



Third Sunday of Advent

Church of St. Mary • Closter, New Jersey

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15 –

Zep. 3: 14-18a; Phil. 4: 4-7; Lk. 3: 10-18

5:00 PM Louis Buonomo / req. by Phyllis Buonomo

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16 –

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zep. 3: 14-18a; Phil. 4: 4-7; Lk. 3: 10-18

7:30 AM All Parishioners – Living and Deceased

9:30 AM Margaret Corrigan

req. by the Corrigan Family

12:00 PM Dominick Calabro / req. by Joan Westervelt

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17 – LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY

Gn. 49: 2, 8-10; Mt. 1: 1-17

8:00 AM Ofelia and Porfirio Bondaon

req. by Roy and Espie Landrito

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18 – LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY

Jer. 23: 5-8; Mt. 1: 18-25

8:00 AM Bernard Kelly / req. by Midge Haramis

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19 –

LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY

Jgs. 13: 2-7, 24-25a; Lk. 1: 5-25

8:00 AM Orlando Tobia

req. by Thom and Grace Calabro

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20 – LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY

Is. 7: 10-14; Lk. 1: 26-38

8:00 AM Carmela Ruth

req. by Rev. Joseph Scarangella

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21 – ST. PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST
AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Sg. 2: 8-14 or Zep. 3: 14-18a; Lk. 1: 39-45

8:00 AM Susan DeRosa Hogue

req. by Joseph and Esther DeRosa

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22 – LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY

1 Sm. 1: 24-28; Lk. 1: 46-56

8:00 AM Patricia Glover

req. by Ralph and Regina DeNicola

5:00 PM Walter and Anne Brady / req. by Dennis Brady

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23 –

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Mi. 5: 1-4a; Heb. 10: 5-10; Lk. 1: 39-45

7:30 AM Oneida Hernandez

req. by John and Midas Hernandez

9:30 AM Joseph Sekerak / req. by Margaret Sekerak

12:00 PM All Parishioners – Living and Deceased

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Altar Bread – In memory of Michael and Nellie Duffy.

ANNOUNCED SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Weekly offerings of: Altar Bread, Altar Wine, Blessed Virgin Mary Candle and Sanctuary Candle are available throughout 2019.

From the Director of Stewardship

Dear Parishioners,

God Allows Us to Participate in His Divine Plan

We've arrived at Gaudete Sunday (*Gaudete* is the Latin word for "rejoice") this Third Week of Advent, and the Scriptures take on a joyful tone as we head toward the feast of our Savior's birth.

The Gospel passage, from Luke, shows us how to *live out* this happiness, making our lives a "Christmas gift" to Christ in joyful response to His love for us. When the crowds hear John the Baptist's message that their Savior is coming, they ask him what they should do to prepare. He responds, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do the same." In other words, he tells them to be good and generous stewards of all God's gifts to them!

At St. Mary's, parishioners participate in God's plan all year round. From volunteering to cook meals and provide groceries and Christmas gifts to those in need to supporting special collections for the missions, education, disaster relief, Catholic Charities, the work of the parish and the list goes on! Luke's words remind us to renew our stewardship, but also to *rejoice* in that God allows us to participate in His divine plan. When we share our talent, time and financial resources we bring God's love to bear. *St. Mary's Parishioners, you are participating in God's plan and you are wonderful in His eyes.*

Louis Scarpa

Stewardship Ministry

We Pray for the Sick

Irene Abad, Paula Bertelloni, Christian Brueck, Fran Caldwell, Dolores Collier, Lee Ann Davito, Lisa Deegan, Desiderio Fernandes, Frank Forte, Ed Koch, Sr. Dominic Marie McDonnell, Joseph Miele, Carol Munkins, David O'Hanlon, John Pagano, Alicia Parent, Joan Pinto, Richard Pinto, Jim Walsh, Samantha

Hospital Privacy

Please remember that current privacy laws regarding patients in hospitals do not allow the hospitals/pastoral care offices to contact parishes if their parishioners are in the hospital. If you or a loved one are going into the hospital and want Father to visit you or a loved one, please call the rectory office and let us know.

Religious Education News

The fourth grade has been working hard on the Christmas Pageant. Join us **December 16th**, 10:30 AM in Church to attend.



Advent Giving Tree – today is the last day to return gifts

Today, December 16th, is the last day to return wrapped gifts for our Advent Giving Tree. Please place the gift tag with the unit and room number facing outward. Gifts will be picked up early Monday morning. No late gifts can be accepted – you will need to drive the gift to Paramus. Thank you for your generosity!



Place Your Christmas Gift Order TODAY: A Win for St. Mary's!

We will be placing an order for Scrip Gift Cards Monday morning, **December 17th**. Scrip cards are prepaid cards, used like cash at many different stores, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, etc. The Church of St. Mary receives a certain percentage of each card purchased (2% to 15% or more depending on the card) and doesn't cost you anything extra. Please have your orders to us no later than 10:00 AM Monday. Info and order forms can be found in the vestibules and on our website or you can setup an account online at www.ShopwithScrip.com (registration # is D84E6EB522L51) pay either by PrestoPay or check made out to Church of St. Mary. If you don't see a certain card on the list feel free to call, it may be available. Contact John Hernandez at jah21344@aol.com or 201-768-8871 or Grace Ditzel at gditzel@stmarycloster.org or 201-768-7565 for further information. GIFT CARDS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS! This is the last order we will be placing before Christmas. We will contact you when your order is available for pickup at the Rectory, probably Wednesday afternoon.

We are Almost There!

The third Sunday of Advent, so called from the first word of the Introit at Mass (*Gaudete*, i.e. Rejoice), is called Gaudete Sunday.

The color rose is worn as it is a lighter version of the color purple (which denotes penitence.) Gaudete Sunday marks about midway through a season which is otherwise of a penitential character, and signifies the nearness of the Lord's coming. The spirit of Advent is one of expectation and preparation for the Christmas feast as well as for the second coming of Christ, and the penitential exercises (in earlier times, folks fasted during Advent) to that spirit are thus on Gaudete Sunday suspended for a while in order to symbolize that joy and gladness in the Promised Redemption which should never be absent from the heart of the faithful.

Welcome, Joseph Greey, Cantor

Joe has been cantoring at St. Mary's for a few months now and we welcome him to his first Christmas at St. Mary's. Joe is a student at William Paterson, studying sound engineering. He also volunteers with campus ministry at Rutgers, leading a prayer group and providing music. He started choral singing in high school, plays guitar and also sings in a chamber choir.

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARY PARISH

Dec. 16:

9:30 AM – LWC
 10:30 AM – 11:50 AM – Religious Education – Grades K – 6
 10:30 AM – Christmas Pageant
 11:15 AM – Parish Choir meet
 12:00 PM – Parish Choir at Mass
 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM – Third Order Lay Carmelites – Fr. Roger Troy Hall

Dec. 17:

10:00 AM – Prayer Shawl Ministry – Parish Life Room
 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Deepening the Journey – Parish Life Room

Dec. 18:

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM – Religious Education – Grades 6 – 7
 7:30 PM – Parish Choir Rehearsal – Church

Dec. 19:

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM – Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament – Church
 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Morning Scripture Study – Parish Life Room
 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM – Choristers Rehearsal – Church
 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – Evening Scripture Study – Conference Room
 7:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Individual Confessions

Dec. 20:

7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – Youth Group Meeting – Fr. Roger Troy Hall
 7:30 PM – Marian / Eucharistic Holy Hour

Dec. 22:

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM – Choristers Rehearsal – Church
 4:15 – 4:45 PM – Reconciliation

Dec. 23:

9:30 AM – LWC
 11:15 AM – Parish Choir meet
 12:00 PM – Parish Choir at Mass



Christmas Schedule

Individual Confessions – every Saturday, 4:15 PM – 4:45 PM and Wednesday, **December 19th**, 7:30 PM – 8:00 PM.

Christmas Masses – Christmas Eve, 5:00 PM (with Childrens Choir and the Choir of St. Mary's) and 10:00 PM, **Christmas Day**, 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM.

Physical Plant Update

The baptismal font area is complete. The font is now placed in a more dignified and logical location. We have a dedicated area for baptisms to occur, with family and friends able to gather around during the baptism. The holy oils used for anointings at baptisms and other sacraments are located near the font. The Pascal candle (Easter candle) is nearby, making the connection of the light of Christ and new life. The font being located by the entrance to the church enables the blessing of the body during funeral mass, further making the connection from baptism to resurrection.

The next issue that needs attention is interior church lighting. The first 5 pews are very poorly lit and the fixtures that contain spotlights for the high altar are outdated. The plan is to replace these fixtures and add more lights for the front pews. Also, the main vestibule light fixtures will be repaired and perhaps some additional lighting added over the music ministry area. The parish has some funds reserved from the Living Stones Campaign to cover these upgrades.

The former convent is still without a tenant. Since the Religious Education offices have been moved to the lower rectory, we have realized significant savings on utilities (cooling, internet and phone) over the summertime. The convent remains heated throughout the winter and staff regularly checks on the building. Pray that a tenant comes soon as the parish very much needs this rental income.

The St. Mary Finance Council has agreed that any projects in the parish which may cost over \$5,000 will require detailed bids from three contractors.

Thank you to all parishioners who support beloved St. Mary's financially and offer their gifts of time and talent as we manage the physical plant.

Volunteer Ministry Opportunities at St. Mary

Make a difference at St. Mary and have a good time in the process by singing with the Choir of St. Mary. Men are needed. Great group. No singing experience is necessary. Another opportunity is to serve as a *cantor* or *song leader*. Parishioners in high school and beyond interested in volunteering as a *cantor*, please reach out to Mr. Scarpa to schedule an interview. See Louis after mass or send an e to ministry@stmarycloster.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

St. Mary's is in need of a parishioner to change the parish announcements on the sign located on High Street. This is not a weekly task, perhaps once or twice a month. It does not entail coming up with the announcements. Please contact Grace at the parish office or email gditzel@stmarycloster.org. Thank you!

Altar Linen Help Needed

Our parish altar linen ministers are responsible for laundering the liturgical linens (purificators, corporals, and towels) used during Mass and baptisms. We need volunteers to help with weekly laundering and ironing. The commitment is one assigned week per month, takes less than one hour, and is an easy way to share your time and talent with the parish. If you can assist please call Chris Hofmann at 201-768-6535. Thank you!

Parish Membership

To be considered an active, participating member of the parish and thus eligible for reduced tuition rates at participating Catholic schools or sacramental sponsorship eligibility, St. Mary's takes into account an individual's participation (attendance) in Mass, and ministry/volunteer involvement. Since weekly offertory envelopes are the primary means of determining if parishioners are "active," we ask you to place your offertory envelope in the collection basket even if you cannot afford to make a monetary stewardship donation. The parish cannot track cash donations in the Sunday collection. *Praying together as a God's family, participating in a ministry to be the hands of Christ and supporting the parish financially are the three meaningful ways we live our Catholic faith!* We Catholics are blessed!

FAMILY PROMISE WALK IN- DINNER PROGRAM THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Thanks again for your continued support of the Walk-in Dinner Program through Family Promise held on December 12th. Thanks to your generosity and kindness, we served over 110 people, who were extremely grateful for the delicious variety of food which you all provided.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
THE 2019 WALK-IN DATES ARE:
February 6th, May 29th and
September 25th.**

Your Christmas Gift to Beloved St. Mary's:

Needed Now More Than Ever

As the end of year and Christmas approaches, now is the time to remember a special stewardship gift to support the work of St. Mary's financially. As we report it monthly in our bulletin, St. Mary's is challenged in meeting operating expenses and is in debt. The Sunday collections, special collections and school rental income are not covering the operating expenses, which themselves have been carefully scrutinized for saving opportunities without cutting back on basic ministries and services offered by St. Mary's. The parish is relying on year-end and Christmas gifts to help offset the deficit. All parishioners and friends are asked to make a very special stewardship gift at Christmas to beloved St. Mary's. Tax advantages may benefit the donor. Most importantly, in light of all that God has given to us, your gift will help St. Mary's continue to be the hands of Christ in the local community and beyond. Please consider a generous Christmas gift today. The best way to donate is via parishgiving.org or a check payable to St. Mary's Church. May God's peace reign in your hearts and may those in need spiritually or materially know that St. Mary's will be here to serve. God bless you and yours!

St. Mary's Benefits from Amazon Smile

Did you know your purchases can make a difference? AmazonSmile donates to St. Mary's Catholic Church when you do your holiday shopping at smile.amazon.com/ch/22-1512275.

It's that season again . . .

Sneezing, coughing, scratchy throat, flu – you've got the idea. If you are experience any of these symptoms or not feeling 100%, rather than shake hands a smile or nod of the head works well. Also, it is okay only to receive only the Eucharist and not receive the Precious Blood.

The Advent Wreath: Progressing Forward

Traditionally, Advent wreaths are constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which four candles are inserted, representing the four weeks of Advent. Ideally, three candles are purple and one is rose, but white candles can also be used.

The purple candles in particular symbolize the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and goods works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas.

The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead. Whether at home or in the church the Advent wreath reminds us to re-focus on Christ.

Sacrament Certificate Requests

For various reasons there are times when one needs to obtain a new current Baptism, First Eucharist, Confirmation, or Marriage Certificate. When doing so please allow the office at least two weeks time. Thank you.

How To Report Abuse

The Archdiocese takes very seriously any and all allegations of sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, Religious and lay staff of the Archdiocese. We encourage anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct to inform us immediately so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to victims of sexual abuse.

Individuals who wish to report an allegation of sexual misconduct may do so by calling the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at 201-407-3256.

Support Groups

Many who hunger for God's consolation after the loss of a loved one, separation or divorce or other circumstance will find that faith based programs can offer them hope and comfort. A listing of parish support groups are now available on the Family Life Office webpage. Currently, the Archdiocese of Newark has over 60 different types of support groups ministering to an estimate of 1,200 people each year. The types of groups include: general bereavement, bereaved parents, separated & divorced, single parents & same sex attraction. To find a support group near you, please go to: www.rcan.org/about-parish-based-support-groups-0 and select the group type from the menu on the right. To make updates to our list please contact Lauren Egan at 973-497-4327 or Lauren.Egan@rcan.org.



QUEEN OF PEACE COUNCIL 3679

Membership in the Knights of Columbus is open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. This means that an applicant or member accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in

good standing in the Catholic Church. Queen of Peace Council 3679 chartered here at St. Mary in 1953 and serving Northern Valley parishes, meets on the second Thursday of the month in the Rev. Fr. Roger Troy Hall and a dinner meeting on the fourth Thursday usually at *A Taste of Spain Restaurant* in Northvale. For information on membership please contact Grand Knight John Hernandez at 201-768-8871 or email jah21344@aol.com.

2019 Women's Day of Reflection / Catholic Men's Conference

The dates for the 2019 Women's Day of Reflection is on Saturday, **March 9th** and the Catholic Men's Conference is on Saturday, **March 16th**. Both events will be held at Seton Hall University, have English and Spanish tracks and include Breakfast and Lunch. Registration fee is \$25.00. Time of events is 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

Some of the advantages of attending these events are:

- Listen to speakers who inspire us to learn, love and live our faith better
- Times of prayer and worship
 - Holy Mass
 - Holy Hour
 - Adoration Chapel
- Availability of confession
- Meet and fellowship with like-minded Catholics
- Help others to experience the faith
- Learn about ministries of the Archdiocese
- Catholic gifts and books for sale

More information can be found soon at

www.rcan.org/womenscommission or www.NJCatholicMen.org.



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Follow and like St. Mary's on FaceBook. Why? Because the latest news and announcements are posted there and by "liking," St. Mary's we reach more circles of people.

www.facebook.com/stmarycloster.

"Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort me and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."

- St. Patrick

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