



Saint Clare of Assisi Parish

LOVE GOD, SERVE GOD: EVERYTHING IS IN THAT.

December 10, 2023

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

A VOICE OF ONE CRYING OUT IN THE DESERT:

"PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD,

MAKE STRAIGHT HIS PATHS.

EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE FILLED

AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE MADE LOW."

—LUKE 3:4-5





MATER DOLOROSA

409 North Main Street
Chicora, PA 16025

ST. JOSEPH

864 Chicora Road
Chicora, PA 16025

ST. WENDELIN

210 St. Wendelin Road
Butler, PA 16002

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Monday - Friday | 9 am - 12 pm

724-445-3713

www.saintclareparish.com

St. Wendelin School

211 St. Wendelin Rd., Butler, PA 16002

724-285-4986

email: stwend@zoominternet.net

Saint Clare Prayer List

For Prayer List updates, call Fran Parker @
724-445-7421 or the parish office

Cemetery Inquiries

Contact North Regional Office,
2636 Ellwood Road, New Castle, PA 16101,
724-323-0033, cpca@cpca-pgh.org

Flocknote is a GREAT communication tool that the Diocese of Pittsburgh has given all parishes. A safe and simple way to get updates from the parish via email or text allowing the parish and ministry groups to communicate more easily and effectively with you! You can select which groups or ministries that you prefer to receive messages from, allowing us to easily send you the information you care about most via email and text message. Sign up through the parish website!



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our website



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our Facebook Page



Check out the online version of the
Pittsburgh Catholic at
www.diopitt.org



A Message from Fr. Matt

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Have you ever been to a desert? I guess I kind of have. I have been to Arizona a few times. My Aunt Susie and Uncle Bud used to live in Tucson and my parents used to go rent a place near them for a few weeks in the winter after my dad retired. It is a beautiful area but I'm not sure I could live there. It kind of looks like you're on the moon. One of my college buddies got married in Phoenix. We all stayed at a pretty fancy hotel out there and I remember going to meet my buddies at the pool. I forgot to bring flip flops so I had running shoes on. Once I got to the pool, I kicked my shoes off and stood up on the patio around the pool and I am pretty sure I seared my feet like a good steak! I didn't realize that the patio would get so hot! But that is the way it is in the desert. Nice to visit. Bring flip flops if you do. Pretty sure I wouldn't want to live there.

I noticed something in the Readings for this week. I think there is a mistake in punctuation. Maybe I am wrong but, did you notice that in the Gospel, St. Mark says that the Prophet Isaiah says "A voice of one crying out in the desert: Prepare the way of the Lord..." However, in the First Reading, Isaiah actually says "A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!" Did you catch the difference? St. Mark is identifying John the Baptist as the one whose voice is crying out in the desert. That is how Mark introduces John. But Isaiah is saying that a voice is telling us that we should go to the desert to prepare the way for the Lord. That is different, isn't it? Of course, we need to remember that neither Mark nor Isaiah wrote in English and so both of these passages are translations and all translation involves interpretation, so maybe this is nothing. Maybe it doesn't matter. We do believe that the coming of John the Baptist was foretold by the prophets. He was indeed the voice that cried out in the desert. But...what if this isn't nothing? What if the message really is that in order to prepare the way of the Lord, we need to do it in the desert?

I have to admit, I had never really noticed this difference before. I always just heard Isaiah and assumed that he was writing about John, and honestly, I don't think that this is wrong. But with that said, what do you think it means when the prophet says "In the desert prepare the way of the Lord"? Go to a hot place that burns your bare feet and looks like a moonscape? Maybe a good question to ask is, what does "the desert" mean in Scripture? In some ways the desert is a place of testing. Jesus was tested for 40 days in the desert. Israel was tested for 40 years in the desert after the Exodus. The desert can be a place of banishment and punishment. It can be seen as a place of desolation. So, is this what we are being encouraged to do? It sounds awful.

The thing is, to Israel, the desert was not only a place of testing and desolation, it was also a place of great intimacy with God. When Israel was in the desert, God was with them. There was no buffer. God's presence was in the Ark of the Covenant and the Ark was with Israel. They had never been closer to God. God literally was in a tent with them. Did you know what the Hebrew word for tent is? Tabernacle. Isn't that something? Isaiah is calling Israel back to the intimacy and simplicity of the time when God dwelt in the tabernacle with them. Wait...are we in the desert? God is in the tabernacle with us, right? Indeed, God is. I think that the answer is that we can be in the desert if we are willing. God is here and desires intimacy with us. We need to realize where we are and make way for Him.

There is actually something called "Desert Spirituality" and in it, the desert is called "The Place of Great Undoing." Going to the desert or realizing that you are in the desert can lead you to a more honest understanding of yourself. It is a place where ego is put aside, because how can you be full of yourself when you know that God, THE GOD, is sitting right in the room with you? If we are honest, we couldn't. The desert is a place where all of our dreams and goals for ourselves can stand side by side with the dreams and goals that God has for us. If we are honest, God's are better. In the desert, we can see clearly who we are, not who we think we are, not who we want others to think we are, but who our Maker says we are. The desert is the place of great undoing. It is the place of humble and honest seeing. It is the place of greatest intimacy with God.

This week let us realize where we stand. We stand on holy ground. We stand in the desert. We have an intimacy with God, in the Tabernacle and inside our bodies when we receive Him in the Eucharist, that most people in the history of the world have never had. The desert is available to us. It is a good place to be. It is a place that will allow you to see yourself and all that is going on in your life, in a most honest way. Stand in the desert. Be honest. Be real. You are so intimately close to God. Do you realize it?

In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!

Peace and Love,
Fr. Matt



Praying for those in need . . .



REMEMBER
in your prayers

Dick Preston
Breanna Tomsey
Sue Ellen Carr
Joseph McCloskey
Jayden Albright
Rosemarie Gall Zarnick
Ron Kriess
Fr. Rick Thompson
Kandi Nassy
Larry Karenbauer
Steven Shultz
Mason Martin

Mark McBride
Lena Jane Steiner
Sandy Burns
Bill Smith
Sharon Golobish
Madalyn Rose Geibel
Jim Bergbigler
Virginia Briski
Fred Green
Carter T. Williams
Ada Skelly
Donna Green
Vince Ritzert
Dean Morrow
Madeline McCloskey
Pearl Kocher



WEEKLY READINGS

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 10, 2023

Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 (8)/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8

Monday: Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/Lk 5:17-26

Tuesday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

Wednesday: Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30

Thursday: Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab/Mt 11:11-15

Friday: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19

Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Next Sunday: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 (Is 61:10b)/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28



Prayers for comfort and peace to the family
& friends of those our parish has lost.

Genevieve Pearl Ritzert

May they rest in the peace and glory
of the Risen Christ.



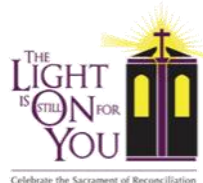
*Warm wishes and blessings to those recently
baptized in our parish.*

Cove Jagger O'Polka

son of Andrew & Alisha O'Polka

Welcome to our faith community!

The Light is on for You. Prepare for the coming
of Jesus on Christmas Day, by receiving the
Sacrament of Reconciliation, **Wednesday,**
December 13th at Mater Dolorosa from 6-9 pm.



CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Wednesday
6:15pm-6:45pm
Mater Dolorosa

Saturday
11:00am-11:30am Mater Dolorosa
11:00am-11:30am St. Wendelin
11:45am-12:15pm St. Joseph



WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS

Date	Time	Location	Intention	Requested By
Saturday, December 9 St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin	4:00 PM Vigil	St. Wendelin	Doris Stephenson	Her Family
	5:30 PM Vigil	Mater Dolorosa	Ed Parker	Family
Sunday, December 10 Second Sunday of Advent	7:00 AM	St. Wendelin	Mr. & Mrs. Henry Jodzis	
	8:15 AM	Mater Dolorosa	Jim Slaughenhoup	Fred & Martha Callihan
	9:30 AM	St. Joseph	Ralph G. Boltz	Kim & Henry Williams
	10:30 AM	St. Wendelin	Ed Ross	Sue Fraley
Monday, December 11 St. Damasus I, Pope	12:00 PM	Mater Dolorosa	Gertrude Flick	Family
Tuesday, December 12 Our Lady of Guadalupe	8:00 AM	St. Wendelin	Mason Martin & Family	Tony & Roberta
Wednesday, December 13 St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr	10:00 AM	St. Wendelin	Nick Monteleone	Pauline Saeler
	7:00 PM	Mater Dolorosa	NO Mass- The Light is on for You Confessions	
Thursday, December 14 St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church	8:00 AM	St. Wendelin	Clare Mitch	Brenda Wolfe
Friday, December 15	12:00 PM	St. Joseph	Mary Jo Modzelewski	Pauline Saeler
Saturday, December 16	4:00 PM Vigil	St. Wendelin	Madeline Neff	Children
	5:30 PM Vigil	Mater Dolorosa	Robert Zanella	Family
Sunday, December 17 Third Sunday of Advent	7:00 AM	St. Wendelin	For the Parishioners of Saint Clare of Assisi	
	8:15 AM	Mater Dolorosa	Patricia Liberto	Bean Callihan
	9:30 AM	St. Joseph	John T. Price & Family	Bill & Elaine Kusick and Family
	10:30 AM	St. Wendelin	Mabel Weiland	Ruth & Chuck Rodgers and Families

Parish Giving

Due to the early submission date for the bulletin, the collection totals for December 3rd will be published in next weekend's bulletin.



Please take note of the upcoming early submission deadlines for the bulletin below. If you have any questions or to submit bulletin information, contact Jenn at

communications@saintclareparish.com.

Bulletin Date Information Due (by 5 pm)

December 17th	Friday, December 8th
December 24th	Wednesday, December 13th
December 31st	Thursday, December 21st

St. Clare Parish 2024 Lottery Calendars are still available! The cost is \$20 each. Calendars are available in the back of each church. Money can be turned in with the completed stub from the calendar when sold. Ticket stubs and payment can be mailed or dropped off at the Administrative Office, dropped in the collection basket or in the lock boxes located at each church. Contact the office with any questions!



St. Clare continues to collect nonperishable food items for the Petroleum Valley Food Cupboard. Boxes are located in the back of each church for donations. Thank you for your continued support!



St. Francis Parish is seeking an organist/choir director to play at St. Joseph Church in Cabot. Resumes may be sent to St. Francis Parish, 315 Stoney Hollow Rd., Cabot, PA 16023, Attn. Barb Boltz or emailed to office@saintfrancisparish.net.



The parish is looking for a volunteer to tend to the poinsettias at St. Wendelin after Christmas. If you can help, please call the office.

Christmas Flower donations received **by tomorrow, December 11th**, will be published in the December 24th bulletin. *Any donations received after December 11th will be published after New Years.* Thanks you.



A reminder to anyone who generously selected a tag from the **Giving Angel Tree**, if you haven't already, please return wrapped (or unwrapped if specified on the tag) gifts **to the tree or the St. Clare office by Monday, December 11th.** Thank you for your generosity as always!



Some tags are still available on the **Giving Trees for residents of Quality Life Services in Chicora**, trees are in the **back of Mater Dolorosa and Saint Joseph**. Please take a tag from the tree and record your name and phone number next to the corresponding number on the tag. **Please return the wrapped gifts to the office (behind St. Joseph, North Oakland) by Monday, December 18, 2023.** Thanks for your generosity.

St. Joseph, North Oakland will decorate for Christmas after the 9:30 am Mass on December 17th. Because the 4th week of Advent is on Sunday, December 24th, the Advent Wreath will remain until after the 9:30 am Mass. Also after the 9:30 am Mass on December 24th, the flowers and Mary & Joseph will be placed in the church. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office.



The Knights of Columbus are hosting their famous **Pancake Breakfast today, December 10, at Biller Hall in Mater Dolorosa from 8:00 am until 12:30 pm.**

Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast. We look forward to seeing everyone!



The next **St. Clare Senior Pot Luck Lunch** will be on **Wednesday, December 13th, at DePaul Hall (St. Joseph N.O.) from 12-2 pm.**

Please join us for food, friends, and fellowship!



St. Wendelin hosts the **Community Dinner at St. Paul Church, Butler, on Tuesday, December 19th.** Volunteers are needed from 3-6:30 pm to pack and distribute the carry out meals. If you are **interested in volunteering and/or can offer desserts**, call or text Gina Beaver at 724-991-7967.



CHRISTMAS CHOIR

Anyone interested in singing for **Christmas Midnight Mass** is invited to join us for rehearsal every **Wednesday, 7 - 9 pm at St. Wendelin church**, now through Christmas. All singers of high school age and older are welcome. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Dunn at steve@saintclareparish.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE ADVENT WREATH



Advent comes from the Latin verb “ven” to come. The Advent Wreath is thought to be German in origin. The circle shape of the wreath represents Christ’s being eternal. No beginning and no end. Materials used for the wreath come from nature or materials readily available. Evergreens are popular because they symbolize “life” even in the dead of winter. The candles represent Christ as the Light of the World. Three purple candles represent prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifice. One rose candle representing rejoicing. Some people include a white “Christ Candle” in the center of the wreath that is lit on Christmas Eve in anticipation of Christmas.

Any student in grades K-12 is welcome to join the **Children's Choir** for Christmas Eve Mass at St. Mary. Remaining practice times are **December 10th, and 17th from 2:00 -3:30 pm at St. Mary's church. Mass is on December 24th at 6:00pm.** Please **text or call Amy Pettinato** at 724-355-6194 with any questions.



EVENING PRAYER & BENEDICTION

December 3rd, 10th, & 17th

5 PM

St. Mary of the
Assumption Church
Herman, PA



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2023

SAINT CLARE PARISH



Wednesday, December 13
Mater Dolorosa 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Solemnity of Christmas The Nativity of the Lord

December 24 - 4:00 pm at Saint Wendelin

December 24 - 4:30 pm at Mater Dolorosa

December 24 - 7:00 pm at Saint Joseph (N.O.)

December 24 - Midnight at St. Wendelin

December 25 - 8:00 am at Mater Dolorosa

December 25 - 10:00 am at Saint Wendelin

Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

January 1 - 9:00 am at Mater Dolorosa

Not a day of obligation

SAINT FRANCIS PARISH



Tuesday, December 12

Saint John 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Wednesday, December 13

Saint Mary 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Saint Joseph 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Solemnity of Christmas The Nativity of the Lord

December 24 - 4:00 pm at Saint Joseph (Cabot)

December 24 - 6:00 pm at Saint Mary

December 24 - 7:00 pm at Saint John

December 24 - 10:00 pm at Saint Joseph (Cabot)

December 24 - 10:00 pm at Saint Mary

December 25 - 8:00 am at Saint John

December 25 - 10:00 am at Saint Mary

December 25 - 10:00 am at Saint Joseph (Cabot)

Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

January 1 - 9:00 am at Saint Mary

Not a day of obligation

**Pick up a copy of the Kids' Bulletin
for your children to enjoy!**

Save the date for the **March for Life** in Washington DC
on **Friday, January 19th.**

More details to
follow soon!



MARCH FOR LIFE

Thank/
you!

TO OUR
ADVERTISERS



Thank you for supporting the Knights of Columbus with their Wreaths across America campaign to honor deceased veterans this Christmas. The **wreath distribution/pick up date is Saturday, December 16th at 11:00 am at St. Wendelin Cemetery.** Wreath distribution and placement on the graves in St. Wendelin Cemetery will follow a short dedication ceremony. Everyone is welcome to attend. (If you purchased a wreath for a veteran at a different cemetery, they will be available for pick up at this time as well.) Below are the names of the Veterans being honored with a wreath at the request of donors and 38 additional wreaths were purchased and will be placed on other veteran's graves in St. Wendelin Cemetery. Thank you all for your support and **May God Bless All of our Veterans.**

John Cook
Wilbert Baptiste
Edward Feehan
Carol Ann Schrut
Kenneth J. Schrut
Fr. William Ritzert
James M. Croyle
Cloyd Fair
Ed Gall Jr.
Harvy Coyle
Ardel Rayback
Richard J. Geibel
Joseph Geibel
Victor Geibel
Donald C. Ryan
Adolph C. Hilderbrand
Wilbert C. Rasely
Donald Ed Knoll
George Graham
Robert J. Peterman
Robert E. Peterman
Joe Barich
George M. Lucas
Clayton Cypher
Glen Wylie
Harold Kildo
Elmer Lunn

Raymond Lunn
John Tomsey
Edward Schiebel
Calvin M. Barnes
Stephen V. Neff
George H. Neff
Harry A. Neff
Donald E. Angles
Frank Brothers
Vincent Rodgers
Don Graham
Tom Wilson
George Zanella
Sam Sita
Leroy Rodgers
Robert/June Sherman
Benedict M. Thoma
Leroy A. Smith
Gene Steiner
Brad Magill
Bernard Waltman
Richard Waltman
Cletus Geibel
Robert Weiland
John Green
Denny Nebel
Robert O'Donnell

Harold Newell
Earl E. Saeler Jr.
Lawrence Neff
Joseph Stutz
James Edward Neff
Arthus Weiland
Francis J. Gabby Weiland
William E. Collier
Albert Votlori
Francis Cook
Wendel Rearick
Herman A. Neff
Ed Ross
Anthony Fello
Kenneth Fraley
Stephen Santus
Phillip Santus
Joseph Santus
Wanda Santus
Anthony Santus
Phil Sleighter
John Forester
Charles Robbins
Guy Grenet
Floyd Schnur

St. Clare of Assisi Children's Faith Formation
Student of the Week is:

Riley MacKrell!

Riley is in the 2nd grade class this year. She says that her dad likes to play on the iPad and mom likes to do laundry. She has a cat and horses as pets. Her cat's name is CT for "Crooked Tail". Riley enjoys dancing and riding horses. When she gets older, she would like to be a veterinarian.

**Congratulations to this week's
St. Clare of Assisi Children's Faith Formation Student of the Week,
Riley MacKrell!**



Children's Faith Formation 2023



- 10- **Grades K-2 Regular class**
Grades 3-8 Reconciliation after the 10:30AM Mass at St. Wendelin. (No regular class time)
- 17- **CFF** **Grades K-8**
Confirmation Class w/ Sponsors **6:30PM**
- 24- **OFF**
- 31- **OFF**



ST. WENDELIN SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE IN THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT





St. Wendelin School ANNUAL MEAT RAFFLE

1st Prize:

Gift Card for \$575 to Sprinkle's Neighborhood Market

2nd Prize:

\$300 worth of your choice of meat from Welter's Meat

3rd Prize:

40lbs of Boneless/ Skinless Chicken Breast Individually Vacuumed Sealed/Frozen from Schnur's Country Market

4th Prize:

40lbs of Boneless/ Skinless Chicken Breast Individually Vacuumed Sealed/Frozen from Schnur's Country Market

Donation \$5.00. Drawing on December 21st, following the Christmas concert.

Tickets are available in the back of all St. Clare Parish churches. ***There is now an envelope with the tickets to leave the sold tickets and cash in!***

All tickets and money must be returned to the school, or St. Clare office by **Wed., December 13th.**

Oakland Twp. Oneida Valley VFC is hosting an All You Can Eat Breakfast on December 17th from 8am to 1 pm at the firehall, 301 Oneida Valley Rd, Butler. Menu includes pancakes, French toast, eggs, bacon, sausage, toast, cheesy potatoes, biscuits and gravy, all for \$12! Stop by and support our local VFC!

HOPE AND HEALING ARE POSSIBLE!!! For those struggling with addiction or substance abuse, for their families and for those who have lost loved ones to the disease of addiction and overdose. We come together in prayer! PLEASE JOIN US FOR ROSARY AND SPECIAL INTERCESSIONS **Tuesdays, December 12th - 2 to 3 pm and December 19th - 7 to 8pm** **No gathering on Dec. 26th** ABBA'S HOUSE, 320 W. MAIN ST., SAXONBURG. For information: patomaszewski@zoominternet.net

The Sweet Gremlin, LLC is hosting 2 **Pierogi Classes!** Join us for a fun evening learning how to make your own potato and cheese pierogi! Each participant will be provided a recipe card and receive step by step instructions for 2 dozen pierogi. All ingredients will be provided. **January 10, 2024 6-9 pm at St. Joseph Hall in Cabot or January 25, 2024 6-9 pm at Mater Dolorosa Hall in Chicora.** The cost is \$50, seating will be limited. Be sure to sign up early to guarantee your spot. Classes will be taught by Jennifer McConnell & Julie Patrick. Participants will need to bring their own potato peeler, rolling pin, apron, and container to take home their pierogi.

Register at www.thesweetgremlin.com/classes

Bus Drivers are urgently needed to transport residents at the **Concordia's Haven Apartments in Cabot to St. Joseph Church for the 5:30 pm Mass on Saturdays (4:30 - 7:00 pm).** A small transport bus is provided. ANY help is appreciated! Please contact Neal Trimble at 724-448-8916 (cell) or 724-353-2506 (home) to volunteer or for more information.

Catholic Identity Program Family Link

This Week's Virtue: GOODNESS

Goodness is recognizing we are made in the image and likeness of God, and making choices to demonstrate our love for God and our neighbor.



SPURRED TO VICTORY

At Legacy Pines Equestrian Center
845 CENTER DR.
CHICORA, PA 16025

SUNDAY, DEC. 10
2:00 PM

FREE EVENT- DONATIONS ACCEPTED
INDOOR ARENA- BRING LAWN CHAIRS
DRESS WARM

CONTACT CORTNEY FOR MORE INFO
CORTNEYSHIPLEY@GMAIL.COM
724-321-4413

HUNTERS SHARING THE HARVEST donated 19,308 pounds (77,232 servings) of venison to **Butler County food providers** last year. Your harvest or a monetary donation would be very welcome. **Food Providers accepting venison:** Katie's Kitchen - Butler, Luther's Table - Butler, Moniteau Food Pantry - West Sunbury, Petroleum Valley Food Cupboard, St. Andrew's Community Dinners - Butler, St. Vincent De-Paul - Butler, Family Life Ministries - Butler, First Methodist - Butler, Salvation Army - Butler, Helping Hands - N. Main Church of God - Butler, Grapevine Center - Butler, Plus 1 Ministries - Butler, Covenant Food Cupboard - Butler, Pioneer Pantry BC3-Butler. **Meat Processors preparing the venison for these groups** -Shuler's Butcher Shop - Herman - 724-321-1769, Bim's Boloney - N.Washington/Petrolia - 724-894-2569, McKruit's Meat Packing - Cabot - 724-352-2988, Welter's Meat Shop - Chicora - 724-282-7071. **For more information visit shareddeer.org or contact Tom Rossman, Butler Co. Coordinator - 724-283-0449**