

# St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

Established in 1841

10<sup>th</sup> & Mahantongo Sts., Pottsville, Pa. 17901

Pastor: *Rev. David J. Loeper*

Deacons: *Luis R. Visot / Lawrence Lonergan*

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**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
DECEMBER 1, 2019**

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**Rectory (570) 622-5470**  
**Rectory Fax (570) 622-4589**  
**Russell Building (570) 628-3002**  
**Website – SaintJohnPottsville.org.**

**Parish Council President: *Robert Bechtel***  
**Choir Director/Organist: *David Derbes***  
**CCD Coordinator: *Lucilla Kochol***  
**E-mail – [stjbparish@comcast.net](mailto:stjbparish@comcast.net)**

**Nativity BVM High School (570) 622-8110**  
**Assumption BVM Elementary (570) 622-0106**  
**St. Joseph Center for Special Learning (570) 622-4638**

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### **Weekend Mass Schedule**

Saturday Evening – 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday Morning – 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

### **Weekday Mass Schedule (in Chapel)**

Monday thru Friday – 9:00 a.m.

### **Cemetery Information**

St. John's Rectory (570)-622-5470

### **C.C.D.**

All children preparing to receive any sacrament must be in a Religious Education Program for two consecutive years immediately prior to receiving a Sacrament. The child must also be a practicing Catholic.

### **Certificates of Eligibility**

Certificates to act as sponsors, Godparents, etc. will only be issued to parishioners who are formally registered with the church and attend Mass on a regular basis.

### **New Parishioners**

Please call the Rectory for an appointment to register.

**Bulletin Deadline** Tuesday prior to publication.

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Saturday afternoon – 4:15 to 4:45 p.m.  
Sunday – 7:45 to 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 to 10:15 a.m.  
Or by appointment

### **Sacrament of Marriage**

Please call the Rectory one year in advance.

### **Sacrament of Baptism**

First Sunday of each month at 11:30 a.m.  
Second Sunday during 10:30 a.m. Mass  
Baptismal Preparation for Parents **MUST** precede the Baptism  
Please contact Father Dave for an appointment.

### **Outreach Program**

Rectory (570)-622-5470

### **Sick Calls**

Please notify the parish office

### **Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator**

Ms. Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., NCC,LPC  
Direct Telephone: (800) 791-9209

### **Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator**

Sister Meg Cole, S.S.J., M.S., LMFT  
(610) 332-0442 ext. 2019

## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

Christianity has nothing to say to someone who is satisfied with their life or content with the current state of the world. Jesus didn't attract people who liked the status quo. He attracted people who were hungry and thirsty, who desired something more out of life.

Hope springs from a desire for more. It is a confident expectation that something good will come one day out of a difficult or undesirable situation through steady effort, often struggle, and always grace. Hope is not simply not wishful thinking; it is virtue that finds its source in God and can be developed by all people of faith. These messages will help you grow the virtue of hope in your own life as we prepare for and celebrate the coming of the Savior.

So let us take a moment to ask our heavenly Father for an increase in hope during this holy season of Advent.

Yours in Christ,  
Father Dave

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### MASS INTENTIONS

#### Monday, December 2 – 9:00 a.m.

**KATHY NORKUS** (Nancy Hester)

#### Tuesday, December 3 – 9:00 a.m.

**JOHN B. LIEBERMAN IV**

(Millie McCormick & Family)

#### Wednesday, December 4 – 9:00 a.m.

**CECELIA HUNT** (Staff & Residents of York Terrace)

#### Thursday, December 5 – 9:00 a.m.

**JOEY ELIZABETH LAZZARO** (living intention)

(Joseph D. McGraw Jr.)

#### Friday, December 6 – 9:00 a.m.

**DR. WILLIAM SCHLITZER** (Family)

#### Saturday, December 7 – 5:00 p.m.

**LOUISE DELANEY** (Scott Williams)

#### Sunday, December 8 – 8:15 a.m.

**JOHN H. HOHMAN** (Joseph Hohman)

#### Sunday, December 8 – 10:30 a.m.

**MICHAEL & ANNA FEDOCK**

(Jim & Donna Pugh & Family)

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### **PRAY FOR OUR SICK / DECEASED**

We remember in prayer those who are ill. We commend to our Divine Lord all of our aged people and those residing in nursing homes.

**Sick:** *Beth Thomas Resnick, Doug Broughton,*

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*Thou has fixed all the bounds of the earth: Thou hast made summer and winter. ... Ps. 74:17*

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## CANDLE DONATIONS

**BVM** - IMO Mildred & Ed Deiter

by Dave & Joan Deiter

**St. Joseph** - IMO Mildred & Ed Deiter

by Dave & Joan Deiter

**Tabernacle** – Special Intention

by John & Mary Jean Morgalis

**Sanctuary**

1. Special Intention

2&3. Parishioners of St. John's

4. Special Intention

**Guardian Angels**

1&2. Special Intention

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### **BANNS OF MARRIAGE**

**I** – Gabrielle Nabholz & David Baker

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### **SCHEDULE**

#### **SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

#### **5 p.m. – Saturday – December 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Reader:** Carol Lasco

**Euch.Min.:** Ray Petrilla, Bobby Rienzo, (Dr. Visot)

**Servers:** R.J. Post, Noah Lecher, Reese Ketner

**Cantor:** Lucilla Kochol

#### **8:15 a.m. – Sunday – December 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Reader:** Bob Bechtel

**Euch.Min.:** John Corbacio, Gerry Schwartz,  
(Larry Lonergan)

**Servers:** Maggie & Rhyann Brennan, Dylan Schreffler

**Cantor:** Debbie Purcell

#### **10:30 a.m. – Sunday – December 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Reader:** Mary Matulevich

**Euch.Min.:** Frank Murphy, Bobby Rienzo,  
(Larry Lonergan)

**Servers:** Noah & Helena Fredericks, Nathan Peckman

**Cantor:** Marianne Wollyung

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### **ATTENTION**

All **Readers, Servers, and Eucharistic Ministers** ... your help is needed ... please let us know your plans for **January & February** so that we can get started on the schedule for those months. **Please call or e-mail the rectory by Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>** to let us know when you are **NOT** available during these months. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

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## Next Week's Readings

### SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Dec.7 & 8)

**Reading I:** Isaiah 11:1-10

**Reading II:** Romans 15:4-9

**Gospel:** Matthew 3:1-12

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## **FIRST RECONCILIATION**

On **Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.**, our third grade children will celebrate the *Sacrament of Penance* for the first time. Please remember them and their families in your prayers as they learn to grow in acceptance of the great gift of God's forgiveness

given to us in this important sacrament.

**First Reconciliation Practice is scheduled for:  
Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in church.**

## **THE AMAZING PARISH**

St. John's Parish Mission:

*.. To encounter Christ and make disciples ..*

The leadership team wants to thank everyone who stopped by after Mass last weekend to enjoy the refreshments and to learn a little more about the Amazing Parish. Many thanks to all who set up, organized and served the food and drinks. We received many good suggestions and comments about what parishioners want to see the parish do in the future.

The suggestion box will be in the back of church and everyone is always welcome to contact the team or the rectory with your ideas and critiques.

Please prayerfully consider becoming a minister at the altar or joining our new greeter ministry for the good of St. John's Parish. More to come!

*Father Dave, Josette Peckman, Tara DeStefano,  
Bob Hahner, Bill Gianfagna.*

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## **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY FATHER DAVE**

The Parish Family of St. John's  
Congratulates Father Dave on his  
*"Twenty-second Anniversary"*  
with us on **December 2nd.**

We wish you continued enjoyment  
and happiness as you begin your  
**23<sup>rd</sup>** year as Pastor here at St. John's.

## **THE GIVING TREE**

Next weekend a barren tree is placed in the front of church adorned with gift tags. The gift tags will have suggestions for our shut-in parishioners and needy moms and children in the area. If you are able, please take one. Return your gift wrapped with the gift tag on the outside, attached to the ribbon. Please return the package under the tree before the weekend of **December 7/8**. The tag is **very important** because it has the person's identity number on it.

**Please Note:** If you are not able to purchase the item on the gift tag, please return it to the tree.

### **PLEASE DO NOT TAPE TAG TO THE PAPER**

Our gifts each year to our shut-in friends and the needy of the area are our way of reaching out to those who have meant so much and saying we love them and wish them the blessings of Christmas.

**GIFTS ARE DUE BACK before  
DECEMBER 7/8 WEEKEND**

**If you can help with gift distributions, please call the rectory 570-622-5470.**

## **WANTED**

### **GREETERS FOR THE MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY.**

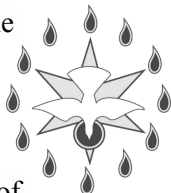
No experience necessary. On the job training provided. Prerequisites include: an interest in serving your parish community, 10-15 minutes before mass arrival and the desire to help St. John's become an *Amazing Parish*.

If this sounds like you, please contact the rectory (570)622-5470 or Parish Leadership Team member.

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## **CONFIRMATION PRAYER SPONSORS**

Our 8th graders are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on **Wednesday, April 29, 2020**. Please consider supporting this important decision by praying for one or more candidates. Cards containing the names of the candidates are located on the table in back of church. Please take one and during this time of preparation, please pray for that person in a special way and write notes of encouragement. Our parish will be doubly blessed!



**PLEASE NOTE: If more than one item is listed on the tag .... You are asked to get one item ONLY.**

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**2020 CALENDARS:** Church calendars for the New Year will be available at the church exits the weekend of **November 30/December 1**. Please feel free to take one, but please make sure they are not wasted. We wish to thank the **James E. Humphrey Funeral Home** for taking care of this expense.

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### **FAMILY MATTERS**

**Advent Season.** Do you have a favorite custom for the Advent season? Have you considered starting a new tradition? Plan on using this activity as a way for your family to grow closer to Jesus in this time of preparation and waiting.

*You pray for my family and I'll pray for yours.*

### **ADVENT**

The word **Advent** is from the Latin *adventus* for "coming" and is associated with the four weeks of preparation for Christmas. **Advent** always contains four Sundays, beginning on the Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, (November 30) and continuing until December 24. It blends together a penitential spirit, very similar to Lent, a liturgical theme of preparation for the Second and Final Coming of the Lord, called the Parousia, and a joyful theme of getting ready for the Bethlehem event.

Since the 900s **Advent** has been considered the beginning of the Church year. This does not mean that **Advent** is the most important time of the year. Easter has always had this honor.

The traditional color of **Advent** is bluish purple which symbolizes the penitential spirit. Religious traditions associated with **Advent** express all these themes.

### **ADVENT WREATH**

"Customarily the **Advent Wreath** is constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which are inserted four candles (advent candles). According to tradition, three of the candles are bluish purple and the fourth is rose. However, bluish violet or white candles (advent candles) may also be used".

The rose candle is lit the third Sunday of Advent, for this color anticipates and symbolizes the Christmas joy announced in the first word of the Entrance Antiphon: "Rejoice". For this reason the Third Sunday is also called Gaudete Sunday, and rose color vestments are permitted.

The **Advent Wreath** represents the long time when people lived in spiritual darkness, waiting for the coming of the Messiah, the Light of the world. Each year in **Advent** people wait once again in darkness for the coming of the Lord, His historical coming in the mystery of Bethlehem, His final coming at the end of time, and His special coming in every moment of grace.

During **Advent**, family and friends can gather around the **Advent Wreath** lighting the appropriate candle(s),

read from the daily **Advent** meditation and sing songs. The Church's official Book of Blessings also provides a blessing ceremony for the **Advent Wreath** which can be used in the absence of a priest.

### **JESSIE TREE**

During **Advent**, biblical persons representing the ancestors of Jesus, either in faith or bloodline, are gradually added onto a tree or branch, named after the father of David. The symbols such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesse, David, Solomon, Joseph and Mary can be drawn, cut out or purchased.

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### **'TIS (ALMOST) THE SEASON**

Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for Christmas, but we often get distracted and busy. Don't let this Advent pass you by. Slow down and focus on what matters most with **BEST ADVENT EVER**.

Each day, you'll receive an email with short inspirational videos from Allen Hunt and Dominic Albano, practical tips for your everyday life, and real-life stories to encourage you in your faith journey.

All you have to do is sign up at **BestAdventEver.com**.

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### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT CHILDREN'S LITURGY**

Any child 5 years of age or older who would like to take part in our Christmas Eve

Pageant may sign up by contacting  
the Rectory 622-5470.

Our rehearsal dates are:

Wednesdays – December 4, 11, 18  
6 to 7 p.m. in Church.

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### **CHRISTMAS WAFERS "OPLATKI"**

**What are Oplatki?** For centuries on Christmas Eve, families in Poland, Lithuania, the Czech and Slav Republics have practiced a beautiful tradition. It is the breaking and sharing of the Oplatek – Christmas Wafer. Oplatek taken from the Latin word *oblatum*, meaning Sacred Bread, has been the symbol of Christianity and Jesus Christ our bread of life since the Last Supper.

The host or hostess leads in a special prayer and distributes an oplatek to the participants. Each person breaks off a piece of the other's oplatek and continues until they have exchanged good wishes and blessings with everyone. **Oplatki are available at the Rectory.**

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## PRAYER GROUP

Our parish Prayer Group will continue to meet on the **second Sunday every month after the 10:30 a.m. Mass.** We will meet in front of the Blessed Sacrament making it more convenient for all to participate. Please join us and if you can't, please place your prayer requests in the box on the side of the confessional in the rear of church. (There is paper available on the shelf.)

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### WEEKLY COLLECTION

**November 23/24: \$3,509.75**

**Youth Ministry: \$ 806.00**

*We thank our parishioners for their sacrificial giving.*

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*I sought the Lord and He heard me,  
and delivered me from all my fears. Ps. 34:4*

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## PARISH COUNCIL

St. John's Parish Council will meet .....

**Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> – 7 p.m. in Longinus Hall.**

There are two ways that any parishioner may raise a question or concern or make recommendations.

1. Parishioners may approach any Parish Council Member listed below and ask that a question, concern, etc. be brought up at the meeting.
2. Parishioners may write their concerns, etc. and put it (them) in the suggestion box provided in the rear of the church. These may be signed or unsigned. They will then be brought up at the Council meeting.

### Elected Members

Bob Bechtel  
John Consugar  
Paul Datte  
Darren DeArment  
Joseph Gerchak  
Heidi Gorski  
Alicia Kleman  
Eric Lieberman  
Kevin McNamara  
Al Norkus  
Patty O'Neill  
Josette Peckman  
John Pfluger  
John Powers  
Nick Quinn  
Melissa Scheetz  
Martin Smith

### Appointed Members

Lucilla Kochol  
Evelyn Datte

### Ex-Officio

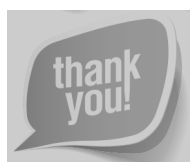
Ed Brahrer  
Deacon Larry Lonergan  
Deacon Luis R. Visot  
Father Dave Loeper

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## THANKSGIVING BASKETS

### THANK YOU

Because of your overwhelming generosity during the Thanksgiving



Food Drive we were able to provide **13 families** with a Thanksgiving Dinner complete with a turkey and all the trimmings. Thank you to **Gerry Schwartz** and her helpers who organized this event ...

**Bernadette Gombola, Millie Fredericks, Barbara Schoenauer, Joanne & Ralph Wood.** Special thank you to everyone who donated food items, turkeys and monetary donations. Many of those less fortunate will be nourished because of your kindness!

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## OPEN ARMS MINISTRY

If you have good used furniture that you would like to donate, *Open Arms Ministry* is in need for these items for their transitional housing. If you would like more information about this organization, check out their website at [www.openarmshelp.org](http://www.openarmshelp.org), or email Pastor Vincent Murray at [Oathmainoffice@gmail.com](mailto:Oathmainoffice@gmail.com).

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## PARISH COUNCIL

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

My fellow parishioners,

During his time on Parish Council, Dr. Robert DeColli started the President's Corner as a way to inform the parish of the goings on of Parish Council. I would like to bring it back as I feel it is a great way to keep everyone apprised of our activities.

Following the events of the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting in October of 2018, then President Paul Datte felt it necessary to form a **Safety and Security Committee** for our church. We on Parish Council felt it was important that we examine all aspects of safety and security at St. John's to see what, if anything, we could update or improve. The committee met and gave a report to Parish Council with various suggestions. One of these which we are in the process of planning is a class titled **Citizen Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE)**, taught by Pottsville Police Chief Richard Wojciechowsky (a member of our Parish). This class was developed by the FBI and teaches the principles of "Run, Hide, Fight" during an active shooter event. This class will be held in the first quarter of 2020 and will be open to all members of Saint John's.

Our next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns which you would like us to discuss, please see a member of Parish Council.

**Bobby Bechtel**, Parish Council President

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

### December

- 1 Confirmation Class – 6:30 p.m. – L.H.
- 3 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 4 Catholic Women's Christmas Party

- 6 First Reconciliation Rehearsal – 7 p.m. – Church
- 7 First Reconciliation – 10 a.m. – Church
- 7/8 Giving Tree Gifts due back in church
- 9 Immaculate Conception Masses 9 am & 5:15 pm
- 9 Parish Council – 7 p.m. – L.H.
- 10 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 11 St. John's Beneficial Soc. – 8 p.m. – F.R.
- 14/15 Christmas Cookie Sale after Masses – L.H.
- 15 Confirmation Class – 6:30 p.m. – L.H.
- 17 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 21/22 Blood Pressure Screenings after Masses – L.H.
- 24 Christmas Eve – Masses 4 – 6 – 10 p.m.
- 25 Christmas Day – Mass – 10 a.m.
- 28/29 Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
- 31 Solemnity of Mary – Mass – 5:15 p.m.
- Jan.1** Solemnity of Mary – Mass – 10 a.m.
- \*\* L.H. – Longinus Hall
- \*\* F.R. – Rectory Fellowship Room
- \*\* R.B. – Russell Building

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S UNION  
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**When:** Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>  
**Where:** Blu Tavern  
**Time:** 6 p.m.  
**Cost:** \$25.00  
**Menu:** Stuffed Chicken Breast with filling or  
 Broiled Haddock with Lemon.



We will also exchange a \$5.00 gift, wine or snack item you would serve for the holidays – please wrap the item. For more information please call the Rectory at 570-622-5470 ext. 3.

**CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE**

Homemade Christmas Cookies to benefit St. John's Catholic Women's Union will be available in Longinus Hall on the following dates.

**Saturday, December 14th**  
 after 5 p.m. Mass

**Sunday, December 15th**  
 after 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. Masses

**Prices: \$5.00 and \$6.00 per dozen**  
**Peanut Rolls - \$10 per pound**

**-- ST. JOHN'S REMEMBERS --**

So many have been part of the lives of those who have served our Parish Family as Pastor or Pastoral Assistant. During this Holiday Season, please remember the following:

**Sister Judith Baldino**, 2405 Gulf Gate Drive, Sarasota, Fl. 34231

**Rev. Donald Henry**, 4339 Kingston Loop, Sarasota, Fl. 34238



**Rev. Frederick Sattler**, Holy Family Villa, 1325 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem, Pa. 18018

**Sister Barbara Jean Wojnicki**, 2755 Holme Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19152

**Sister Maryanne Zakreski**, St. Joseph Convent, 120 Hilldale Road, Cheltenham, Pa. 19012

**Matthew Kuna**, St. Charles Seminary, 100 E. Wynnewood Road, Wynnewood, Pa. 19096

**ASSUMPTION BVM SCHOOL**

**GIFT CARD CALENDAR RAFFLE** ... will take place during the month of December to benefit the school and its students. Calendars are \$10 each and are good for all 31 drawings during the month. Calendars can be purchased from any ABVM family or from the school. Please contact the school at 570-622-0106 or email [tmengel@assumptionbvmschool.net](mailto:tmengel@assumptionbvmschool.net). Thank you for helping make our Calendar Raffle a success.

**ST. JOHN'S CHOIR OPENINGS!**

St. John's Choir is welcoming new members to the choir to sing Saturday 5:00 PM Masses and special Masses. This is a very rewarding experience for anyone seeking to become more involved in our Parish Family. No prior singing experience or reading of music is required. Practices are held **Tuesday's at 7:00 in Longinus Hall**. Contact David Derbes at [daderbes@yahoo.com](mailto:daderbes@yahoo.com) with any questions for more information.

Hope to see you Tuesday!

**DIOCESAN NEWS & EVENTS**

**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER** Starting your Christmas shopping this weekend? Golf weekend for him or shopping spree for her - \$\$\$\$? The gift of a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend to each other – **PRICELESS!** For information call 610-449-1859 or [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org).

**DAY OF REFLECTION** ... hosted by the Commission for Women on **Saturday, December 14** from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the McGlenn Conference and Spirituality Center, 460 Bernardine St. in Reading. (Adjacent to Alvernia University). Talks by Rev. Bernard J. Ezaki, Parochial Vicar, St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish, Easton and Mr. Matthew J. Kuna, parish son of St. Thomas More, Allentown and diocesan seminarian. Pray the Rosary together, participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and enjoy great food & fruitful conversation. Cost \$20. Register by Dec. 1st at [www.allentowndiocese.org/cfw-spirituality](http://www.allentowndiocese.org/cfw-spirituality).

## NEIGHBORING EVENTS

**COAL REGION ETHNIC DINNER** ... at St. Clare of Assisi Church Hall on **Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 5 to 7 p.m.** (Inclement Weather Date: December 8). Meal will include: Piece of Smoked Kowalonek's Kielbasy, Halupki, Haluskie, Kugel (a baked bleenie), Applesauce, Beverage and Dessert. Tickets \$12 Advance Orders Only, **no tickets at the door!** Eat in After Mass or Take out. Tickets available at the rectory and after weekend Masses. SPECIAL KIDS MEAL includes: Chicken Tenders, Mac 'n Cheese, Applesauce, Beverage and Dessert. Tickets \$6.

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY** ... presenting Handel's MESSIAH on **Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** at Grace EC Church, Sch. Haven and Sunday, **Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.** here at St. John's. Tickets Adults \$18 Senior/Student \$12. Tickets available by calling 570-628-3388 or at the door. For more information [www.schchoral.org](http://www.schchoral.org).