



Welcome to

# Good Shepherd Parish

Hopelawn,  
New Jersey 08861

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are called by Jesus as a community of faith to love God and love one another by our acts of worship, fellowship and stewardship.

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

Rev. Krystian Burdzy  
Deacon Sam Costantino  
Deacon Albert Coppola  
Maria C. Arcelay  
Anna Krasowska  
Margaret Russo  
Wayne Behr

Pastor  
R.C.I.A.  
Parish Secretary/Cemetery Coordinator/Website Admin. & Notary  
Bookkeeper/Business Manager  
Director of Religious Education (PCL)  
Director of Liturgical Music

## MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil Mass	4:30PM
Sunday Masses:	8:30AM & 11:00AM
Adoration: (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament)	Monday at 6:00pm only (except Holidays when Mass starts at 9:00am) Thursday from 8:30am to 10:00am
Confessions:	Saturday afternoon 3:30 - 4:15PM
Daily Mass	Monday at 7:00PM (except Holidays when Mass starts at 9:00am) Tuesday - Friday at 8:00AM
Holy Days	as announced

## THE PARISH CENTER

Parish and Cemetery Offices  
625 Florida Grove Rd., Hopelawn, New Jersey  
Phone: 732-826-4859 • Fax: 732-826-6078  
Office open for phone calls only  
Monday-Thursday 9:00AM - 4:00PM  
Fridays at 12Noon (only during the Summer)

Website: [www.goodshepherdpanj.org](http://www.goodshepherdpanj.org)  
E-mail: [goodshepherd20@verizon.net](mailto:goodshepherd20@verizon.net)

## BLESSED SACRAMENT (CHAPEL)

Located in the Parish Center  
Open for private prayer during office hours by appointment only.

(To easily access to all Good Shepherd Social Media links, visit our homepage of our website with the QR Code).



## Parish Information

### We welcome you to the Good Shepherd Parish Community!

Please register at the Parish Office as soon as you are able to do so, and the staff will be happy to inform you about our parish and the opportunities we offer. Parish registration is required for religious education, celebration of all Sacraments and certification as a sponsor for Baptism and Confirmation. Regular Sunday worship with us indicates a practicing Catholic, not just parish registration. Attendance is necessary at weekend worship for the all sacraments and certification of sponsorship. Please notify the parish office of any changes in phone numbers, addresses, e-mail addresses or when leaving the parish.

**Baptism:** All Baptisms are celebrated on the first Sunday of the month at **12noon**. The preparation process should begin at least three months before the planned date of the Baptism. A Baptism Preparation Class is required for parents (godparents may attend if they wish). This class is offered on the fourth Sunday of each month at **9:45 AM**. Please call the parish office to register. The date of the baptism is scheduled after attending the class. Parish membership and active worship is required for two months prior to preparation.

**Religious Education:** We provide faith filled instructions for Levels 1st through 8th. There are times, due to Covid-19 we must implement virtual instruction, otherwise our program is offered in person. Special instructions are given for sacramental preparations.

**Initiation of Adults and Older Children:** This is an extended formation process for unbaptized or uncatechized adults or baptized Christians of other faith traditions who wish to become members of the Catholic Church, as well as for unbaptized or uncatechized school-aged children. Please contact the parish office for more information. Initiation is celebrated at the Easter Vigil after a formation period of one or two years.

**Adult Confirmation:** This is a program for persons over the age of 18 who have received the Sacraments of Baptism and First Eucharist, but who never completed their initiation with the Sacrament of Confirmation. The program is a 10-12 week program, with Confirmation being celebrated on the Solemnity of Pentecost. Please call the parish office for more details.

**Matrimony:** Couples wishing to marry in Good Shepherd Parish must be registered members of our parish. They are required to make initial arrangements at least one year in advance. Four sessions with the priest or deacon, as well as Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter take place during this year. Active worship for at least two months are required before a date may be scheduled.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Anyone who is seriously ill or unable to come to church for a length of time should contact the parish office to arrange for the Anointing of the Sick. Eucharistic Ministers bring Holy Communion to homebound parishioners every Sunday, and our priest will visit on the First Friday of each month. Please call the parish office to make arrangements. The Diocese of Metuchen provides Catholic priests to serve at all local hospitals.

**Holy Orders:** If you are interested in learning more about the priesthood or religious life, contact the Vocations Office of the Diocese of Metuchen at 732-562-1990, ext. 1700 or by email at [vocations@diometuchen.org](mailto:vocations@diometuchen.org) or visit [www.diometuchen.org/vocations](http://www.diometuchen.org/vocations).

## GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH FINANCIAL CORNER

11/19/2023	\$5,063.00
E-Offering	\$135.00
Works of Mercy	\$979.00
11/26/23	\$3,941.00
E-Offering	\$195.00
Thanksgiving	\$1,657.00
Christmas Flowers	\$1,737.00

## MONTHLY OPERATING INCOME & EXPENSE JULY 2023

Collection Income	\$ 21,906.00
Other Income	\$ 6,859.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 28,765.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 32,184.00</b>
<b>Month's Income/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (3,419.00)</b>
Year-to-date (July '22 – July '23)	
Income/(Deficit)	\$ (15,925.00)
Outstanding Diocesan Assessment	\$ .00
Debt as of <b>June 30th</b>	

## Donations to Good Shepherd Parish

We thank our parishioners who support our parish with their weekly/monthly offerings, and are especially grateful to those parishioners and friends who are supporting our capital campaign.

**Please remember all checks must be made payable to Good Shepherd Parish.**

Contributions to the parish can be made in one of the following ways:

- Drop envelopes in the baskets at the church doors when you come to Mass.
- Mail your contributions to the parish office.
- Drop off your contributions in the locked mailbox or the door slot of the parish office.
- Contribute using our online giving service. You must have an email address to register for an account and you can start the process using our website's "Online Giving" button found on the top of the web-page.

### Please Note:

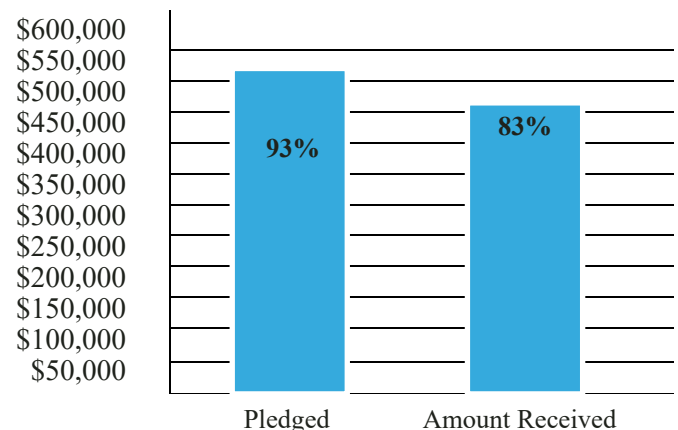
Checks for the capital campaign or donations for the roof must be separate from regular church donations as they go to a totally different financial institution. **Please write your name and envelope number on the envelope and label the envelope "Capital Campaign" or "Continuing Our Mission" or "Roof Project".**

**Thank you for your continued support and understanding.  
Stay well and God bless!**

## Capital Campaign Update As of August 17, 2023

"Continuing Our Mission"

Goal: \$600,000



# The First Sunday of Advent

## First Reading

**Is 63:16B-17, 19B: 64:2-7**

You, LORD, are our father, our redeemer you are named forever. Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old. No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him. Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways! Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful; all of us have become like unclean people, all our good deeds are like polluted rags; we have all withered like leaves, and our guilt carries us away like the wind. There is none who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to cling to you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt. Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.

***The Word of the Lord.***

***Thanks be to God.***

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19**

**R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hearken, from your throne upon the cherubim, shine forth. Rouse your power, and come to save us.

**R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

Once again, O LORD of hosts, look down from heaven, and see; take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

**R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

May your help be with the man of your right hand, with the son of man whom you yourself made strong. Then we will no more withdraw from you; give us new life, and we will call upon your name.

**R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

## Second Reading

**1 Cor. 1:3-9**

Brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord

Jesus Christ. He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

## Alleluia

**PS 85-8**

**Alleluia, Alleluia**

Show us Lord, your love; and grant us your salvation

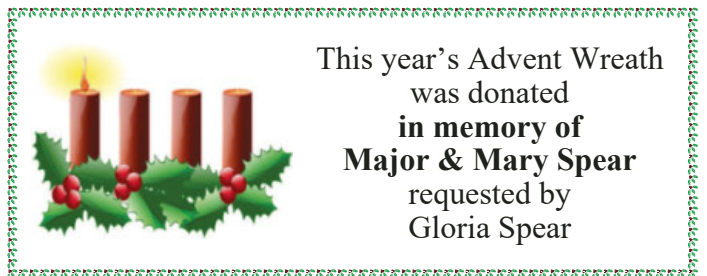
**Alleluia, Alleluia**

## Gospel

**MK 13:33-37**

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'"

**The Gospel of the Lord.**



Join us Tuesday,  
December 12, 2023 at the  
8am Mass for a special  
Virgin De Guadalupe prayer.  
Everyone is welcome.



Join us the weekend of December  
16/17 for Bambinelli Sunday  
Christmas Blessing.

Please bring your baby Jesus from your home nativity to any Mass that weekend and Father Krystian will offer you a special Christmas blessing.



## MINISTER SCHEDULE

### THIS WEEK

#### LECTOR

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND**

4:30PM Mary Ann Suhay

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD**

8:30AM Melissa Smith

11:00AM Loni Rodriguez

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH**

8:00AM Ron Schendorf

7:00PM Linda Cruz

#### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND**

4:30PM Deacon Sam Constantino, S. Gulyas & M. Joyce

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD**

8:30AM Carolina & Shawn Chichester, L. Santamaria

11:00AM Deacon Mickey & Colleen Coppola,

C. De Jesus

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH**

8:00AM M. Amaya, L. Loso & L. Quintana

7:00PM Deacon Mickey Coppola

& Deacon Sam Costantino, S. Gulyas

#### ALTAR SERVERS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND**

4:30PM A. Gulyas, A. Malave, A. Starrick

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD**

8:30AM L. Petrick, *Volunteers Needed*

11:00AM *Volunteers needed*

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8TH**

8:00AM L. Petrick, *Volunteers Needed*

7:00PM A. Gulyas, *Volunteers Needed*

### NEXT WEEK

#### LECTOR

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**

4:30PM Linda Cruz

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH**

8:30AM Gabriella Conrady

11:00AM Ben Salerno Sr.

#### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**

4:30PM Deacon Sam Costantino, Michele

& Ron Schendorf

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH**

8:30AM D. Cherubini, Mildred & Rudy Morales

11:00AM Deacon Mickey & Colleen Coppola, J. De Jesus

#### ALTAR SERVERS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**

4:30PM A. Gulyas, A. Malave, A. Starrick

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH**

8:30AM L. Petrick, *Volunteers Needed*

11:00AM *Volunteers needed*



The Parish Office will be closed on **Friday, December 8th**, in observance of **The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**. We will resume regular business practices on Monday, **December 11th at 9am**. **Daily Mass on Monday, December 11th will be held at 7pm following 6pm Adoration. Thank you!**

## MASS INTENTIONS

**MONDAY, December 4 : Advent Weekday**

7:00PM Jill

Req Laura Riccardi

**TUESDAY, December 5 : Advent Weekday**

8:00AM Mario Rapetti

Req Doherty family

**WEDNESDAY, December 6 : Advent Weekday**

8:00AM Mario Rapetti

Req Carol Mik

**THURSDAY, December 7 :**

**St. Ambrose. Bishop & Doctor of the Church**

8:00AM Living & Deceased members of the Good Shepherd

**FRIDAY, December 8 :**

**The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

8:00AM Torchia family

Req Catherine & Tony Paone

7:00PM Deceased Members of the Rosary Altar Society

Req Rosary Altar Society

**SATURDAY, December 9 :**

**The Vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent**

4:30PM Deceased members of the Gawroniak family

Req Loretta & Bob Gawroniak

**SUNDAY, December 10 :**

**The Second Sunday of Advent**

8:30AM Berlingieri family

Req Mr. & Mrs. Biagio Buffolino

11:00AM Joseph Rocanelli

Req by the family

## CHRISTMAS

### *Decorating Committee*

**Saturday, December 9th, at 10am**

*We're looking for tall, strong parish members to help set-up Christmas Trees & Wreaths inside & out. Ladders will be used.*

**Thursday, December 21st, at 10AM**

*(to decorate church for Christmas)*

If you're interested in helping please call Linda for more information 732-826-4068. 7th & 8th level Religious Ed students are invited to volunteer.

**For the Week of November 25-December 1st**



#### **SANCTUARY CANDLE**

**In Memory of**

Mario Rapetti (Church)

Req Dee Ziemba



#### **BREAD & WINE**

**In Memory of**

Raymond Yergeau

Req wife & daughter



#### **BLESSED MOTHER FLOWERS**

**In Memory of**

John De Matteo

Req Good Shepherd Seniors



#### **ALTAR FLOWERS**

**In Memory of**

John A. Lesko Jr.

Req daughter Carol Ann



## Religious Education

Next Class will be held on

December 9th

If your child has not received any Sacraments and is between grade levels 1-9th, or your family is new to our Parish and you would like information on how to continue your child's Religious Education for **September 2024-25**, please call the **Parish Office 732-826-4859**, or email **Mrs. Margaret Russo at: [gspreligioused@gmail.com](mailto:gspreligioused@gmail.com)**.

Our location has been changed to the former Holy Spirit Church on 584 Hazel Ave. Please enter through the side door on Brace Ave. The basement has been recently renovated into classrooms.



## RCIA - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Registration for our 2023 - 2024 RCIA class is now **CLOSED**. For those who are registered our next meeting will be held on: **Tuesday, December 12, 2023**

### Session 5:

"Living the Christian Life"-  
The Sacrament of the Eucharist

**Location: Downstairs in our Church Hall**

**HOLY HEROES Advent ADVENTURE** KIDS ages 5-12 love this...  
...and Moms and Dads do, too!

"I was not involved in the day-to-day use of Advent Adventure. My kids did it on their own—the 10 year old was in charge! THANKS!"  
—(A busy Mom who had a wonderful Advent)

"We used the Advent Adventure in my 5th grade classroom this year. The kids loved it! Some even continued the Adventure at home while on their holiday break! Wow!"  
—(Melissa, Catholic schoolteacher)

"I love that my kids are learning the Faith...while I can be free to do laundry or dishes!"  
—(Anonymous Mom)

**Your Best Advent EVER!**

"This year's Advent has been 'the best ever'—thanks to Advent Adventure. It introduced us to how the Old Testament lovingly foretold Christ's birth. I love it and my children love it!"  
—(Christine)

Advent Adventure... it's fun, it's easy, and I'm always nearby with the answer keys!

Learn from the Holy Heroes "Adventure Guides" & the "Answer Kid," too!

We do all the work for you, sending you daily emails full of fun:

- Prepare your heart for Jesus through our **Sacrifice Manger** activity!
- Make family memories as you explore **Advent Traditions and Feast Days** together!
- Get more out of the Mass with "**Mass prep**" activities for each **Sunday of Advent**!
- Fall in love with the **Rosary**. Pray a "decade-a-day" and get "rosary certified" this Advent!

Fun, Faithful and FREE activities all through ADVENT...  
Register NOW at [www.AdventAdventure.com!](http://www.AdventAdventure.com!)

*"Please respect the Sacred Silence"*

**PERTH AMBOY CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**A Christmas Miracle Concert**

Guest appearances by some very special people!

You're invited for some holiday cheer to celebrate this special time of year!  
**JESUS is the REASON for the SEASON!**

Monday, December 18th  
(In lieu of our December HSA meeting)  
6:30 pm-8:30 pm  
PACS Auditorium

**Hallow**

**FIND PEACE IN GOD THIS ADVENT**

LIZZIE VELASQUEZ MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER  
FR. JOSH JOHNSON AUTHOR & PODCAST HOST

"The Hallow app helped me open up my front door to Jesus and reminded me I have never and will never be ALONE thanks to Him."

"The resources on this app draw me to reorient my attention to the face of God and the voice of Christ."

QR code





## Join us for our Third Annual Memorial Tree Lighting Sunday, December 17 at 2 pm

We are holding our Third Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at Good Shepherd to honor our loved ones who have passed. If you have purchased a snowflake ornament in the past, you may put it on our tree at any time after December 10. We have new ornaments for sale. Please call Joyce at 732-887-7800 or email Rose at [rlund3@verizon.net](mailto:rlund3@verizon.net). We will also have them for sale at all Masses the weekend of Dec. 2-3.

If the names of your deceased loved ones were read aloud at last year's Tree Lighting, they will be read again. If you have additional names you would like read aloud, again please call Joyce or email Rose at [rlund3@verizon.net](mailto:rlund3@verizon.net). And let us know how many of your family members will be coming to our refreshments in the Hall following the service, by December 10. Many thanks from the Rosary Altar Society. This event will be livestreamed.



## Good Shepherd Ladies Guild Cookie Shoppe

**Let's show off the hidden talents of our Parish by making home-**

**made Christmas Cookies and Cakes for our Cookie Shoppe on December 16th & 17th.**

**Cookies will be available for purchase before and after all Masses in the Bell Tower only.**

**Bakers please remember to drop off your donated cookies on Saturday, December 16th between 10am - 1pm in Msgr. Gambino Auditorium. *We thank you for your support!!!***

## Hymnal Memorials

We have a few which are still available for memorialization. If you would still like to honor a loved one, living or deceased, please call the Parish Office. It is a memorial which will be used year after year. Donation envelopes are available in church and at the Parish Office.



## Flynn and Son Funeral Home

*Flynn and Son Funeral Home will be hosting its 23rd Annual Memorial Tree Lighting Ceremony at our Metuchen location (319 Amboy Avenue) on Wednesday, December 6, at 7:00 p.m. For information on how to participate, please call 732-548-2134 or visit our website at [www.flynnfuneral.com/CommunityEvents](http://www.flynnfuneral.com/CommunityEvents)."*



## Gift Giving for our local Senior Nursing Homes

We are proud to announce our Senior Gift giving is back! Please wrap a gift indicating male or female or sugar free where needed. Suggestions: Toiletries, Sleepwear, Footwear-slipper socks, Candy/Cookies. All nursing home gifts should be placed in specially marked boxes. Any questions, please call Linda at 732-826-4068.

**Deadline: Sunday, December 17, by 11 am Mass to insure Christmas delivery!!**

## Save the Date

### Parish Penance Service

Friday, December 15th at 7pm.

We will have Priests who speak Spanish, Portuguese and English on hand.



## Veterans Christmas Gift Giving Tree

*(Sponsored by the Rosary Altar Society)*

During this blessed season of Christmas, let us not forget the men and women who served, protected, and defended our nation with honor and valor.

Our Veterans face many emotional and physical challenges. Let us make their Christmas a little brighter. Our Giving Tree has ornaments representing 5 of our armed forces. On the back are simple suggestions for things we take for granted. Please give to our Heroes. Tags will be available on our Veterans Tree from December 2-10th. Gifts should be brought to the Church by **December 17th.**

***Thank you for your support!***

***For the month of December pray for nursing home personnel, Military personnel, our sick, and homebound, and those suffering from the atrocities in Ukraine, especially those of our sister parish:***

Carlos Bendrell, Bob Bunten, Biagio Buffolino, Ron Chabala, Carmen Collura, Ann Cyрана, Andrea Costantino, Knoah Dahlberg, Chuck F., Bill & Phyllis Edwards, Victor & Melissa Ferrer, Tommy Fitzpatrick, Joseph Frisbe, Marty Gaffney, Bob Gawroniak, Carol George, Johnny Gondek, Richard Hijzer, Nancy Hunt, Tommy Jones, Mike Karvalis, Arleen Kopin, Rose Langan, Louis Loso, Brianna Ortega, Megan Ortega, Carol Magyar, JoAnn Magyar, Nancy Milochik, Fr. John Morley, Raymond Magyar, Maryanne Mateuszczyk, Etelvina & Edite Monteiro, Lynn Munoz, Mary Murray, Teresa P., Catherine Paone, Christopher Paone, Danny Parker, Dianne Petro-Duncan, Ann Poznick, Caroline Pry, Miriam Sandoval, Stephen Pry, Greg Rohrbacher, Marie Ross, Joseph & Joyce Signorile, Virginia Sokolowski, Jack Stacey, Jean Stacey, Maryann Suhay, Telofski family, Melissa Telofski, Dave Utter, Elsie Vega & Barbara White.

With respect to personal privacy only requests made by immediate family members will be taken. If you would like to add or continue to keep a name on our list: call the parish office at 732-826-4859 or email [goodshepherd20@verizon.net](mailto:goodshepherd20@verizon.net). Please keep in mind that we pray for all the sick every day in the general intercessions of the Mass.



Your donations  
make our  
babies  
SMILE!!!

## Life Choices RC Baby Bottle Blessings

**Good Shepherd Parish**  
is hosting a "Baby Bottle Blessings"  
Campaign for **Life Choices Resource Center**,  
*Metuchen.*

Please return it by this weekend of December 2nd & 3rd.  
Place your envelope with completed donation form in the church  
collection basket. If you are writing a check please issue it paya-  
ble to:

**Life Choices Resource Center**

You can also mail the donation form directly to:  
**Life Choices Resource Center**, 503 Main Street, Metuchen, NJ  
08840 or donate on-line at [www.LifeChoicesRC.com](http://www.LifeChoicesRC.com).

*"Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart, as to the Lord, and not  
to men: Knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of  
inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ". Col 3:23-24*

**Your gift will help us serve our Lord's most precious creation!  
Thank you! You are in our prayers!**

## Spreading the Word

*"Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time  
will come."* - Mark 13:33

We all take things for granted. In particular, we  
take time for granted. We make our lives too  
busy. We plan our days, weeks, months, even  
years in advance. Remember, our time on earth is  
a gift. None of us knows how long we will be  
here. Start today and begin thanking God for each  
and every day. Take time in silence, every day,  
and listen to how God is calling you right now to  
help build His kingdom on earth.



One of our parishioners  
is in need of handyman  
who's able to fix sheet-  
rock, replace tiles and  
other house hold repairs.

If you are interested please contact the Par-  
ish Office 732-826-4859



## Holy Water Bottles

We currently have holy water bottles availa-  
ble for a small donation. Please contact the  
Parish Office 732-826-4859.



## Christmas Oplatki

The tradition of the [Oplatki](#) originated in Po-  
land during Early Christian times. This Christ-  
mas Custom began with a simple white wafer,  
baked from flour and water. The wafers are  
wonderfully designed to display Christmas  
images, such as the Nativity.

### HOW TO CELEBRATE THE OPLATKI TRADITION

The Oplatki are enjoyed by families, typically right before the  
Christmas Eve meal. The entire family will gather around the table  
with the Oplatki. Generally the eldest member of the family will  
begin the ritual by breaking off a piece of the wafer and passing it  
to another family member with a blessing. This blessing can simpl-  
ly consist of what you desire for your loved one in the upcoming  
year – whether it be good health, success, or happiness. The pur-  
pose of this act is primarily to express one's unconditional love and  
forgiveness for each member of his or her family.

### THE SYMBOLISM

The significance of the Oplatki Christmas wafer is that it shadows  
the Eucharistic meal that Catholics participate in at each  
Mass. Just as we share in the Eucharist as one family in Christ  
and receive Christ's love through the Eucharist, the Oplatki allows  
for one's immediate family to come together and share the love  
they have for one another. This symbolism is deepened by the fact  
that the name of the town where Jesus Christ was born, Bethle-  
hem, means "House of Bread," which makes the Oplatki tradition  
an especially beautiful way to celebrate the charity and unity so  
characteristic of the Christmas season.

### YES, EVEN FOR FAMILY PETS!

Although this tradition is primarily enjoyed by the human members  
of the family, even the family pets can partake in this meal. Tradi-  
tionally, this corresponds to the animals that were the first to greet  
Christ at his birth. In current times, this can also represent the im-  
portant role that pets play in the family. Whereas the wafers are  
generally white in color, there are colored Oplatki made especially  
for pets (although both colors are edible by people). We have  
packs of 4 Oplatki wafers which contain 3 white ones for the hu-  
mans and 1 pink one for the family pets.

### A SYMBOL OF FAMILY UNITY

The Oplatki tradition is one that is easy, fun, and deeply meaningful  
to introduce to the family anytime during the long Christmas sea-  
son. All it requires is a simple wafer paired with love and affection,  
and the willingness to share it. This is a heartwarming tradition that  
will complete your family's time together during the Christmas sea-  
son.

***Oplatki (Christmas Wafers) are currently availa-  
ble in the Parish office for a small donation. If  
you are interested, please stop by the office.***

## Day of Recollection for Consecrated Life - Save the Date!

**Topic:** Advent Day of Recollection for Consecrated  
Life

**Date:** December 9, 2023

Retreat Master: Rev. Francis Hilton

**Location:** St. Joseph Parish

34 Yorktown Road, Borough of Millstone

Hillsborough, NJ 08844-5139



Sister Anna Nguyen, SCC  
(732) 562-2439

[anguyen@diometuchen.org](mailto:anguyen@diometuchen.org)

***Additional information will be coming soon!***



Preplanning  
Prepayment Plans/  
Affordable Prices  
Personal Service

# GUSTAV J. NOVAK FUNERAL HOME

419 BARCLAY STREET • PERTH AMBOY • 826-4525

Gregory B. Chubenko  
Manager  
Aida B. Canete  
Director



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