

# St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church

*We are called to honor the Lord by serving each other in hope.*



**December 3, 2023**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

**1150 West Centre Ave. • Portage, MI • [www.stcatherinesiena.org](http://www.stcatherinesiena.org) • (269) 327-5165**

**In case of after-hours emergency, death, or danger of death, please call: (269) 598-0357**

Dear Parishioners,

Advent has begun! All of us who have been through Advent before are accustomed to the four candles on the Advent wreath and four weeks of Advent. But if you looked at the calendar, or read or heard some of the hints that I have given over the past few weeks, we do not have four full weeks of Advent this year. In fact, the 4th Sunday of Advent will begin with the Vigil Mass on the 23rd and end on Sunday morning, the 24th. That means that your last candle on the Advent wreath won't get much use this year! On the afternoon of the 24th, we begin our celebration of Christmas with the Christmas Eve Masses.

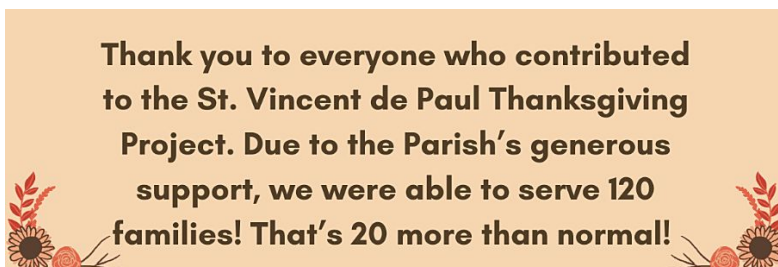


With such a short season of Advent this year, the question to ask ourselves is: How will we make the most of every day of Advent? How will we prepare ourselves in a spiritual way? It would certainly be easy this year to skip over Advent and just go straight into a Christmas mode. It's certainly tempting to do this isn't it? Christmas is usually a joyous time of the year (and many of us remember Fr. Bill telling us how much he loved Christmas). I can guarantee you that Fr. Bill is counting down the days. Yet the Church gives us these days to prepare ourselves. It's a time to pray, to reflect, and appreciate what God did for us by sending His Son! We are truly missing out on helping our spiritual life grow if we just skip over all of these days of preparation.

One way that we can prepare ourselves is with the Sacrament of Penance. You may have noticed the schedule for the Kalamazoo area Penance Services in the bulletin. St Catherine will be having our Advent Penance Service this coming **Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30 p.m.** This will be a great way to prepare oneself for the upcoming celebration of Christmas. But if this date and time doesn't work for you, please check the schedule and see if a Penance Service on another day and time will work for you. Preparing for Christmas certainly means that we need to prepare our hearts.

In next week's column, I will be explaining how the 4th Sunday of Advent and how the Christmas Mass schedule is going to work with this particular year. Please stay tuned! Thanks for reading!

Fr. Mark



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## Mass

Monday - Saturday: 9:15 am (Trinity Chapel)  
Saturday: 4:00 pm, Vigil Mass  
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 am, & 5:00 pm

**All schedules are subject to change.**

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

**Saturdays from 11:00 am—12:00 pm,  
Trinity Chapel/GLP**

If this time does not work for you, call our Front Office to schedule an appointment with a priest.

## Front Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm  
**Phone:** (269) 327-5165 **Fax:** (269) 327-7266  
**Email:** [Office@stcatherinesiena.org](mailto:Office@stcatherinesiena.org)



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or <https://stcatherinesiena.org/prayerrequest>

## Stewardship

<b>November 13 - November 19, 2023</b>	<b>Envelopes &amp; Loose Donations</b>	<b>\$17,756</b>
	<b>Electronic Giving</b>	<u>\$7,051</u>
		<b>\$24,807</b>
<b>November 14 - November 20, 2022</b>	<b>Envelopes &amp; Loose Donations</b>	<b>\$11,104</b>
	<b>Electronic Giving</b>	<u>\$8,679</u>
		<b>\$19,783</b>
<b>2023 Year to Date</b>	<b>\$558,331</b>	
<b>2022 Year to Date</b>	<b>\$556,165</b>	

***Thank you all for your continued generosity!***

If you are interested in membership or volunteering,  
please contact our Front Office today!  
**Office@stcatherinesiena.org or 327-5165.**

# Calendar of Events

Calendar events subject to change!

## Sunday, December 3, 2023

7:30 am	Mass, Church
8:30 am	Coffee and Donuts, Marian Hall
9:00 am	Mass, Church
10:00 am	YFF, Fellowship, GWR
10:00 am	CFF, Classrooms
11:00 am	Mass, Church
1:00 pm	Baptism, Trinity Chapel
5:00 pm	Mass, Church
6:00 pm	WOW, Classroom 2/4
6:00 pm	HS Youth Group, Game Room
6:30 pm	MOPS, Fellowship
7:30 pm	Youth Ministry HS Leaders Meeting, Game Room

## Monday, December 4, 2023

9:15 am	Daily Mass, Trinity Chapel
11:30 am	Primetimers, Offsite
7:00 pm	Catholic Men's Fellowship, GLP
7:00 pm	CFF, Classrooms
7:00 pm	YFF, Fellowship, GWR, Stanley Centre Office

## Tuesday, December 5, 2023

9:15 am	Daily Mass, Trinity Chapel
9:45 am	Rosary, Trinity Chapel
6:30 pm	RCIA Room 5/7
6:30 pm	RCIC Room 6/8
6:30 pm	Grief Share Program, Classroom 9/11
6:30 pm	KofC Rosary, Fellowship
7:00 pm	KofC Business Meeting, Fellowship

## Wednesday, December 6, 2023

9:15 am	Mass, Trinity Chapel
10:00 am	St. Catherine's Buddy Up Walkers, Stanley Centre Gym
6:30 pm	Penance Service, Church, GLP
7:00 pm	33 Days to Morning Glory, GWR
7:00 pm	Scripture Study, Zoom

## Thursday, December 7, 2023

9:15 am	Daily Mass, Trinity Chapel
10:00 am	Adoration, Trinity Chapel
10:00 am	Women of the Word, OFFSITE
12:50 pm	Benediction, Trinity Chapel
6:15 pm	Choir Practice, Choir Room
7:00 pm	Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass, Church

## Friday, December 8, 2023

9:15 am	Immaculate Conception Mass, Church
7:00 pm	Immaculate Conception Mass, Church
8:00 pm	33 Days to Morning Glory, Church

## Saturday, December 9, 2023

7:30 am	Catholic Men's Fellowship, Classroom 9/11
8:30 am	SVDP Interviews, Stanley Centre Office
9:15 am	Daily Mass, Trinity Chapel
11:00 am	Reconciliation, GLP, Trinity Chapel
2:45 pm	Siena's Rehearsal, Church/Choir Room
3:30 pm	Rosary for Life, Church
4:00 pm	Mass, Church

# Reflection on the Readings

Today starts a new liturgical year with the first Sunday of Advent. We begin our journey toward the birth of Christ at Christmas. Mark's Gospel calls us to be active participants, remaining alert for the coming of Jesus. We can "hear" the resounding urgency as Jesus speaks to His disciples, "Be watchful! Be alert! You will not know when the time will come." And again, "What I say to you I say to all: 'Watch!' But what are we to watch for? Certainly, we are watching and waiting to celebrate the joyous birth of Jesus on Christmas day. That is our first period of "watch and wait." Yet, we also await the second coming of Jesus. He will come to the whole world at the end of time when, as our Creed states, "He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end." He will also come to each one of us individually at the hour of our death when we'll be asked to make an accounting of our stewardship of God's kingdom here on earth. So, when Jesus says to stay alert and be watchful, He is not just speaking to a last generation that will see His second coming as this world ends. He is speaking about the ultimate mortality of our own lives. We don't know "when the lord of the house is coming..." Jesus gives us full warning to be alert for that day because Jesus also comes to us in the present! He awaits us in each Mass in the Eucharist. He comes to us many times each day in the opportunity to choose Him, to follow Him and to serve Him by our service to others in need. While His presence may not be obvious, we can recognize Him through "the eyes of faith" in all those we encounter. We are each called, but not forced, to respond with love to all, even the unlovable, for Jesus' sake. To summarize this Gospel passage, another word stands out: Prepare! The beginning of Advent is a perfect time to step back and examine our own lives. Will the Lord find us "sleeping" through our life and "blind" to His presence? Or will we be prepared to welcome Him into our life?

Reflection by Parishioner Dale Gerber



# News Around St. Catherine

## St. Nicholas Raffle & Dinner Tickets For Sale

Win \$5,000 or a prize package while supporting important causes! This weekend, the Knights of Columbus are selling \$25.00 raffle tickets in the Narthex for the St. Nicholas Fundraiser after masses. The winner will be picked on December 6th! You don't need to be present to win.

## Gospel Mission Sock and Underwear Drive

Please consider donating a NEW pair of socks or underwear for the homeless at the Gospel Mission. All sizes are needed for men, women, and children. Items can be placed on the table located in the Narthex **until December 18th**. Thank you for your help and generosity. If you have any questions, please contact Michele at 269-808-2452 or Mary Jo at 269-569-0037.

## Giving Tree Donations

Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far! Just a reminder that items for the Giving Tree should be returned to the Narthex today since deliveries will be the week of December 4th. PLEASE remember to tape or tie a label to your bag with the NAME of the organization for which it is intended. If you are interested in assisting with the sorting or delivery of these items, please contact Colette (gushursts@yahoo.com). Your generous gifts and time have been appreciated in previous years!

## Women of the Word

Women of the Word is inviting you this winter and spring to join our study, *Lectio Mark: Faith over Fear* by the Augustine Institute. **Cost is \$15 per book.** Financial assistance is available. Registration will be available in classes on December 3rd. You can also register by returning the flier from previous bulletins to the parish office or going online at [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com) under the km\_packard@hotmail.com tab. Register **by December 14th**. For registration questions, contact Katie Packard at km\_packard@hotmail.com or general questions contact Janet Wheeler at rwhee28934@aol.com

## St. Catherine's Advent Retreat

Deacons Brian Kaluzny, Ron Brown, and Tim Kistka will lead St. Catherine's Parish Advent retreat **on Saturday, December 16**, from 10:00 to 4:00 pm. Coffee and Lunch will be provided. This is a free event. A free will donation is appreciated and may be given during the lunch hour. No childcare provided. For more information and to sign-up, contact George Dragan at gdragan@stcatherinesiena.org or call the parish office. **Please sign up by December 10.**

## St. Catherine's MS Youth Group Christmas Bake Off

Middle-Schoolers! Join us at the Stanley Centre on December 10th at 6:00 to 7:30 pm, we will hand you the ingredients, and you'll flex your baking skills by whipping up the most mouthwatering dish without a recipe!

## "In Honor Of," and "In Memory Of," Poinsettia Donations

You can donate funds to offset the cost of decorating the church with poinsettias for Christmas. With your contribution, you can choose "In Honor Of," for a living person or "In Memory Of," which is for someone who has passed. You can make your donation through the envelopes that you received in the mail, visit the office, or call the church at (269-327-5165). We will be accepting donations **until December 10th** in order for your contribution to be listed in the bulletin.

# News Around the Diocese

## Hackett Jazz Band MSUFCU Jazz Artist Concert

The Hackett Jazz Band hosts for the tenth time the MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence Concert, featuring jazz drummer Sylvia Cuenca along with jazz musicians from MSU. We hope you will join us on Thursday, December 7 at 7:00 pm in the Hackett auditorium. Tickets may be purchased at the door or at <https://hackettband.ludus.com/> Thank you for supporting Hackett Catholic Prep!

Location	Date	Time
St. Augustine Cathedral	Sun, Dec 3	3 PM
St. Catherine of Siena	Wed, Dec 6	6:30 PM
St. Martin of Tours	Sun, Dec 10	3 PM
St. Thomas More	Mon, Dec 11	6:30 PM
St. Joseph	Wed, Dec 13	6 PM
St. Monica	Thurs, Dec 14	6 PM
St. Ambrose Parchment	Tues, Dec 19	6 PM

## Advent Penance Services



# Fall Fest 2023



**Thank you  
for  
coming!**

## CHRISTMAS 2023

Are you ready to celebrate the season? Know what the obligations are and how to fulfill them.

This year, the 4th Sunday in Advent is also Christmas Eve. You will need to attend a Mass to fulfill your Sunday obligation and one to fulfill the Christmas Holy Day obligation. Below are the Mass times at St. Catherine of Siena.

### 4th Sunday of Advent

Dec. 23 - Saturday Vigil  
Mass  
4:00 PM

-or-

Dec. 24 - Sunday Mass  
7:30 AM, 9:00 AM

### Christmas

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve  
Vigil Mass  
4:00 PM, 6:30 PM, 9:00 PM

-or-

Dec. 25 - Christmas Mass  
10:00 AM

# Mass Intentions

**SATURDAY: December 2, Vigil of The First Sunday in Advent**

4:00 pm Fr. Ben Huynh

**SUNDAY: December 3, First Sunday in Advent**

Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7/1 Cor 1:3-9/Mk 13:33-37

7:30 am Tammy & Doran LeFaive

9:00 am Deacon Ed Feltes †

11:00 am People of the Parish

5:00 pm Kristine Himebauch †

**MONDAY: December 4, Advent Weekday; Saint John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church**

Is 2:1-5/Mt 8:5-11

9:15 am Thomas Arthur Blake †

**TUESDAY: December 5, Advent Weekday**

Is 11:1-10/Lk 10:21-24

9:15 am Joyce Larkin †

**WEDNESDAY: December 6, Advent Weekday; Saint Nicholas, Bishop**

Is 25:6-10a/Mt 15:29-37

9:15 am Fr. Albert Kemboi's Ordination Anniversary

**THURSDAY: December 7, Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**

Is 26:1-6/Mt 7:21, 24-27

9:15 am Joyce Larkin †

Vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gn 3:9-15, 20/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

7:00 pm People of the Parish

**FRIDAY: December 8, The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Gn 3:9-15, 20/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

9:15 am Kevin Schamehorn †

7:00 pm Donna Moran †

**SATURDAY: December 9, Advent Weekday; Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin**

Is 30:19-21, 23-26/Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8

9:15 am Kay and Lee Tundevold

**SATURDAY: December 9, Vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent**

4:00 pm Clara Martin †

**SUNDAY: December 10, The Second Sunday of Advent**

Is 40:1-5, 9-11/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8

7:30 am Jan Neale †

9:00 am Margaret Hudson †

11:00 am Maggie Cantu †

5:00 pm People of the Parish

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Connect with us online at:  
[stcatherinesiena.flocknote.com](http://stcatherinesiena.flocknote.com)



# Staff Contacts

## Accounting

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George Dragan / (269) 978-2347

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## Parish Nurse Ministry

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Paula White (volunteer) / (269) 330-3762

# Clergy Contacts

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Fr. Jacob Sundararaju

Deacon Brian

Deacon Ron

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All clergy contacts are [@stcatherinesiena.org](mailto:@stcatherinesiena.org)

Call our Front Office to leave a non-urgent message  
for a Priest or Deacon **(269) 327-5165**

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A Scotsman, planning a trip to the Holy Land, was aghast when he found it would cost 50 Euro an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee.



"Hoot mon! In Scotland, It wouldn't have been more than 30 Euro." he said.

photo created by  
[rawpixel.com](http://rawpixel.com)

"That may be," said the travel agent,"but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is where our Lord himself walked."

"Well, at 50 Euro/hour for a boat," said the Scotsman, "it's no wonder he walked!"

**VIRTUS training is required of any adult who works with children at the church or within the Catholic Schools.**





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