

**PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS
FLOW**

Stewardship Report – Treasure

<u>Sunday Collection-11/22 & 11/29/20</u>	\$	8,066.00
<u>Catholic Home Missions– 11/22/20</u>	\$	150.00
<u>On-line giving –Regular -11/15 & 11/22/20</u>	\$	1,157.00
<u>On-line giving – Maintenance 11/15 & 11/22</u>	\$	45.00

If you are unable to attend Mass, weekly collection envelopes may be mailed directly to the Rectory office at 33 Unionville Avenue, Sussex, NJ 07461. Collection envelopes may also be dropped in the metal milk box located to the left of the front door of the rectory. Thank you for your generosity!

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN AS OF 11/23/2020

Please support St. Monica's Church by contributing to our Annual Campaign. Forms are located at the Church Hall Exits and at the Rectory Office. *We thank you for your generosity!*

Pledges to Date: \$24,245.00
Paid to date: \$20,253.34



The Sanctuary Lamp is given this week:
In Memory of: People of our Parish

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

12/7	MON:	9:00am	People of our Parish
12/8	TUES:	9:00am	Giorgio Gallara
12/9	WED:	9:00am	NO MASS TODAY
12/10	THU:	9:00am	People of our Parish
12/11	FRI:	9:00am	People of our Parish
12/12	SAT:	5:00pm	Martinette Maikowski Anita Gawenus Jerry Hershey
12/13	SUN:	8:30am	Kelly Curtis
		10:30am	John & Theresa Orso Carlos & Rosaura Castro
		12:00 pm	Anita Gawenus

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, IS THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND IS A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION MASSES WILL BE AT 9:00 AM AND 7:00 PM.

MASS TIMES:
SATURDAY: 5:00 PM
SUNDAY: 8:30 AM, 10:30AM and 12:00 NOON
WEEKDAY MASSES: MON., TUES, THURS, FRI.
AT 9:00AM (NO MASS ON WEDNESDAYS)

PARISH PENANCE SERVICE
St. Monica's Parish Penance Service will take place on Tuesday, December 15 at 7 pm. Three priests will be available to hear confessions.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 6, 2020



Twice today we hear Isaiah's directive: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." How are we preparing for the Lord to make inroads into our lives, into our hearts? What obstacles has our self-centeredness placed in the way and how can we remove them? For what do we need forgiveness and what repentance can we make? As we prepare to receive the Lord today in the Eucharist, let us also prepare to truly receive him in our hearts.

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WEEKLY/MONTHLY PARISH EVENTS

HELPING HANDS- The next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 7:30 pm in the Church Hall. New members are always welcome.

SPECIAL DEVOTIONS AT ST. MONICA'S

Recitation of the Rosary – Come join us every Monday at 4:00 pm in the Church to recite the Rosary for peace in our nation and around the world.

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 9:00A.M. Mass until 10:00 A.M.

READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8
Monday: Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26
Tuesday: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38
Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30
Thursday: Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15
Friday: Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19
Saturday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab;
Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

DUE TO RESTRICTIONS THAT ALLOW FOR ONLY 25% CAPACITY AT EACH MASS, THOSE ARRIVING AFTER CAPACITY IS REACHED MAY, REGRETABLELY, HAVE TO BE TURNED AWAY. IN THIS CASE, PARISHIONERS MAY ATTEND A WEEKDAY MASS OR JOIN US ON-LINE EACH SUNDAY TO CELEBRATE MASS.

The Link for the video Mass will be available each weekend on our homepage. (stmonicasussex.org).

You Need to Know.... Because of this pandemic, nothing is normal! So, as much as we all look forward to the "Giving Tree" (or wreath), unfortunately, this year, I cannot do that. With the need for volunteers, the tags and the handling of all of those gifts received...the risks are just too great! These weeks of Advent, we will keep simple gifts in our window at the pantry for folks to choose from and we will give extra special December food bags. Some of you have been leaving non-perishable food in the baskets in the hall. Thanks! It is the season when canned soups or stews would be appreciated. You can always leave clean, gently-used coats or boots and shoes (labeled with my name). They will fill a need.

Normally, this season you would have received a fund-raiser flyer, but not this year! We will not burden folks more than this pandemic has done. Be safe-be well-God Bless.

Joan 973-875-6417



We are very grateful for the generosity shown by so many to our **Annual Collection**. If you have not yet had an opportunity to return your pledge card,

please do so as soon as possible. Every gift is welcomed and sincerely appreciated. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIAL ENVELOPES



Envelopes are available on the tables in the Church and hall. Print the name(s) of your deceased loved ones and enclose your monetary donation for a poinsettia to be placed in the church. A printed list will be made available and a copy placed on the altar. Please return all envelopes to the box near the pulpit by no later than the weekend of December 19th- December 20th.



On Sunday, November 29, 2020, AINSLEY ELIZABETH PABST, daughter of John J. Pabst IV and Rachel Taylor, received the Sacrament of Baptism here at St. Monica's. The Godparents are Justin Taylor and Kristen Catino. Congratulations and God bless you, Ainsley!



2020 DIOCESAN MINISTRIES APPEAL
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR"

As the year comes fast to an end, and many are planning on how to make a final year-end charitable contribution that has the most impact, please consider the many lives that are helped

because of the support given to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal. These are your neighbors, your friends, our senior priests and seminarians and urban school students. All of us can play a part in the Diocesan Ministries appeal-as either a contributor to the cause or as a recipient of its mission-and all are blessed as a result. Please make the Diocesan Ministries Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, credit cards, through gifts of securities or on-line at www.2020appeal.org.



RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Help our Elders. In good times and bad, senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have dedicated themselves to service and acts of mercy. Today, they pray for an aching world. Yet years of serving for little or no pay have left their religious communities without enough retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious helps provide medications, nursing care, and other necessities. Please be generous when we take this special collection next weekend, December 12th and 13th, for this important fund. Thank you!

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARISHIONERS!

We collected \$569 on Thanksgiving Day which will be used to help the poor in the local Sussex area. Thank you for your generous donations which will go a long way to help those in need.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS 2020

Tuesday, December 15th – PARISH PENANCE SERVICE

7:00 pm (Confessions)

Thursday, December 24th – CHRISTMAS EVE (evening)

Pre-registration required for all Christmas Masses.*

5:00 pm**

8:00 pm

10:30 pm – “Midnight Mass”

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 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm on Christmas Eve. The Presbyterian Church begins their Christmas Eve service at 7:30 pm and needs its parking facility while our 5:00 Mass is still going on.

Friday, December 25th – CHRISTMAS DAY

10:30 am and 12:00 noon

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Saturday, December 26th - 5:00 pm

Sunday, December 27th - 8:30 am, 10:30 am & 12:00 noon

NEW YEAR’S EVE MASS

Thursday, December 31st – 5:00 pm



THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (NEW YEAR’S DAY)

Holy Day of Obligation

Friday, January 1st - 10:30 am and 12:00 noon

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday, January 2nd - 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 3rd - 8:30 am, 10:30 am & 12:00 noon

***DUE TO RESTRICTIONS THAT ALLOW FOR ONLY 25% CAPACITY AT EACH MASS, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO PRE-REGISTER FOR ALL CHRISTMAS MASSES. PRE-REGISTRATION SHEETS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE TABLE IN THE CHURCH HALL. PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE MASS OF YOUR CHOOSING AND INDICATE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING. ONCE CAPACITY HAS BEEN REACHED FOR ANY MASS, NO FURTHER RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR THAT MASS. THANK YOU.**

****FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN, THERE WILL BE NO CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN’S NATIVITY PAGEANT AT THE 5:00 PM MASS THIS YEAR.**



The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Every year on December 8th, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The feast is celebrated nine months before the feast of the Nativity of Mary on September 8th and serves as one of the most important holy days of obligation in the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church.

According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, the Immaculate Conception refers to the special way in which the Virgin Mary was conceived in her mother's womb free from original sin. Although the Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived by normal biological means, God acted upon her soul, keeping her immaculate at the time of her conception. The creation of the Virgin Mary is explained in the [Catechism](#) of the Catholic Church, which states "*the most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.*" This means that when she was conceived, God gave Mary a pure soul incapable of sinning. Her soul was never stained by original sin, nor by the depraved emotions, passions, and weaknesses consequent on that sin, but created in a state of original sanctity, innocence, and justice. This privilege was given to Mary to prepare her to be the mother of the Redeemer.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was dogmatically defined by Pope Pius IX, December 8, 1854. It was centered on Mary's motherhood, on her as "Mother of God", and on the text from the Scripture: "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you" (J 1:28). The doctrine was established by tradition, by the writings of the Fathers, by feasts observed in honor of this prerogative, by the general belief of the faithful. The very controversies over it among theologians brought about a clear understanding and acceptance of the doctrine long before it was officially declared.

As affirmation of this doctrine the Blessed Virgin Mary used the title Immaculate Conception when appearing at Lourdes. When Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous near a cave outside of Lourdes, France, in 1858, she identified herself as the "Immaculate Conception." A mural of that scene from Lourdes stands in the Basilica.

The Feast of Mary's Conception was known as early as the 6th century in the Eastern Churches. The feast spread to the West, at least by the 9th century. In 1476 Pope Sixtus IV approved the feast with its own Mass and Office, and in 1708, Pope Clement XI extended the feast to the universal Church, making it a holy day of obligation. In 1847, Pope Pius IX proclaimed Mary as patroness of the United States, under the title of her immaculate conception. Thus, to this day, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the patronal feast of the United States.

Mary goes before us as a model of faith. Though she was conceived without sin, and remained sinless, we can follow her in faithfulness and purity. The grace that purified and sustained Mary can purify and sustain us as well. Let us strive to cooperate with God's will as Mary did throughout her whole life, even from the moment of her conception.

Fr. Jan