

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 23, 2018



GOSPEL REFLECTION: The gospel passages of the second and third weeks of Advent this year featured John the Baptist in his role of preparing the way for the coming of Jesus; the one who announces the arrival of the Christ. In this week's passage, which goes back to an earlier point in the gospel of Luke, we might say that the as yet unborn John is already recognizing the presence of the Christ. When Mary goes to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, the child within Elizabeth's womb—John—leaps for joy. At the time of the Annunciation, when Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was to give birth to a child, Mary is also told that Elizabeth and Zechariah, although very old, were to also give birth to a child. Mary rushes to visit Elizabeth, not to make sure that the angel was telling her the truth but because the fact that Elizabeth was also pregnant was a sign of confirmation to Mary that she had indeed made the right decision. Elizabeth's unlikely pregnancy confirms for Mary the even greater truth of her own pregnancy. These two women, separated by age and distance, share a common experience of God acting in their lives to bring about unlikely events. The lives of their two children will be inextricably linked such that the one who leapt for joy in his mother's womb will eventually baptize the other and announce the arrival of his ministry to the people of Israel. // The joy expressed by Elizabeth and her child reflects the joy of all people of faith as we draw so close to the celebration of Christmas and the greatest expression of God's love—to enter into the world as one just like us and share our experience.

ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST PARISH MINERSVILLE, PA

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

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 – 4:00 PM –** Donald J. (Sr.) and Aldona Butler by Son, Edward
9:00 PM – Living and Deceased of Malec and Smiszek Families
- TUE – 8:30 AM –** Mary and Stiney Skavinsky by Family
10:30 AM – Living and Deceased Parishioners
- WED –** Scott Renninger by Family
- THU –** Enoch Purcell by Joe and Janet Purcell
- FRI –** Louise Kishel by Daughter, Joan Roberts
- SAT – 4:00 PM –** Josephine Laudeman (Anrv) by Granddaughter and Family
- SUN – 8:30 AM –** Mary and Stiney Skavinsky by Olshefski Family
10:30 AM – Living and Deceased Parishioners

WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING MASSES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2019

I BANNES OF MARRIAGE: Kayla A. Stickell (St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish) and Devin Heckman (St. Patrick Parish)

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THE WEEKLY CALENDAR: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Savior. (Cf. Is 45:8)

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 23 – SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: 8:00 AM, 10:15 AM. Last Confessions before Christmas!

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. **BOB AND MARINA STREMICK (8:30 AM)** will host the FPC for vocations this week. Sign up for March and April in Church.

FAMILY PERSPECTIVE: Mary was excited about her first pregnancy and rushed to tell her cousin. Sadly children are often seen as a liability, "another mouth to feed" or an "obstacle to my career." It is said "Christmas is for children." It is more accurate to say "Christmas is for adults to appreciate the gift of children!"

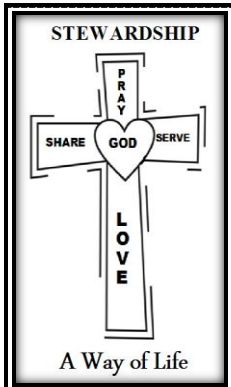
ADVENT CHARITIES: 1) **ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOOD PANTRY:** We need ALL TYPES OF PASTA and SAUCES to feed the needy of our area. Call 570-544-2739. Volunteers, especially men, are needed for God's Bountiful Table. 2) **BIRTHRIGHT'S GIVING TREE:** All ornaments were taken! Your gifts were picked up by Birthright and will be distributed to needy mothers and children throughout the Christmas season. Kindly deliver any late gifts 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: "The mystery of the Incarnation reveals the specific value of the dignity of human life. God gave us this gift and sanctified it when the Son became man and was born of Mary. Life is a gift that must be protected, from conception until natural death. With all my heart I join people involved in various initiatives aimed at respecting life and promoting a new social awareness." (Pope Benedict XVI) Choose the culture of life!

ADVENT VOTE: (1) **SANCTUARY:** IMO Debbie Dutcavich by Family.

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). (4) **PASTORAL NOTE:** The Rectory Office will be closed today and tomorrow in observance of the Christmas holiday.

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! **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



"For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." (Luke 1:44)
When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading each Sunday, do you "leap for joy?" If not, don't blame the lector or priest, rather look inside yourself. Do you prepare for Mass each week or do you just show up and expect to be entertained?

We are called to be active participants, not passive by-standers. Last Week You contributed: Sunday: \$2,879; General Repair: \$331 (293 Parishioners attended Sunday mass) Thank You! Expenses: \$9,135.24 (Salaries, Utilities, Oil, Taxes, Altar Bread). **Please pray that all Parishioners will attend Mass and receive the Sacraments weekly!**

CHRISTMAS PRAYER: As the St. Matthew parish family, let us pray this prayer of Robert Louis Stevenson: Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and worship of the wise men. // Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with our hearts. // May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen. **GOD BLESS OUR PARISHIONERS AND BENEFICATORS!**

CHRISTMAS VOTIVES: (1) ALTARS: BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: IMO Annie Socko by Daughter, Ann Marie; IMO Mary Szekeres by Ann Marie; IMO Peter and Genevieve Ferenchick; IMO Nancy, Matthew and Mark. **DIVINE MERCY:** IMO John Socko by Daughter, Ann Marie; IMO John Szekeres by Ann Marie; Living and Deceased of Malec and Smiszek Families; IMO John Andruchek, Sr. **REREDOS NICHE:** IMO Carol Bogush by Niece, Linda Butcavage and Family. **(2) BEFORE: ST. ANNE:** IMO Jennie Gut. **ST. ANTHONY:** IMO Veronica Ferenchick. **ST. BARBARA:** IMO Leister Family; IMO Pytko Family. **ST. FRANCIS:** IMO Wanda and Joseph Senawaitis; Special Intention; IMO Andrew Botek by Wife, Bertha. **ST. THERESA:** IMO Theresa (Socko) Sweat by Ann Marie; IMO Betty Reed by Daughter, Linda Butcavage and Family. **ST. LUCY:** Special Intention by Father Leo; Special Intention by Stan and Sally Gober. **ST. JOSEPH:** Special Intention; IMO Joseph Dallago by Family. **SACRED HEART:** IMO Michael and Anna Warhola by Family; Forgotten Souls in Purgatory by Mary. **POPE JOHN PAUL II:** IMO John Sokola by Mary Ann, Brian and Neil. **ST. PETER:** Special Intention by Stan and Sally Gober; IMO Julia and Tony Stabinsky and Elizabeth and John Consugar by Joe and Barb Stabinsky and Family. **ST. PAUL:** IMO Stewart Family; Special Intention. **HOLY OILS:** IMO Charles Grabusky by Mary; Intentions of Adele Grabusky by Mary. **INFANT OF PRAGUE:** IMO Fritz Doran by Daughter, Ellen; IMO Jean Doran by Daughter, Ellen. **(3) NAVE:** IMO David Homa by Nancy and Lisa Homa; IMO James Moore, Sr., David Moore, Bud Warner (3) by Evelyn Moore; For the Health of Waldo by Helen and CoCo; IMO Thomas and Leona Donlen by Family; IMO Lewis, Mary, and Lewis Carroll, Jr. by Rose Ann; IMO Deceased Carroll Cousins by Rose Ann Donlen; IMO George and Stella Pytko by Son, George and Daughter, Joanne; IMO Edward and Elizabeth Siminitus by Family; IMO Tom and Margaret Pleva by Donna Siminitus; IMO Stiney and Anna Siminitus by Family. **ST. STANISLAUS BISHOP AND MARTYR MURAL:** IMO Michael Conway, Richard Murphy, and Peggy Zuratt (3) by Sister, Phyllis Rada. **ST. BARBARA MURAL:** IMO Joseph and Amelia Czwarc Family, Michael and Mary Butler Family (2) by Ed Butler; For the Health of Judy Graver by Helen and CoCo. **BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE:** IMO Anthony and Marie Tomalonis by M/M Walter Zitka and Family; IMO Donald and Aldona Butler by Ed Butler. **ALTAR OF SACRIFICE CANDELABRAS:** For the Health of Father Leo by Mary; IMO Walter and Mary Zitka by M/M Walter Zitka and Family; IMO Paclawski Lineage; Deployed Military; Holy Souls in Purgatory; Living Souls over 90 Years of Life; IMO Anderko Family by Evelyn Moore; IMO Thomas and Leona Donlen by Family; IMO Anna Kanapitsky by Family; IMO John Magic by Family. **BAPTISMAL FONT CANDELABRAS:** IMO Bernie Walasavage, Sr., Bob Rudaitis, Frank Wank, For the Health of Joe Weschules, For the Health of Wally Slifka (5) by Dave Sincavage; IMO Agnes Sincavage by Family; IMO Peter Washinsky, Sr. by Family; IMO Elizabeth Hoban by Millie Magic; IMO Jennie Gut by Millie, Dave and Barb; IMO Joanne Zula by Dave and Barb Sincavage; Special Intention for Kelly by Parents, Joe and Judy Sabados (2); IMO Deceased of Buffington and Bainbridge Families by Mary Lou Bainbridge (2); IMO Stephen Rada, Aaron Mitchell, Emma Kasko by Edward and Janet Rada-Mitchell (3); IMO Aldona Butler by Edward; IMO Stiney and Anna Gober, Francis and Sallie Tracey by Stan and Sally Gober (2). Call the Rectory (570-544-2211) to memorialize votives.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND VOTIVES: Late Floral Memorials (\$10) and Votive Memorials (\$5) will still gladly be accepted for the adornment of our Church during this coming Christmas Season. Envelopes for Flowers are in your 2018 Sunday Envelope boxes. Please return them and make arrangements for Vigils as soon as possible. Or, call 570-544-2211 for information. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

ST. MATTHEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM: 1) No classes today. Classes resume 6:00 PM, Tuesday, January 8, 2019. 2) Parents, remember to bring your children to Mass; take them to Confession! 3) Mass attendance cards are in the Church Vestibule. 4) Our Coordinator of Religious Education is Miss Novack (570-544-2211).

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26 – FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN: To honor the Proto-Martyr, walnuts will be blessed within today's 8:00 AM Mass. **DEVOTIONS TO ST. PEREGRINE:** 8:00 AM Mass. St. Peregrine, help cancer patients and caregivers!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27 – FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST: Wine will be blessed in honor of St. John, the beloved disciple, and distributed after today's 8:00 AM Mass.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28 – FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS: Children will be blessed at today's 8:00 AM Mass. **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** 7:45 AM. MAKE CONFESSION A REGULARITY IN THE NEW YEAR!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29 – SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: 3:30 PM. BEGIN THE NEW YEAR BY GOING TO CONFESSION!

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30 – "O God, who left us a perfect model of family life lived in obedience to your will, help us be examples of faith and love for your commandments." (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI) Honor the Holy Family of Nazareth by attending Mass as a family throughout this coming year. A special family blessing will be imparted at all weekend Masses. God bless you, your families, and our entire Parish Family! SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: 8:00 AM and 10:15 AM.

THE FAMILY PRAYER CHALICE FOR VOCATIONS (FPC): RITA SKAVINSKY (8:30 AM) will 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) There is no second collection envelope for today. Please check your Sunday Church Envelope Boxes for the envelopes you might have missed. Kindly catch up! Thank you! 2) The remaining 2019 adult envelopes can be found in the church vestibule. Please take yours and help us deliver those of our shut-in parishioners. If there are any concerns with your envelopes, please call the Rectory (570-544-2211).

MINISTERS AT MASS FOR CHRISTMAS				
	OFF. PROC.	LECTORS	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS	SERVERS
MON	4:00 PM 9:00 PM	Butler Family Volunteers	Nicole Forney John Andruchek	Barbara Sincavage Jack Ruscavage
TUES	8:30 AM 10:30 AM	Skavinsky Family Parishioners	Jack Hudock Theresa Kroznuski	Marian Rhoads Beth Tropp

MINISTERS AT MASS FOR HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY				
	OFF. PROC.	LECTORS	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS	SERVERS
SAT	4:00 PM	Laudeman Family	Rosalie Novack	Al Boris
SUN	8:30 AM 10:30 AM	Skavinsky Family Parishioners	Abigail Adams Sharon Kolenick	Jason Clark Mary Ann Harrison

COMING EVENTS: PLEASE BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

JANUARY 1, 2019, NEW YEAR'S DAY – THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD: Contemporary Catholics can recall a number of names for this day, titles dictated by Church tradition, society, and various popes. It is New Year's Day; it is often still called the Circumcision of Jesus; it has been decreed as World Day of Peace. In the current calendar's preparation, research showed that it is the oldest feast of Mary in our Church. Amidst the echoes of Christmas and the visit of the shepherds, we take time to celebrate Mary. Masses are at 4:00 PM (Eve), 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM. **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** NONE TODAY.

JANUARY 6 – THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD: The Christmas Season continues with yet another view of God in our history. In his very flesh, Jesus is the revelation of God. This is a season to celebrate a baby, but even more the manifestation, "epiphany," of God to the whole world. // Packets containing the gifts of the Magi to the Christ Child, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh (and chalk for the traditional Epiphany Home Blessing) will be blessed at mass. The offering is \$1.00 per pack.

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. Ricipito 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.