

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

Hurricanes, thunderstorms, tornadoes, fires, floods are all fearsome forces of nature which can scare us. Collapsing canyons of thunder reverberate like an angry God stalking across the skies. Lightning flashes illuminate the darkened sky and we know something bigger is coming. These natural events in our lives give us a fore taste of the dramatic vision of the second coming which Luke paints for us in this Sunday's gospel. The challenge of Luke – "Be vigilant at all times and pray that you may have the strength to escape the tribulations that are eminent and to stand before the Son of man"

Yours in Christ,
Father Dave

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday – December 3 – 9:00 a.m.

MARY HAHNER (Sr. Mary Jane Hahner)

Tuesday, December 4 – 9:00 a.m.

CHARLES LORENZ (Ann Marie Campion)

Wednesday – December 5 – 9:00 a.m.

ANN BERENESI (Staff & Residents of York Terrace)

Thursday – December 6 – 9:00 a.m.

ELLEN & WILLIAM SCHLITZER

(Dan & Ann Marie Wachter)

Friday, December 7 – 9:00 a.m.

ANNA KURTEK (Dot Elison)

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Friday – December 7 – 5:15 p.m.

CAROLINE DARHUN (Dan & Hermine Murphy)

Saturday – December 8 – 9:00 a.m.

JOE CHRIST (Mike Palko)

Saturday, December 8 – 5:00 p.m.

LOUISE & JIM DELANEY (Kathleen Williams)

Sunday, December 9 – 8:15 a.m.

JOHN H. HOHMAN (Joseph Hohman)

Sunday, December 9 – 10:30 a.m.

MICHAEL & ANNA FEDOCK

(Donna & Jim Pugh Family)

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Tuesday – December 4

at York Terrace Nursing Home

MARIE FORAN (Residents & Staff)

WEEKLY COLLECTION

November 24/25: \$ 4,035.06

Outreach: \$ 855.00

Youth Ministry: \$ 1,001.00

We thank our parishioners for their sacrificial giving.

CANDLE DONATIONS

BVM - IMO John & Patrick Hohman

by Kathleen Hohman

St. Joseph – IMO John & Patrick Hohman

by Kathleen Hohman

Tabernacle - Special Intention

Sanctuary

1. IMO Mary Hahner by Hahner Family

2. Parishioners of St. John's

3&4. IMO James Gallagher by Stiney & Rita Kruell

Guardian Angels

1&2. IMO Debbie Bowers by Joan Bowers

SCHEDULE

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5 p.m. – Saturday – December 8th

Reader: Chris Disabella

Euch.Min.: Ray Petrilla, Hermine Murphy

Servers: Mark Disabella, Noah Lecher, Reese Ketner

Cantor: Lucilla Kochol

8:15 a.m. – Sunday – December 9th

Reader: Bob Bechtel

Euch.Min.: John Corbacio, Gerry Schwartz

Servers: Ryan & Dylan Schreffler, Julia Botto

Cantor: Debbie Purcell

10:30 a.m. – Sunday – December 9th

Reader: Mary Matulevich

Euch.Min.: Frank Murphy, Dominic Chiplonia

Servers: Evielyn Hower, Nathan & Aliyah Peckman

Cantor: Dave Derbes

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 Sunday, December 9th** to let us know when you are **NOT** available during these months. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

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: Angela Pfeil Hamm, Theresa Tuite, Joe

Brahler, Bill Webber, Karen Modesto, Tom

Jefferson, Jean Hill, Esther Smith, Paul Connors.

Deceased: Annette Lieberman



PRAYER FOR OUR TROOPS AROUND THE WORLD

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior."

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

John the Baptist pointed to Jesus.

Who has pointed to Jesus for you?

Next Week's Readings

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 8/9)

Reading I: Baruch 5:1-9

Reading II: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

PRAYER GROUP



Our Prayer Group meets on the second Sunday of each month after the 10:30 Mass in the Chapel. Please consider joining us as we lift up those in need of prayer. It will take only a few minutes of your time.

Prayer request can be placed in the box on side of confessional. Thanks and God bless!

For more information or questions, please contact one of the following:

Bob Hahner 570-640-4448

John Corbacio 570-640-5038

My Prayer Request

Please place in box on side of Confessional.

DIVINE MERCY PERPETUAL ADORATION

Come to Christ where He is alone. In the Blessed Sacrament. Seek Him where He is alone. Bring Scripture. Sit in His presence. Ask Him the questions in your heart. And He will give you understanding. He will lead you to know what it is He desires you to do!

... Rev. Barry Braum, MSC

We need adorers for the following hours:

Monday 3 p.m.; Tuesday 9 a.m.

Thursday 4 a.m.;

Friday 12 a.m. & 6 a.m.;

Saturday 4 a.m. & 12 p.m.;

Whenever you are unable to cover your Holy Hour, for whatever reason, we are always able to get a sub.

Call or text Aleece for information 570-449-7678.

Fear not, for I am with you ... I will strengthen you, I will help you .. Is. 41:10

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

December

- 2 Advent-ure – 9:15 a.m. – Russell Bldg.
- 4 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 5 Catholic Women's Christmas Party at Lodge
- 6 RCIA – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 7 Immaculate Conception Mass – 5:15 p.m.
- 8 Immaculate Conception Mass – 9:00 a.m.
- 9 Confirmation Class – 6:30 p.m. – L.H.
- 8/9 Giving Tree Gifts due back to church
- 11 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 12 St. John's Beneficial Soc. – 8 p.m. – F.R.
- 13 RCIA – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 15/16 Christmas Cookie Sale after all Masses – L.H.
- 18 Men's Gospel Reflection Group – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 20 RCIA – 7 p.m. – F.R.
- 24 Christmas Eve – Masses 4, 6, 10 p.m.
- 25 Christmas Day – Mass – 10 a.m.
- 29/30 Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
- 31 Solemnity of Mary – Mass – 5:15 p.m.
- 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 5th

Where: The Lodge at Sharp Mountain

Time: 6 p.m.

Cost: \$25.00

Menu: Chicken Breast stuffed with Bread Stuffing or Baked Haddock with Lemon Dill Butter

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 **Dorothy Hahner Stangl, 1343 W. Norwegian St., Pottsville 17901 (phone 570-624-7106).**



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 15th
after 5 p.m. Mass

Sunday, December 16th

after 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. Masses

Prices: \$5.00 and \$6.00 per dozen

Peanut Rolls - \$10 per pound



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY FATHER DAVE

The Parish Family of St. John's
Congratulates Father Dave on his
"Twenty-first Anniversary"
with us on **December 2nd**.
We wish you continued enjoyment
and happiness as you begin your
22nd year as Pastor here at St. John's.

THE GIVING TREE

Last weekend a barren tree was placed in the front of church adorned with gift tags. The gift tags 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 by the weekend of **December 8/9**. 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 BY DECEMBER 8/9 WEEKEND

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

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

SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND

Support the Retirement Fund for Religious. A donor writes, *"Your flyer touched my heart – seeing the retired religious, such memories surfaced."* Do you remember the sisters, brothers, or religious order priests who made a positive difference in your life? Today many are elderly and need assistance. Their religious communities struggle to meet retirement needs while continuing to serve the People of God. Please give to next week's second collection.

PARISH COUNCIL

St. John's Parish Council will meet

Monday, December 10th – 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
Joseph Gerchak
Heidi Gorski
Christy Joy
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
Connor McNamara
Joe Rehnert

Ex-Officio

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



CHRISTMAS WAFERS "OPLATKI"

What are Oplatkis? 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. **Oplatkis are available at the Rectory Monday thru Thursday.**

2019 CALENDARS: Church calendars for the New Year are available at the church exits. 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.

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.

... *God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all.*
... *1 John 1:5*

DIOCESAN NEWS & EVENTS

COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER Catholic Charities Diocese of Allentown is hiring a full-time (37.5 hr./week) counselor and case manager (split position) based at the Pottsville Office location with possible travel in the five-county service region. Case management and education are provided to assist families with services needed during pregnancy or while parenting. The counselor provides individual, family, and marriage counseling for those seeking mental health services. Applicants should have a master's degree in related field with counseling licensure or licensure eligible. Applicants must be willing to provide services that align with the ethical, moral, and social teachings of the Catholic Church. Send cover letter and résumé to: CCAD@allentowndiocese.org. Please specify POTTSVILLE COUNSELOR in the subject line.

CHRISTMAS NOVENA The Diocese of Allentown Commission for Women is sponsoring a Christmas Novena for Bishop Schlert and his intentions on **December 8th concluding December 16th**. Anyone can participate. A card will be presented to the Bishop, including the names of all those who enroll. To sign up to receive the daily prayer in your email in-box, go to <http://allentowndiocese.org/BishopNovena>. For questions, contact 610-289-8900 ext. 2021 or e-mail cfw@allentowndiocese.org

DAY OF REFLECTION **Want to give yourself the perfect Christmas gift?** Join the women of the diocese at a Day of Reflection to be held at the Jesuit Center, Wernersville on **Saturday, December 15th** from 9:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. The theme is “*Advent: New Church Year, New Me.*” Deacon James Russo will be discussing a Catholic perspective on the Charles Dickens’ classic, “A Christmas Carol.” Cost for the day is \$20, which includes a light breakfast, Mass, Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours as well as lunch and time for fellowship. If you would like to register, please go to www.allentowndiocese.org/cfw-spirituality. For questions, please contact Joanie Norelli at 917-406-4879 or Susan Teaford at 610-207-5763 or e-mail cfw@allentowndiocese.org. Hope to see you there!

NEW TEEN MINISTRY *Schuylkill Catholic Young Church* is the new Schuylkill County regional youth ministry of the Diocese of Allentown. Teens are invited to participate in the upcoming “Alpha” series, which includes free dinner. Alpha is an opportunity to explore life, faith and meaning. Know a teen with questions about life? Invite them to Alpha. Please RSVP to Father Dave at the rectory 622-5470 or email stjbparish@comcast.net. Alpha will be held on **Sundays from 6-8pm at the Frackville Youth Center, 7 S. Broad Mountain Ave, Frackville) from January 27 through March 24.**

NEIGHBORING EVENTS

SCHUYLKILL CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT ...

"The Snow of Pennsylvania" featuring traditional holiday songs of family, friends and "snow" heard annually throughout PA. Performance on **Sunday, December 2nd at 3 p.m.** here in St. John's Church. For more information call 570-628-3388 or www.schcommunitychorus.org or email: schcommunitychorus@hotmail.com

TOYS FOR TOTS ... Drop off at numerous locations throughout the area. **Cutoff date is December 8th.** If you know of a family that is in need of toys for Christmas, please call **Ed Quirin at 570-640-5873.**

CHRISTMAS SHOW ... will take place **Sunday, December 9th from 2 to 4 p.m.** at the Schuylkill County Council for the Arts, 1440 Mahantongo St. in Pottsville. Stories, Santa and Elves and much more. Everyone is welcome to participate in singing of Christmas Carols. Refreshments ... cookies and hot chocolate to follow. Free will offering Everyone welcome!

PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW ... hosted by St. Ambrose Women's Club on **March 2, 2019.** Tour includes: Admission to Philadelphia Flower Show and a Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation. Departs from St. Ambrose Church at 9 a.m. Depart Flower Show at 5:30 p.m. Return to St. Ambrose Church at 7:30 p.m. **Adults: \$62.00; Children (2-16) \$50.00.** Reservations and money **due by January 31, 2019.** Checks can be made to the St. Ambrose Woman's Auxiliary Club. Contact Karen Holly at 570-573-1608.

CATHOLIC WEB OF FAITH

www.catholiceducation.org

This week visit the Catholic Educator's Resource Center website. The website strives to relate all human culture eventually to the good news of salvation so that the light of faith will illumine the knowledge.

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.

... The heavens declare the glory of God ...

Psalm 19:1

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Immaculate Conception of
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
is a Holy Day of Obligation.

Mass times are as follows:

Friday, December 7th - 5:15 p.m.
Saturday, December 8th - 9:00 a.m.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

We appreciate advertisers who support St. John's by advertising in our bulletin. Please patronize their business and let them know you saw their ad in our bulletin.

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FROM OUR PARISH NURSE ... If you have type 2 diabetes and sleep apnea, treating the sleep apnea may help prevent diabetic retinopathy, a complication of diabetes that often causes blindness. Many people with diabetes have sleep apnea and don't know it; both conditions are often related to excess body weight. Those with both conditions are nearly twice as likely to develop diabetic retinopathy as those without sleep apnea, and three times more likely to progress to advanced retinopathy within four years, according to a 2017 British study of 230 people with diabetes, published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Management. The good news: Participants who treated their sleep apnea with CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) devices were less likely to develop advanced retinopathy than those who went untreated.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR THANK YOU

The cold, chilly temperatures were just the right feel for our Annual Christmas Bazaar. The Bazaar was filled with many beautiful crafts, baked goods, and theme baskets. There was definitely something for everyone. A big thank you goes out to our Christmas Bazaar Committee who works very hard throughout the year to make sure that the Bazaar is always something special. This year was no different. The Bazaar was another great success. The hours they spend in coordinating various volunteers and crafts, putting together over 80 themed baskets made this annual event run very smoothly and well planned.

A very special thank you to **Christy Joy** and **Ann Marie DeFrank** and our Food Committee. They did a fantastic job preparing the food items for the Bazaar. They made sure everyone's appetite was met. A special shout out to those who helped with the preparation of the food and transported the food back and forth to the Russell Building and Longinus Hall. Everything was done to perfection and in a timely manner.

Finally, let us not forget all those who donated any items, baskets, gift cards, monetary donations, crafts, served the food, and helped to set up and take down Longinus Hall. And of course, all those who patronized the Bazaar. To you a very special thanks cause without YOU the Bazaar would not be what it is. Also, a special thanks to Santa Claus. He definitely put us in the Christmas spirit! May God's blessings be with you all. Again, thank you for all your hard work and support.

Father Dave

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way with this year's Christmas Bazaar. The wonderful support and hard work from all of our parish family was overwhelming. We all had a great time and we look forward to working with everyone again next year.

St. John's Christmas Bazaar Committee

Special thanks to ...

- The **Sponsors** who generously supported our efforts.
- The **Bakers** who made all the delicious treats.
- **Everyone** who helped in the kitchen preparing food.
- **Everyone** who donated those beautiful **Themed Baskets**.
- **Everyone** who donated the many **Gift Cards & Lottery Tickets**.
- **Everyone** who donated the very generous **Specials**.
- The **volunteers** who worked at the Bazaar.
- The **volunteers** who helped to transport the food and supplies.
- **John & Chrissy Eagan** for making the Santa pictures such a success.
- **Students** from Assumption BVM School for carrying the baskets and supplies to church.
- **Guers Dairy** for their donation of the ice tea products.
- **Theresa Skrobak & Linda Smith** for making the bleenies.
- **Carl & Tony Wiest** for their donation of the cake which was chanced off.
- **All** who attended the Bazaar and supported it in any way.

**2018 Christmas Bazaar
Profits
\$ 10,351.78**

Our Many Volunteers

| | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chris Black | Olivia Hable | Bernie Lecher | Frank Murphy | Gerry Schwartz |
| Katie Blackwell | Mary Beth Harvey | Ed Leffler | Patty O'Neill | Emma Seiger |
| Mary Bound | Debbie Herb | Charlene Leshner | Eleanor Orzechowski | Mark Seiger |
| Ann Burns | Paul Herb | Mary Lipton | Jason Prestileo | Ryan Seiger |
| Cooper Chipplonia | Zachary Herb | Frances Lorenz | Carole Quirin | Tina Seiger |
| Nora Chipplonia | Sue Jochems | Patty Markovich | Reene Reddington | Rosann Sitkus |
| Michelle Darhun | Maeve Ketner | Kevin McNamara | Mike Rizzardi | Dianne Stoudt |
| Janet Daubert | Pat Klassen | Bennett McNamara | Eleanor Schaeffer | Luis R. Visot |
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| Sandy Frinzi | Maureen Kurtek | Sharon Miller | Dylan Schreffler | Joanne Wood |
| Karla Garland | Pat Kutch | Barbara Munster | | Ralph Wood |
| Joyce Gerace | Carol Lasco | | | |

Our Bakers

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Nora Chipplonia | Livia Hable | Frances Lorenz | Mary Jean Morgalis | Carole Quirin |
| Michelle Darhun | Theresa Hossler | Ann Lowe | Barb Munster | Missy Scheetz |
| Janet Daubert | Sue Jochems | Hilda Maley | Babe Murphy | Pat Scheetz |
| Joanie Deiter | Jan Kurtek | Aggie Messner | Eleanor Orzechowski | Rosann Sitkus |
| Millie Fredericks | Bernie Lecher | Sharon Miller | Mary Porter | Janet Thomas |

*Despite our very best efforts, we invariably misspell, misplace or omit the name of an important person ... YOU!
We apologize if we have done this.*