE EARTH

"[H]umanity is at a crossroads. Having read the signs of the times, we can either ignore the harm we see and witness further damage, or we can take up our responsibilities to the Creator and creation with renewed courage and commitment" (*U.S. Catholic Bishop, Renewing the Earth*).

GIFT CARDS TO BENEFIT ST. JOHN'S

Mark & Tina Seiger are selling Ribbon Gift Cards for the holidays to benefit St. John's. You can visit the site and order on-line at mseiger.ordermygift.com or call 622-3558 for more information. Your purchase will financially help our parish.

NEIGHBORING EVENTS

CHRISTMAS CARD PROJECT The Broad Mt. Chapter 159th Engineer Combat Battalion Veterans WWII will conduct this project for our active duty service men and women for the 2009 Christmas season. Please send the names and addresses of any active duty person to the following address ASAP so they can be sent a Christmas card from "home". Thank you for supporting our troops
Russell Ruch, 709 N. 7th St., Pottsville, Pa. 17901

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST sponsored by St. Clare of Assisi Parish on **Sunday, December 6th** at the Immaculate Conception Social Hall, Caroline Ave. in St. Clair from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Cost \$5.00 Adults; \$3.00 children under 8. Take-outs available.

CHRISTMAS CANDY Immaculate Conception Catering is taking orders for Christmas Candy ... Butter Creams and Peanut Butter at \$8.00 lb. Peanut Rolls, Mixed and Chocolate Covered Pretzels at \$8.50 lb. **Deadline for orders is December 14th**. Call 429-0302 (am) or 429-0581 or 628-4676. Proceeds benefit St. Clare of Assisi Parish.

SINGLE ADULT ADVENT PROGRAM Join 40+ singles on **Sunday, December 13th** from 3 to 7 p.m. to hear Fr. Bill Sneek, SJ talk on *Spiritual Growth, Intimacy, and Wholeness*. The afternoon includes time for prayer, reflection, socializing and dinner. Call or e-mail the Office of Adult Faith Formation for registration form. Registration deadline is December 1st ... mhartigan@allentowndiocese.org or 610-289-8900 ext. 225.

'GIFTS FOR ME' BINGO to be held at Nativity High School on **Sunday, December 13th**; Doors open 11:30; Bingo begins 1 p.m. Cost \$20.00. For information call 640-8945 or 527-0520.

WREATHS FOR SALE Nativity High School Green & Gold Booster Club is sponsoring this Christmas fundraiser of selling Fraser Fir Christmas Wreaths with Velvet Bow ... \$20.00 each .. 12" wreath (22-24" outside diameter). Wreaths can be picked up at Pioneer Evergreen Farms 366-2619 between November 27th and December 24th. For more information contact 640-8945 or 527-0520.

CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

Gift certificates for Giant, Waymart, and Weis Food stores are available at the rectory. Please call 622-5470 for more information. What a great gift-giving idea !!!

WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

The Catholic Church teaches that violence against another person in any form fails to treat that person as someone worthy of love. Instead, it treats the person as an object to be used.

It's a sign of abuse if her partner ...

- Calls her names, insults her, constantly criticizes her, or humiliates her
- Isolates her from family and friends
- Monitors where she goes and how she spends her time
- Controls finances, refuses to share money, or gives her an allowance
- Threatens to have her deported or to report her to a welfare agency
- Threatens to take the children away
- Threatens to kill or hurt her, the children, other family members, or pets
- Threatens her with a weapon
- Destroys property, such as household furnishings
- Pushes, slaps, hits, bites, kicks, or chokes her
- Forces her to have sex or to perform sexual acts

(When I Call for Help, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2002)

For more information on domestic violence or upholding human dignity, please call the Office for Social Action 610-289-8900 ext. 231.

BE RECONCILED. As we approach the sacrament of reconciliation during this Advent time, we reflect on how God willingly forgives and pardons us. In our families, we ask for the grace to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. We especially ask for this grace with family members where there have been long unresolved issues.

FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

... **Janet Daubert**

A nutty way to lower your cholesterol: eat walnuts, Harvard researchers recently reviewed 13 studies and found that walnut-rich diets (1 to 3 ounces of the nuts a day) lower total and LDL (“bad”) cholesterol by about 10 points, on average, over the course of one to six months, as well as improve other coronary risk factors. The polyunsaturated fats, antioxidants, and other substances in walnuts may be responsible for the benefits. The studies found that the other substances in walnuts may be responsible for the benefits. The studies found that the walnut-rich diets did not cause weight gain, so the nuts must have replaced other high-calorie foods. Not surprisingly, the study was funded in part by the California Walnut Commission (as well as the NIH). Previous studies on other kinds of nuts have also found heart benefits.

BULLETIN BOOSTERS

November 2009

Carl Bartholomew

Marie Melinchok

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Harold Bartholomew | IMO Agnes & Felix Narog |
| Robert & Kathleen Berger | IMO Carol Nygren |
| IMO Edward Christ | Jeanne Rehnert |
| Joe Christ | IMO Eugene Rehnert |
| Rev. Donald Henry | H. David Reiner |
| IMO M/M Herbert Henry | Paul & Dorothy Rosenberger |
| Joanne Hepler | Mrs. Marcie Schnerring |
| IMO Marie Homrighausen | IMO Steve Sitkus |
| Sophia Kapsha | IMO Vito Sitkus |
| Francis & Grace King | IMO Margaret Zelinsky |
| IMO Rita Klitsch | |

What is a Bulletin Booster?? Some of our newer parishioners have asked what it means to be a Bulletin Booster. We have a wonderful bulletin – it is timely and keeps us informed of what is going on within our parish family and its surroundings. Paper and supplies are needed on a weekly basis to continue this family tradition. So, if you'd like to donate toward the supplies. **\$1.00 and up ... you too can be a ... Bulletin Booster.**

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER: The birth of the Christ child was a sign of hope for this world. Consider a Marriage Encounter for hope and rebirth in your relationship. The next weekend is February 12-14 in Bethlehem. Call 1-800-787-7679 or go online at www.wwme-nepa.org for information.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

We appreciate advertisers who support St. John's by advertising in our bulletin. Please patronize their business and let them know you saw their ad in our bulletin.

Why Advertise In A Church Bulletin?

- * It's inexpensive Advertising
- * 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