

Divine Grace Parish

First Sunday of Advent

November 30, 2025



GOD'S PERFECT PLAN *for my Life*

From ESPN to the Priesthood, Father Anthony Federico shares his journey at our Parish Advent Mission at Holy Redeemer Church.

Story on page 5.

Saint Ferdinand Church

2535 Rochester Road
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

@divinegracepgh †

Saint Gregory Church

2 West Beaver Street
Zelienople, PA 16063

†

www.divinegracepgh.org

Holy Redeemer Church

415 4th Street
Ellwood City, PA 16117

†

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@divinegracepgh



@DivineGraceParishDioPitt



PRESIDER SCHEDULE

For next week's schedule,
follow us on Instagram –
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<https://bit.ly/3QnKf5w>

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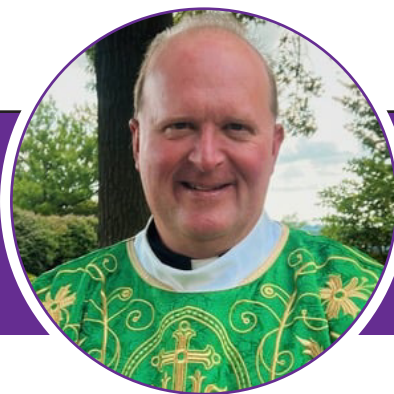
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**Divine Grace Parish Social
Services:** 724-758-3465



Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know
on which day your *Lord* will come.

– Matthew 24:42

Celebrating Advent

We see in the Old Testament, particularly in the Book of Isaiah, the Hebrew people waiting for the Messiah who would deliver them from bondage and forever establish a new kingdom. John the Baptist preached the imminent coming of the Messiah. As Mary and Joseph prepared for the birth of Jesus, much preparation was required, as you parents know first-hand. For the Church, Advent recalls how the People of God yearned for the Messiah as we do each day of our lives. Advent prepares us to celebrate with great joy the anniversary of the birth of Jesus. And, Advent prepares us individually for when the Lord will meet us when we die, as well as when the fullness of the Kingdom will come as we pray in the Lord's Prayer. For these four weeks, I pray all of our parishioners can make this time a holy preparation for Christmas and for our own spiritual journey.

Significance of the Advent Wreath

You can see the Easter Candle in the sanctuary of all three of our churches. A new one is blessed every year during the Easter Vigil. It signifies the light of Christ conquering the darkness of sin and death. The Advent wreath signifies how the light of Jesus Christ came into the Holy Family and comes into our lives, particularly through the Holy Eucharist. The three purple candles represents the "penance" and planning that we devote to our preparations – the spiritual work to strive to be saints. The rose-colored candle blends the white of Christmas and the purple of Advent to signify the joy that goes into the hard work of being a Christian. I would encourage you to display an Advent wreath or some representation of Advent to remind us in our busy lives to keep our focus on Jesus.

Saint Nicholas Day

Many pagan practices emerged as a result of this holy bishop of the 4th century who cared for the poor and

hungry. Today, he is known as Santa Claus (America), Father Christmas (England), Père Noël (France), Ded Moroz (Russia), Noel Baba (Turkey), and Juletomte (Sweden). We also know him as Saint Nicholas. His feast day is **Saturday, December 6**. As we keep "Christ" in Christmas, let us thank the Lord for Saint Nicholas, the real Santa Klaus who generously practiced charity.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

On **Monday, December 8**, the Universal Church celebrates the Immaculate Conception of Mary. This is a holy day of obligation. Mass schedule: Saint Ferdinand - 8:30 am, Noon, 7:00 pm; Saint Gregory - 8:00 & 9:00 am, 7:00 pm; and Holy Redeemer - 9:00 am & 7:00 pm.

Year-End Giving

As you budget for holiday gatherings, receptions, gifts, and other commitments, thank you for your prayerful discernment of a gift to Divine Grace Parish. I greatly appreciate the generosity of so many of you that includes financial, spiritual, and volunteer support which sustains ministry, outreach, and care for our parish campuses. Thank you!

DIVINE GRACE PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT



Sunday Collection total for
November 15-16, 2025 = \$42,397
Second Collection = \$7,093
(for Christmas flowers)
Parish Members = 18,837
Parish Households = 7,100

This weekend there is no second collection; however, the Little Sisters of the Poor is accepting donations following Masses. *Thank you for your generosity.*

I ask that...prayers, petitions, and
thanksgivings be offered for *everyone*

— 1 Timothy 2:1



Saturday, November 29 – 1st Sunday of Advent

4:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Linda Stevens (Stevens Family)
5:00 pm, Holy Redeemer † Mary Jo Cioffi (Husband & Family)
5:00 pm, Saint Gregory † Lynda Vezzani (Gene & Veronica Vezzani)
6:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Jim Kennelly (Mary Ann Kennelly)

Sunday, November 30 – 1st Sunday of Advent

8:00 am, Saint Ferdinand † Bridget Sklarsky (Husband & Children)
8:00 am, Saint Gregory † Butch Kotuby (Padu-Marlene LaCava)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Anthony & Elizabeth Pratt (Daughter, Phyllis)
10:00 am, Saint Ferdinand † Michael Galata (Mom & Dad)
10:00 am, Saint Gregory † Richard Litz (Slifkin Family)
11:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Mary Prestopine (Family)
12:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Patricia Carusone (Kathleen & Gary)
5:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Fr. Thomas Galvin

Monday, December 1

8:00 am, Saint Gregory † Mariano Elepano (Judith Good)
8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Jennie Lee (Pat Pranaitis)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Henry "Hank" Faust (Dave & Vicky Manzo)

Tuesday, December 2

8:00 am, Saint Gregory † Paul R. "Spike" McElhinny (Ann & Salvatore Dino)
8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Michael Semes (Ann & Michael Lynch)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Gerry & Jane Crowley (Jonathan, Claire, Maura & Ella Fauzey)

Wednesday, December 3 – St. Francis Xavier

8:00 am, Saint Gregory Sarah Buzzard - For the Temporal & Spiritual Welfare (Family)
8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Christopher Young (Gary & Linda Ritzert)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Rose Pietrullo (Jeff & Mary Sainato)

7:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Mary Lou & Matthew (son) Stillwagon (Husband & Father)

7:00 pm, Holy Redeemer † For the Eradication of Evil within our Parish Boundaries

Thursday, December 4

8:00 am, Saint Gregory † Wayne Tepke (Tepke Family)
8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Stephanie Deak (K of C Wives, Council 11838)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Catherine Castor (Bill & Beverly Rutter)

Friday, December 5

8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Bill Hvizdak (John & Susan Labos)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Linda Cistolo (Barbara Gioffre)
9:00 am, Saint Gregory † Joseph Goral (Cristalli Family)

Saturday, December 6 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

8:30 am, Saint Ferdinand † Mary Salvatore (Salvatore Family)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Joan Docchio (Keith & Patti Kuhn)
4:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Barbara Neidhardt (Terri Bernath)
5:00 pm, Holy Redeemer † Lizbeth Brandenburg (Dorothy Colella)
5:00 pm, Saint Gregory † Jim Andrews (Carol & Piny Wallace)
6:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Ryan Kingerski (Tony & Sharon Buzzelli)

Sunday, December 7 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

8:00 am, Saint Ferdinand † Richard J. Quinn (Linda Pecyna)
8:00 am, Saint Gregory † Russell Pelligrene (David Hulick)
9:00 am, Holy Redeemer † LuAnn Santillo (Larry & Jonette Capra)
10:00 am, Saint Ferdinand † Marty Chabala (Beggy Family)
10:00 am, Saint Gregory † Mary Jane Schaffer (Therese Yates & Family)
11:00 am, Holy Redeemer † Samuel R. Bertucci (Virginia Ottaviani)
12:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Leonard "Chick" Angeletti (Jayne & Jay Manga)
5:00 pm, Saint Ferdinand † Barbara Procup (Joe & Marianne Marino)

† = deceased

FROM SPORTSWRITER TO PRIEST “God Writes Straight with Crooked Lines”

Father Anthony Federico grew up Catholic, but his life was sports. When he got a job at ESPN straight out of college, he was on top of the world. He quickly climbed the ranks, becoming a sportswriter, editor and producer. Then his world came crashing down.

He was falsely accused of writing a racial slur in a headline and the story went viral. He was fired, humiliated on social media and by reporters, chased by paparazzi, received hate mail and even death threats. He blamed God, and harbored suicidal thoughts.



Father Anthony landed a new job but felt an overwhelming emptiness. One day on his lunch hour, he walked past a basilica. The next day, he also kept going. The third day, he walked in and began attending daily Mass. Slowly, he went from going through the motions to understanding and embracing the True Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Then his life changed again.

He entered the seminary and was ordained in 2019. Three years later, Father Anthony was named Director of Vocations and Seminarians for the Archdiocese of Hartford (CT), helping guide men in discernment. Priestly vocations have undergone a remarkable transformation. No one had been entering priestly formation recently. Today, more than 100 men have begun the discernment process and 16 entered the seminary the last two years.

Now an author, speaker and co-host of the podcast Practically Catholic, Father Anthony shares his compelling story and a bold mission—“to pray for a thousand priests, a thousand deacons, a thousand religious sisters, and a thousand strong Catholic marriages.”

“God writes straight with crooked lines,” Father Anthony says. “The Lord revealed Himself to me in a real way, showed how much He loved me and how perfect His plan was for my life.”

ADVENT PARISH MISSION

with Father Anthony Federico
Holy Redeemer Church

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Dec. 9, 7:00 pm

From ESPN to the Priesthood: How the Eucharist Changed My Life

Wednesday, Dec. 10, 9:00 am

Father Anthony celebrates Mass, followed by his talk, *Under the Gaze of Jesus: The Difficulty and Beauty of Eucharistic Adoration*
7:00 pm talk - *Desire: Coming to Know the Heart of the Father*

No cost; courtesy RSVP at
<https://divinegracepgh.org/talks>

MASS Schedule

Saint Ferdinand Church

2535 Rochester Road
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

Monday - Friday	8:30 am
Wednesday	7:00 pm
First Saturday	8:30 am
Saturday (Vigil)	4:00 pm
	6:00 pm
Sunday	8:00 am
	10:00 am
	Noon
	5:00 pm

Holy Redeemer Church

415 4th Street
Ellwood City, PA 16117

Monday - Saturday	9:00 am
Wednesday	7:00 pm
Saturday (Vigil)	5:00 pm
Sunday	9:00 am
	11:00 am

Saint Gregory Church

2 West Beaver Street
Zelienople, PA 16063

Monday - Thursday	8:00 am
Saturday (Vigil)	5:00 pm
Sunday	8:00 am
	10:00 am



SCREENFAST

Unplug to Recharge Your Faith

As we begin Advent, we end this 30-day challenge to reduce our non-essential screen use on smartphones, tablets, computers and TVs. How did you do?

Pope Leo said recently, "Our deepest questions are not heard or answered by endlessly scrolling on our cell phones, which captures our attention but leaves us with tired minds and empty hearts."

The Holy Father invites all of us to recognize that friendship with Jesus Christ is what should matter most. Entering into Advent, let's reflect on our current relationship with screens:

- How do I offer an example to young people around me of a healthy, intentional, and balanced use of screens?
- How am I witnessing to my children or grandchildren a life where my friendship with Christ comes first?
- Am I being a good steward of the time that God has given me?

Hopefully we're becoming more aware of the time we spent online, and it will benefit us going forward. The next time you are in front of a screen, visit <https://divinegracepgh.org/screen-fast> for info and inspiration.

Sustaining our Parish & Endowing our Future



Divine Grace parishioners have two upcoming opportunities to learn how to support their faith community long-term. Education sessions are set to introduce the Fund for Divine Grace Parish, an endowment being created from the new Catholic Foundation for Greater Pittsburgh.

The Fund will offer a permanent source of support, making giving easier through long-term, short-term, and quasi endowments. Common legacy gifts include estate commitments such as bequests and retirement plans; designations of life insurance policies; personal or corporate matching gifts; and charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, and charitable lead trusts.

Legacy gifts usually cost donors nothing during their lifetimes because they typically are funded with assets. The principal is invested in the Fund and grows.

Two education sessions are scheduled for parishioners. On **Thursday, December 11** at 9:00 am, a continental breakfast will be offered in Saint Ferdinand's McAndrew-Biller Hall; the meeting will begin at 9:30 am. An online session also is available on **Tuesday, December 16** at 6:30 pm. Use this Zoom link: <https://shorturl.at/X4OOq>. Learn more at www.cfgpitt.org

To create a will or make a legacy gift, visit <https://partner.freewill.com/cfgpitt>

EUCCHARISTIC Adoration

—MONDAY—

Holy Redeemer Church

8:00 am to 8:50 am

—TUESDAY—

Saint Gregory Church

1:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Holy Redeemer Church

8:00 am to 8:50 am

—WEDNESDAY—

Saint Ferdinand Church

9:00 am to 6:30 pm

Holy Redeemer Church

9:30 am to 7:00 pm

—FRIDAY—

Holy Redeemer Church

8:00 am to 8:50 am

Saint Ferdinand Church

9:00 am to 10:00 am

—SUNDAY—

Holy Redeemer Church

12:15 pm to 5:00 pm



CONFESSION *Schedule*

—TUESDAY—

Saint Gregory Church
5:00 pm to 6:00 pm

—WEDNESDAY—

Holy Redeemer Church
6:00 pm to 6:45 pm

—SATURDAY—

Holy Redeemer Church
9:30 am to 10:30 am

Saint Ferdinand Church
10:00 am to 11:00 am

Saint Gregory Church
10:00 am to 11:00 am

This week on **formed**TM Week of November 30, 2025

Rooted: Rediscover the Jesse Tree This Advent

Hosted by Dr. Scott Hefelfinger, Rooted guides Catholics through a daily Advent reflection using the Jesse Tree model traditionally practiced by families. Each seven-minute episode introduces the ancestors of Jesus Christ, shares a Scripture passage, and offers an engaging practical reflection.



Adore: Advent with Fr. John Burns

Join Father John Burns as he journeys deeper into the theme for week one: watchfulness.



Encountering Emmanuel with Heather Khym

In week one, Heather speaks about the first reason for the Incarnation - Jesus saves us. Heather helps us to give our sorrows to Jesus, and open our hearts to the saving power of Christ.



Want to grow in faith on your own time? Divine Grace Parish offers free access to Formed, an online hub of Catholic movies, talks, studies, and kids' content. Visit <https://signup.formed.org>, enter our parish name, and start exploring today.

Early Submission for Bulletin:

Due to the upcoming holidays, please send your announcement two Mondays before the publish date to rdewitt@divinegracepgh.org. Thank you!



Advent Retreat on December 6



Join us to learn and pray about Saint Joseph's example of courage, fidelity, and his love and care for Mary and Jesus. This one-day retreat will include an overview of praying with Scripture using Lectio Divina, Visio Divina and Imaginative Contemplation, silent Scripture-based prayer, and group reflection. It will be led by Theresa Rossi on **Saturday, Dec. 6**, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, in Saint Ferdinand's Holy Family Room.

The \$10 cost includes lunch and refreshments. RSVP to ignatian@divinegracepgh.org or call 724-316-5575.



Saint Ferdinand Office Hours

Monday - Friday

9:00 am to 5:00 pm

724-776-2888, ext. 1101

Fax: 724-776-2378



This week at Saint Ferdinand Church

Monday, December 1

- 9:15 am Flame of Love, *Church Cry Room*
- 9:30 am Women Gathered, *Holy Family Room*
- 6:00 pm LifeTeen, *Youth Room*
- 7:00 pm Women Gathered, *Holy Family Room*

Tuesday, December 2

- 9:00 am Flame of Love, *Children's Liturgy Room*
- 9:30 am Contemplative Prayer, *Holy Family Rm*
- 10:00 am Bible Study, *Upper Room*
- 7:00 pm Folk Choir, *Church*

Wednesday, December 3

- 9:00 am Comfort Blankets, *McAndrew-Biller Hall*
- 6:30 pm Temporalities Committee, *Library*
- 7:00 pm K of C Council 11838, *McAndrew-Biller Hall*

Thursday, December 4

- 2:00 pm Women's Club Board, *Library*
- 7:00 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal, *Church*

Friday, December 5

- 9:30 am ABC Moms, *McAndrew-Biller Hall*

Saturday, December 6

- 9:00 am Advent Retreat, *Holy Family Room*
- 11:30 am Lunch with Santa, *Oldenski Hall*

Lunch with Santa on December 6

Help deliver your little one's Christmas List at Lunch with Santa, sponsored by the Women's Club, on **Saturday, December 6** at 11:30 am in Saint Ferdinand's Oldenski Hall. Enjoy crafts, face painting, raffles, party bags (ages 1+), and a visit from Santa! Lunch includes hot dogs, mac & cheese, applesauce, drink, and dessert. \$8/person; free for children under one. To reserve your seat, call Peggy at 724-538-9522.

Giving Tree to Help Many

Can you assist our less fortunate families and neighbors this Christmas? The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is again sponsoring a Giving Tree. Please take a tag from the tree in the Saint Ferdinand Church narthex. We are asking for \$25 gift cards for parishioners in need, Gleaners Food Bank recipients, special needs residents of McGuire Memorial, and those living at UPMC Cranberry Place. Please place gift cards in the boxes under the tree by **Sunday, December 7**. Be sure to include the tag and value of the gift card.

Ideas for Oldenski Hall

You are invited to a town hall meeting on renovation options for Oldenski Hall on **Sunday, December 14** at 1:30 pm in the hall. You may recall members of Saint Ferdinand Parish raised \$2.7 million from the Church Alive campaign to renovate the space. Having completed projects at Holy Redeemer and Saint Gregory churches, we are now ready to hear from a steering committee that has been studying potential recommendations for Oldenski Hall.



Holy Redeemer Office Hours

Mon - Fri: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Closed for lunch (12:30-1:00 pm)

724-758-7587, ext. 3002

Fax: 724-752-1466

Help for our Community Dinner

Every Sunday the Holy Redeemer Catholic Center is filled with good food and a welcoming atmosphere. Teams of volunteers plan and serve home-cooked meals while offering a kind word and resources. More help is always appreciated. If you would like to volunteer or donate food items, visit:

<https://divinegracepgh.org/ec-community-dinners>

Also, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/9227z8hv> to see our wish list of needed supplies.



Holy Redeemer Coat Drive

New and gently used coats are needed for women, men and children of all ages. If you are able to help, please bring your coats to the Holy Redeemer Catholic Center lunch room on **Thursday, December 4** from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm or **Friday, December 5** from noon to 3:00 pm. If you are in need of a warm coat, distribution will take place on **Saturday, December 6** from 9:30 am to noon at the Catholic Center.

Santa Claus Coming to Ellwood City

The Social Club will host their annual Children's Christmas Party on **Sunday, December 7** from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Holy Redeemer Catholic Center. No cost for lunch and activities that include crafts, face painting, an Ugly Sweater Contest, gifts, and of course a visit from Santa. RSVP with children's names and ages by calling 724-657-4661



Be a Bright Light for Others

The Shining Star Tree is in the narthex of Holy Redeemer Church to help families in need this Christmas. Please take a Star tag from the tree and return it with the requested gift, wrapped, with the tag securely attached to the outside. Please drop it off in the narthex or at the Social Services Office in the Catholic Center by **Sunday, December 7**. Thank you!



This week at Holy Redeemer Church

Thursday, December 4

- 3:00 pm Coat Donations, *Catholic Center Lunch Room*
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal, *Church*

Friday, December 5

- 12:00 pm Coat Donations, *Catholic Center Lunch Room*
5:00 pm Bingo, *Catholic Center*

Saturday, December 6

- 1:00 pm Coat Distribution, *Catholic Center*

Sunday, December 7

- 1:00 pm Children's Christmas Party, *Catholic Center*
3:00 pm Youth Ministry, *Location TBD*
4:00 pm Community Dinner, *Catholic Center Lunch Room*

Helping Students in Ellwood City

A new program called Homework Helpers is being launched in Ellwood City to support students living in the Walnut Ridge housing development. Now a ministry of Divine Grace Parish, Homework Helpers needs caring volunteers to help provide academic support and/or snacks one evening a week. If you feel called make a difference, please contact Stacey or Cara at HH@divinegracepgh.org to learn how you can get involved!



This week at Saint Gregory Church

Monday, December 1

6:30 pm K of C Council 6177, *Blue Room*
6:30 pm Evangelization Team, *School Library*

Wednesday, December 3

6:30 pm OCIA, *School Library*

Saturday, December 6

8:00 am Catholic Men's Fellowship, *School Library*
11:00 am Hospice Ministry, *Blue Room*
1:00 pm EMHC Training, *Church Narthex*



Saint Gregory Office Hours

Closed: Monday – Thursday
Friday: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
724-776-2888, ext. 1101
Fax: 724-452-4064

Angel Tree Gift Giving

Help others in need this Christmas season through the Angel Tree in the Saint Gregory Church narthex. Please take a gift tag from the tree and sign the sheet next to it. Return your wrapped gift with the tag securely attached to the outside of it, placing it next to the tree by **Tuesday, December 9.**

Questions? Email SGAngelTree@divinegracepgh.org. May God bless you for your kindness.



Looking for Other Evergreens

To prepare Saint Gregory and Saint Ferdinand churches for the Christmas season, we are in need of live evergreen trees, 12-20 feet tall. If you have a tree you would like to donate, please call the Divine Grace Parish Office at 724-776-2888. Thank you!

More Help for the Holidays

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Gregory Conference will distribute Christmas gift cards to people needing some support on **Wednesday, December 17**, 10:30 am in the church narthex. Recipients must complete paperwork before the distribution and live in one of four zip codes: 16063, 16037, 16033, or 16123.

To reserve a gift card, please email SVDPsg@divinegracepgh.org or call the church office at 724-776-2888 by 3:00 pm on **Friday, December 12.**

Adoration Returns December 2

With the organ restoration project finishing, Eucharistic Adoration will resume at Saint Gregory Church on **Tuesday, December 2** from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. If you can sign up as a permanent adorer or substitute on Tuesdays, email Alena at akucan@divinegracepgh.org or call 724-776-2888, ext. 1107. Thank you

Learn About our New Hospice Ministry

If you are interested in the new Hospice Volunteer Ministry at Divine Grace Parish, there will be an informational meeting on **Saturday, December 6** at 11:00 am in the Saint Gregory Blue Room. Please enter through the lower parking lot behind the church. There is no obligation if you attend.



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Training

Interested in becoming an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion? There will be a training on **Saturday, December 6** from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm in Saint Gregory Church. Those who would like to serve as a minister and current volunteers needing a refresher are invited. Please email a courtesy RSVP to Jennifer at jlivorse@divinegracepgh.org or call 724-776-2888, ext. 1210. Thanks!

Let us *rejoice* in the house of the Lord

Hoagie Sale for Appalachia Mission Trip 2026

Hoagie fundraising sales begin following Masses next weekend for Divine Grace Parish's Appalachia Mission Trip next June. If you are a parishioner age 14 or older and would like to help those in need, please sign up to make and sell hoagies after Masses. Funds raised will be used to buy building materials. Hoagie sales will continue monthly through February. Mission trip alumni, be on the lookout for information about our 30-Year Reunion! Email Mindy at appalachia@divinegracepgh.org if you would like to join our trip and/or be added to our reunion list.

Christmas Gift Ideas

Divine Grace Parish's online store is ready to take your merchandise orders at <https://bit.ly/DGPMerch>. Shop for parish logo shirts, hoodies, hats, jackets, mugs, bottles and more until **Tuesday, December 23**. Purchases will be shipped to your home. Questions? Email Jennifer at jlivorse@divinegracepgh.org.



Looking for a New Vehicle?

Car raffle tickets are available in the narthex of our churches following Mass. Can you help sell tickets? The parish is raffling off a new Chevy Trax LT. Tickets are \$25 each or 5 for \$100. Click here: <https://bit.ly/3UUqJjR> or scan the QR code to sign up and see the raffle rules.



Saint Gregory Organ

Our restored organ has been installed but fundraising continues. The total cost is \$585,000 and gifts to date have totaled about \$375,000. You may make a pledge with reoccurring donations or a one-time gift. Please email Father Jim at jwehner@diopitt.org. The Dedication Concert for the new organ will be held on **Friday, January 30** at 7:00 pm. You are welcome! Donors will be receiving a personal invitation from Fr. Jim.

Parish Ministry Survey Ending

We'd like to know how Divine Grace Parish can better serve you or your family through ministry. Is there a ministry you would like to see started? Please complete our survey by **Monday, December 1**:

- Visit <https://divinegracepgh.org/ministries> and scroll down to the survey button.
- Pick up a hard copy in church or a parish office.

Drop it in the return basket when complete.

Reach out to Jennifer with any questions at jlivorse@divinegracepgh.org.

Annual Parish Appeal

The campaign funds formation, outreach and pastoral care of parishioners and those in need across our diocese. Additional support last year helped parish youth and young adult ministries, religious education, and upkeep of our properties. To date, 1,317 donors have contributed. To give, please click on <https://bit.ly/4h5LNvW>

Pray with us on Hallow this Advent

Starting **December 1**, join our parish for Hallow's Pray25 Challenge, a daily journey of prayer and reflection to prepare for Christmas. Already on Hallow? Tap the Community tab and join our parish page. New to Hallow? Visit <https://hallow.com/parish>, search by zip code, and follow the prompts.

Need help? Email parishsupport@hallow.app or visit <https://divinegracepgh.org/hallow>

Unpacking the Word

— Isaiah 2:1-5 —

Isaiah was a catechism of sorts for the early Church, and sometimes has been called the fifth Gospel. Aside from the Psalms, it is the most frequently quoted book in the New Testament, and we read Isaiah at Mass more frequently than the Gospel of Mark. Isaiah was a prophet in the southern kingdom of Judah in the 700s B.C. when the northern kingdom of Israel was being wiped out and the southern kingdom of Judah was being reduced, both at the hands of the Assyrian Empire. When Isaiah wrote our first reading this week, Judah was dominated by a cultural Yahwism, a post-Yahwism if you will, that foreshadowed our current cultural Catholicism and post-Christian culture. His message of restoration in the coming age was given at a time when most people had completely forgotten or just did not care that their whole world had been built upon following the Lord and trusting in His promises. Sounds familiar, right?

At the outset of Advent, the Spirit is renewing his promise of restoration. There will come a day when people will stream to Jerusalem, not the physical city but the spiritual Jerusalem, the Church. Instruction shall go forth from this New Jerusalem, as when the Apostles began carrying the good news to Jerusalem and Judea, to Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, and as when the Church teaches authoritatively today on faith and morals. Isaiah speaks of a time of Messianic peace when weapons are no longer needed, and so they are turned into a means of providing food instead of fighting.

Many of these prophecies have come to pass in the life and ministry of Jesus, and others still await their fulfillment, most notably the Messianic peace. We all long for peace in our hearts and in the world. The only way to achieve the peace we hope for is by following the Prince of Peace, by living the way He has taught us and continues to teach us. As we pray in the Psalm response, "Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord," to Mass, to the true Mt. Zion where we will be fed with heavenly teaching and with heavenly food. The Spirit is reminding us that the only way to beat our swords into plowshares is to be infused with the heavenly teaching flowing from the Lord's house.

Jesus will restore his Church. He will bring real and lasting peace, even if the world around us forgets it, even if we ourselves forget it. Amid the darkness of a post-Christian world, "let us walk in the light of the Lord!"

Visit <https://divinegracepgh.org/unpackingtheword> to share this reflection and previous columns.



Jason Gawaldo

*Director for Evangelization
& Catechetical Ministries*

**The Light
is ON for you!**

Experience God's forgiveness and healing in the sacrament of confession. As part of the diocesan program The Light is On for You, confessions will be heard
Tuesday, December 16
at Saint Gregory and
Wednesday, December 17
at Saint Ferdinand and Holy Redeemer, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at all three churches. For the full Advent and Christmas liturgical schedule, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/36mk8c9z>



Michael Assaf

*Ministry Coordinator of
Youth and Young Adults*

LIFETEEN
divine grace parish

LIFE NIGHTS: MONDAYS

6:00–8:00 pm @ St. Ferdinand

Dec. 1 – You Are Peter
Dec. 15 – Christmas Party

BIBLE STUDY: TUESDAYS

7:00–8:00 pm @ St. Ferdinand

Dec. 2 – Voice Crying Out

SUNDAY SESSIONS

3:00–4:30 pm @ Holy Redeemer
Location TBD

December 7 & December 14

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Divine Grace LifeTeen invites students in grades 8–12 to an unforgettable summer weekend filled with faith and fun! From **Thursday, July 9 through Sunday, July 12**, teens will experience dynamic speakers, live music, powerful worship, and a full day of excitement at Cedar Point.

This is more than just a trip, it's a chance to grow in faith, discover your purpose, and connect with others on the journey.

Early registration is now open! Sign up by **March 1** to lock in the \$50 early bird rate. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycxesusy>

Save the Date – Faith On Fire



Thursday, December 18 • 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

Dave & Buster's, 6260 Northway Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Young adults celebrate the season with good food and great company! Enjoy a buffet dinner, unlimited soft drinks, and plenty of holiday surprises. All are welcome! Details to follow, stay tuned!



STRIKES AND SPARES

Our 8th Grade students visit with residents at Passavant Senior Center every month to chat, do crafts or play games. In November, they took part in **hallway bowling**. Students and residents also shared what they are thankful for ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday.

COMFORT FOR GRIEVING STUDENTS

Saint Gregory School marked **Children's Grief Awareness Day** to help bring comfort to students who have suffered a loss. The student body wore blue as the official color of the day. The school counselor held activities to help as students wrote uplifting messages on paper butterflies to schoolmates who are grieving. Affected students also wrote the name of a lost loved one.

HELP FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

Students and families are asked to take part in the **Mitten Tree Project**, sponsored by the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV, which provides services to Saint Gregory School. Give the gift of warmth by donating new mittens, gloves, hats and scarves to students in our region who may be experiencing homelessness. Donations will be accepted at the school through **Friday, December 19**.

BREAKFAST With Santa Sunday, December 14 8:30 am to 11:00 am

Join us for a festive morning at St. Gregory Catholic School! Children are invited to share their holiday wishes with Santa while families enjoy a delicious breakfast and the joyful spirit of the season.

St. Gregory School Cafeteria
115 Pine Street, Zelienople, PA 16063

Enjoy pancakes, sausage, eggs, and more!
Adults: \$8 | Seniors: \$7 | Children (10 & under): \$6

We hope to see you there!



FOOD DONATIONS

School families were invited to bring non-perishable food to Mass to be blessed. The donations were then taken to the Southwest Butler Food Cupboard for their November distribution. Thanks to all who participated.





Sanctuary Candle

A candle burns at
Saint Ferdinand

For Alex, Sr & Ann Mallozzi
from Alex & Danette Mallozzi



Sanctuary Flowers

Holy Redeemer

Altar Flowers: *In Memory of*
Anthony & Elizabeth Pratt and Toni
Ann McDevitt
from Phyllis Mulhollen

Tabernacle Flowers: *In Memory of*
The Pratt and Pasta Families
from Phyllis Mulhollen



Prayer Garden

Saint Ferdinand
A candle burns for:

Michael Galata
from Mom & Dad

Mary Stillwagon
from Kathy & Michael

T'Sai Alleyne
from Her Parents

In Loving Memory of
Maria Irene Bey
from Ricci Family

In Celebration, In Prayer: As a parish family, we lift up the names and needs of those in our hearts through prayer. If you would like to have sanctuary or prayer garden candles, or sanctuary flowers dedicated in honor or memory of a loved one, call 724-776-2888.

Advent Wreath Prayer



Dear Jesus, as we light the candle(s) on this Advent wreath, may the light of your presence bring joy to our hearts. Bless our family and our friends and be with all those who are in need this holiday season. Amen.

The First Week of Advent: November 30

1. **Light the first purple candle**
2. **Read from Scripture:** *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined."* (Isaiah 9:2)
3. **Pray the Advent Wreath Prayer for Week 1:** *"Dear Jesus, you are the hope in our messy world. This Advent, help us slow down, listen to your voice, and focus on what's really important. We place our hope in you as we prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth on Christmas. Amen."*
4. **Reflect:** Are you ready to discover the hope Jesus is inviting you to experience this Christmas?

Be a *Light* for all to see.

- Matthew 5:16



Helping our Neighbors in Need

The Salvation Army in Ellwood City is in need of bell ringers for their holiday Kettle Drive held outside Giant Eagle and Shop 'n Save. Most of the money raised – 85 percent – stays in the community to assist families with groceries, utility assistance and other expenses. Organizations and groups can sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/2d7mm8fa> or email Doug at dugslade@gmail.com.



The Pittsburgh Crèche Needs Your Help

For many years, the Pittsburgh Crèche in downtown Pittsburgh has stood as a visible sign of our faith, proclaiming the birth of our Lord. But costs continue to be a challenge – nearly \$90,000 a year to maintain and store the Crèche. You can help by buying a Pittsburgh Crèche Fundraising Lottery Ticket, valid from January 1 to June 30, 2026. Each ticket costs \$25 and is based on the PA Daily Evening Lottery Drawing (3-digit). Only 1,000 are available.

To learn more, email crechefundraising@diopitt.org or visit www.diopitt.org/news

DIVINE GRACE PARISH 2025 Advent & Christmas Liturgies/Events

FROM THE PASTOR

The Advent and Christmas seasons offer a wonderful opportunity to recommit to the Catholic faith and share it with others. Whether you are a regular at weekend Mass or have lost touch with the Church, you are welcome here at *Divine Grace Parish*. See you soon, and bring a friend!

Fr. Jim Wehner
Pastor

Advent Parish Mission DECEMBER 9 & 10

Holy Redeemer Church

SPEAKER: Fr. Anthony Federico
Former ESPN sportswriter turned priest

Tuesday • 7 pm Talk
Wednesday • 9 am Mass + Talk
• 7 pm Talk

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary MONDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

St. Gregory Church
8 am | 9:15 am | 7 pm
St. Ferdinand Church
8:30 am | Noon | 7 pm
Holy Redeemer Church
9 am | 7 pm

Holy Mother of God WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

St. Gregory Church
4 pm
St. Ferdinand Church
7 pm | Midnight
Holy Redeemer Church
7 pm

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1ST

St. Gregory Church
8 am | 10 am
St. Ferdinand Church
8:30 am | Noon
Holy Redeemer Church
9 am

Christmas Eve Masses WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

St. Ferdinand Church
4 pm Church
4 pm Oldenski Hall
6 pm | Midnight
St. Gregory Church
5 pm | 8 pm
Holy Redeemer Church
5 pm | 10 pm

Christmas Day Masses THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

St. Gregory Church
8 am | 10 am
St. Ferdinand Church
9 am | 11 am
Holy Redeemer Church
10 am

Confession Schedule

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU (DIOCESAN-WIDE CONFESSIONS)

St. Gregory Church
Tue. Dec. 16 • 5-7 pm
St. Ferdinand Church
Holy Redeemer Church
Wed. Dec. 17 • 5-7 pm

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

Holy Redeemer Church
9:30 - 10:30 am
St. Gregory Church
St. Ferdinand Church
10 - 11 am

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22ND

St. Ferdinand Church
Noon - 1 pm

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

St. Gregory Church
5 - 6 pm
Holy Redeemer Church
6 - 7 pm

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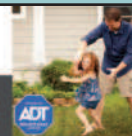


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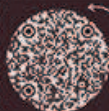


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