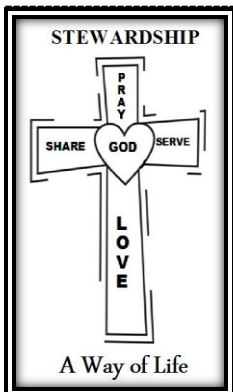


**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
DECEMBER 16, 2018**



**GOSPEL REFLECTION:** Is it any wonder that there was a growing sense among the people that John might be the Christ? His teaching in the first part of this week's gospel might just as easily have come from the mouth of Jesus. It demonstrates for us just how much John was preparing the way for Jesus: even his teaching was in line with what Jesus would later say. In this instance, the people gathered around John (presumably having been baptized by him) are asking how they should live out their new-found conversion of heart. John's response to the three groups is about the need for generosity and justice. It is about not taking more than your share when someone else does not have sufficient. To the crowd of people, he instructs them to give away a second tunic to someone who doesn't have one at all and to share their food with those who are hungry. To the tax collectors, he cautioned them to collect no more than what they were supposed to. Tax collectors made their profit by overcharging taxpayers. Together with the fact that they worked for the Roman occupiers, this made tax collectors one of the most despised groups in society. John's caution to them is to be just in their dealings. He also cautions the soldiers against intimidation and extorting money from the people to supplement their pay. The themes of justice and hospitality that will echo throughout the gospel of Luke are clearly evident in this episode with John. When the people start to talk about him being the Christ, John is quick to point them to the one who is still to come; the one who will share with them more fully the love of God and the fire of the Holy Spirit.



*"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." (Phillipians 4:6)* St. Paul reminds us that our God is an abundant God, the ultimate giver of gifts. He promises to give us all that we need. When we trust that God will take care of us, it is easier for us to share what we have

been given. Last Week You contributed: Sunday: \$2,978; Fuel: \$441 (283 Parishioners attended Sunday mass); Holy Day: \$409 (113 people attended Holy Day mass). Thank You! Expenses: \$4,860.97 (Salaries, Utilities, Equip. Repair, Taxes, Office Supplies). **Please pray that all Parishioners will attend Mass and receive the Sacraments weekly!**

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST PARISH  
MINERSVILLE, PA**

[www.StMatthewTheEvangelistParish.org](http://www.StMatthewTheEvangelistParish.org)

Rectory Office Hours: Monday to Friday 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM  
Phone: (570) 544-2211 Fax: (570) 544-2317 E-Mail: [ssk1905@verizon.net](mailto:ssk1905@verizon.net)

**SAINT MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST WELCOMES ALL**

No matter what your present status in the Catholic Church; no matter what your current family or marital situation; no matter what your past or present religious affiliation; no matter what your personal history, age, background, race, ethnicity, etc.; you are Invited, Welcomed, Accepted, Loved and Respected at Saint Matthew the Evangelist Parish!

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATOR: Sr. Meg Cole (610-332-0442 x2019)**  
**VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR: Wendy S. Krisak (Direct:1-800-791-9209)**

**WEEKDAY MASS AT 8:00 AM (unless indicated otherwise)**

- MON – M/M William Sweitzer by Jack Hudock
- TUE – Anna and Michael Postick and Daughter by Katherine
- WED – Mary Consugar by Family
- THU – Walter Logan (Birthday) by Joe and Rita
- FRI – Clara Parnell (Annv) by Nephew, Father Leo
- SAT – 4:00 PM – John and Anna Dobles by Daughter, Carol
- SUN – 8:30 AM – Red and Germaine Newton by Sarah, Billy, and Marissa  
10:30 AM – Living and Deceased Parishioners

**WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING MASSES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2019**

**ADVENT EMBER DAYS:** During this Season of Advent, His Excellency, Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert asks the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Allentown to celebrate the Ember Days for the Season. Ember Days are quarterly observances with three days set aside (Wednesday, December 19; Friday, December 21; and Saturday, December 22) to pray in gratitude for the blessings of the season and human labor, to thank God publicly. There are twelve Ember Days in all. Traditionally Embertide was also decided as a time to pray for priests. Ember Days are no longer included in the Universal Roman Calendar but they are not abolished. On these days, Bishop Schlert is asking for abstinence from all meat products, fasting, and a Holy Hour by the clergy. The People of God of the Diocese of Allentown are encouraged to join in this practice as a sign of healing.

**THE WEEKLY CALENDAR: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near. (Phil 4: 4-5)**

**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 16 – SACRAMENT OF**

**RECONCILIATION:** 8:00 AM, 10:15 AM. Make a good Confession before Christmas!

**BLESSING OF THE BAMBINELLI:** All children are invited to bring the infant Jesus figures from your family Nativity scenes for a special blessing at all weekend Masses, "Gaudete Sunday".

**FAMILY PRAYER CHALICE FOR VOCATIONS (FPC):** Jesus told us to ask the Harvest Master to send laborers into his harvest. May the prayers of our participating families bear fruit. Thanks to FRANK KUCHTA (8:30 AM) for hosting the FPC for vocations. Sign up for March and April in Church.

**FAMILY PERSPECTIVE:** Today's gospel tells us to SHARE! This Christmas resist the pressure to give token gifts. Instead, use those funds to give necessities to the poor. If our impoverished brothers/sisters are not on our list, we missed the point of Christmas.

**ADVENT CHARITIES:** 1) **ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOOD PANTRY:** We need ALL TYPES OF CANNED FISH to feed the needy of our area. Call 570-544-2739. **Volunteers, especially men, are needed for God's Bountiful Table.** 2) **BIRTHRIGHT'S GIVING TREE:** All stars have been taken. Your gifts are due today! They will be distributed to needy mothers and children throughout our county during the Christmas season. **If you do not return your gifts by today's deadline, kindly deliver them to Birthright's Office in Frackville. Your generosity evidences the true spirit of the season! THANK YOU FOR CARING!** 3) **ANNUAL MINERSVILLE AREA HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE:** Donations, both monetary and non-perishable foods, can be made in care of: Ed Butler, 529 Lytle Street, Minersville. Call Ed (570-449-2739). *Helping the disadvantaged is truly the spirit of the season!*

**PRO-LIFE REFLECTION:** A reality of war is the MIA (missing in action), those who did not return home. In the war on the pre-born, 57,000,000 plus human beings are missing in action as well. They, too, did not return home. Those soldiers who did not return from war, and those pre-born who died are all a great loss to our nation and weaken us as a country. Get involved. Join pro-life today!

**ADVENT COMMUNITY CONFESSIONS: 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church. Prepare spiritually for Christmas by making a good Confession for Christmas!**

**ADVENT VOTIVES:** (1) **SANCTUARY:** IMO Rev. Francis Opps. (2) **ALTARS: BLESSED VIRGIN MARY:** Special Intention by Stan and Sally Gober; IMO Clara Parnell by Nephew, Father Leo; IMO John and Anna Dobles by Daughter, Carol; IMO Aldona Butler by Edward. **DIVINE MERCY:** For the health of Waldo by Helen and CoCo; For the health of Judy Graver by Helen and CoCo; IMO Ewa Wojcik (Annv) by Granddaughter, Mary Weachock; In thanksgiving for blessings received for Eleanore by Father Leo. (3) **BEFORE: ST. THERESA:** Special intention; IMO Genevieve E. Kelly (Annv) by Mary Ann Weachock. **ST. LUCY:** Special Intention by Father Leo; Special intention. **ST. JOSEPH:** Special Intention. **ST. FRANCIS:** Special Intention. **ST. PETER:** IMO Ewa Wojcik (Annv) by Granddaughter, Mary Weachock. **SAINT POPE JOHN PAUL:** IMO Genevieve E. Kelly (Annv) by Mary Ann Weachock. 570-544-2211.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 17 – CHRISTMAS VISITATION OF THE SICK:** Nursing homes until completed. We will try to visit all parishioners in local nursing homes before Christmas, God willing. Call the Rectory (570-544-2211) to add someone to our sick call list.

**THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS:** 5:00 PM, Our Lady's Chapel of St. Patrick Church, Pottsville. Veneration of a First-Class Relic of Saint Pauline Visintainer, Patron Saint of Diabetics, to follow. Call 570-622-1802.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18 – ST. MATTHEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:** 1) 6:00 PM, Good Shepherd Building. 2) Parents, remember to bring your children to Mass; take them to Confession! 4) Mass attendance cards are in the Church Vestibule. 5) Our Coordinator of Religious Education is Miss Novack (570-544-2211). 5) Last class until classes resume January 8, 2019.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19 – DEVOTIONS TO ST. PEREGRINE:** 8:00 AM Mass. St. Peregrine, help cancer patients and caregivers!

**HOLIDAY FOOD SALE: Homemade frozen pierogi (\$7 per dozen) and home-made frozen fresh kielbasa (\$8 per two pound link). Pick-up is 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM today at the Parish Center. PRE-ORDERS ONLY. Call the Rectory (570-544-2211) ASAP!**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20 – DECORATION OF CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS:** We could use volunteer help beginning at 9:00 AM today and tomorrow as well. We would be grateful if you would lend us a hand! Thank you!

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21 – SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** 7:45 AM. Make room for Confession in your busy schedule!

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22 – SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** 3:15 PM. Prepare for Christmas by making a good Confession!

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 23 – SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** 8:00 AM and 10:15 AM. **LAST AVAILABLE CONFESSIONS BEFORE CHRISTMAS! SPIRITUALLY PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS!**

**THE FAMILY PRAYER CHALICE FOR VOCATIONS (FPC): VOLUNTEER NEEDED** to host the FPC this week. Call 570-399-5056 or the Rectory (570-544-2211). We need volunteers for March and April! **THANK YOU!**

**SECOND COLLECTION ENVELOPE: (1) PARISH MAINTENANCE:** Your contribution will help defray the cost of improvements for all Parish Buildings and Grounds. (2) Check your Envelope Boxes for the envelopes you might have missed. Thank You!

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**MINISTERS AT MASS FOR FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

	<u>OFF. PROC.</u>	<u>LECTORS</u>	<u>EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS</u>	<u>SERVERS</u>
SAT 4:00 PM	Dobles Family	Al Boris	Deacon Henninger	Olivia Osborne Erica Osborne
SUN 8:30 AM	Newton Family	Elaine Stine	Deacon Henninger	Connor Schwalm Scott Schwalm
10:30 AM	Parishioners	Brandon Aucker	Deacon Henninger	Kaitlyn Koury Nolan Plesnarski

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**COMING EVENTS: PLEASE BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE:** Mass will be at 4:00 PM and 9:00 PM. Pastoral Notes: (1) 4:00 PM Mass is usually over-flowing. Consider attending another Christmas Mass to avoid any personal inconvenience. (2) Volunteer Choir members will lead the carols at 4:00 PM Mass. (3) At the 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Mass, our Parish Children will present a short Christmas Tableau. Call Rosalie Novack (570-544-2172).

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:** We will commemorate our Incarnate Savior's birth at 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM Masses. **CHRISTMAS OFFERING: A year end Christmas gift is your chance to go beyond the day to day support of your Parish that you fund through your weekly envelopes. The Christmas Offertory Collection is solely for the support of the Parish. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and needed. A minimum \$50 gift is humbly asked from each wage earner. Thank you for your sacrifice and generosity!**

**JANUARY 6 – ALL-YOU-CAN EAT HOMEMADE SPAGHETTI DINNER:** 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM, St. Patrick Parish Center, Pottsville. Adult: \$8; Children: \$3.50. Eat-in or take-out. Call 570-622-1802 for information.

**JANUARY 10 – MONTHLY ROSARY:** 6:15 PM in our Church. Rosary is second Thursday of each month.

**JANUARY 13 – NATIVITY BVM HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE:** School tours, presentations, and displays will begin at 1:00 PM. Members of the entire Nativity community will be available to answer your questions. No pre-registration is required. All are welcome! Call the school (570-622-8110) or e-mail jldaubert@nativitybvm.net with any questions.

**FEBRUARY 13 – GOD'S BOUNTIFUL TABLE:** The Parish St. Vincent De Paul Society prepares and serves a walk-in meal from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM at the Fr. Anthony J. Ricapito Annex for those who are in need. **Delivered meals are available for people with disabilities ONLY.** For additional information call Edward Butler (570-544-2739) or the Annex (570-544-6484).

**ST. MATTHEW'S TRAVELERS' ADVENTURES! YOUR PAYMENT IS YOUR RESERVATION! JULIE(570-544-5231), MILLIE(570-628-5413).**

**MAY 13-17, 2019 – CAPE COD AND BOSTON:** 5 days, 4 nights, \$659 per person, double occupancy includes: 4 Nights lodging, 4 breakfasts, 3 dinners, National Shrine of Divine Mercy, evening of entertainment, Tours of Provincetown, Chatham, Boston and Quincy Market, Plymouth and Plymouth Rock, Historic Sandwich, Hyannis area, including Kennedy Memorial and Main Street, Hyannis Harbor Cruise with view of Kennedy Compound, Cape Cod Canal visitor's center, Foxwoods Casino, Souvenir Gift, Luggage Handling, All taxes and meal gratuities, motorcoach transportation.

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND VOTIVES: It is still not too late to give Floral Memorials (\$10) and Votive Memorials (\$5) for the adornment of our Church during the coming Christmas Season. Envelopes for your floral memorials can be found in your Sunday Envelope boxes. Please return them ASAP. Make arrangements for Vigils at your earliest convenience by calling the Rectory (570-544-2211)**

**2019 ADULT CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES: All remaining 2019 adult envelopes can be found in the last pew of the church. Please take yours and help us deliver those of our shut-in (homebound) parishioners. If there are any concerns with your envelopes, please call 570-544-2211.**

**REMINDERS: 1) CHRISTMAS GIFTS:** Why not consider giving a friend or family member a 2019 **ADULT SUNDAY MISSAL (\$5)** now available in the Church Vestibule; **NEW CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (\$29.95 hardcover; \$19.95 soft cover)**, available at the Rectory. **2) 2019 CHURCH CALENDARS:** We gratefully acknowledge this gift from **The Butler Funeral Home. Thank you for remembering the Parish! Each parish household is asked to take only one.** **3) CHRISTMAS WAFERS / PLOTKELES / OPLATKI:** Are available in the Vestibule to help you preserve the custom of the Christmas Eve Holy Supper. The offering per pack is \$4.00. **Preserve this beautiful religious Holiday Tradition at your family's Christmas Eve meal! (The Wafer envelope explains how to observe this custom.)**

**CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDRENS' TABLEAU:** We are in need of children (grades 1 through 5) to volunteer for our 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Nativity Tableau. Create a beautiful spiritual Christmas memory for your child! Call Rosalie Novack (570-544-2172) ASAP.