

# St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

10<sup>th</sup> & Mahantongo Sts., Pottsville, Pa. 17901 • [www.saintjohnpottsville.org](http://www.saintjohnpottsville.org)

December 24, 2023 • Fourth Sunday of Advent

*Love*



*Advent*

## Mass Intentions

### Saturday, December 23

5:00 p.m. Kathleen, Matt, Mark  
Norkus  
(Al Norkus)

### Sunday, December 24

8:15 a.m. Kelly Jo Messina  
(Matt & Kim Blum)

### Sunday, December 24

10:30 a.m. Ann Lotz  
(Rita Lotz)

### Sunday, December 24—Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family

### Sunday, December 24—Christmas Eve

8:00 p.m. St. John's Parish Family

### Monday, December 25—Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. St. John's Parish Family

### Tuesday, December 26 — NO MASS

### Wednesday, December 27

9:00 a.m. William & Marie Flynn

### Thursday, December 28

9:00 a.m. Gerry Mehling  
(Mary Beth Harvey)

### Friday, December 29 — NO MASS

### Saturday, December 30

5:00 p.m. Marylou Schlert  
(St. John's Parish Family)

### Sunday, December 31

8:15 a.m. Michael Maccarone  
(Ed & Gerry Schwartz)

### Sunday, December 31

10:30 a.m. Lambert & James Pauly

## Next Week's Readings

**Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, Joseph  
(December 30/31)**

**Reading I:** Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3

**Reading II:** Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

**Gospel:** Luke 2:22-40

## Message from Father Bobbin

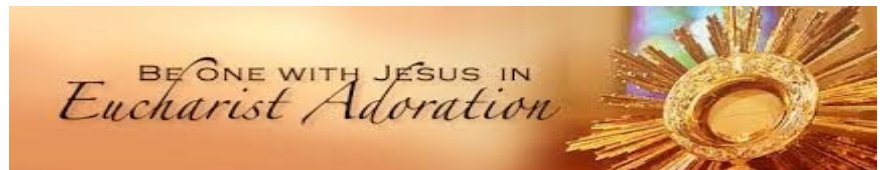
Dear Parishioners,

This Advent, we have reflected on the four candles of the Advent wreath, which represent four spiritual realities: 1. hope, 2. faith, 3. joy. The final candle for the Fourth Sunday represents *peace*.

Peace is similar to joy. Just as joy is something much deeper than pleasure – feeling good on the surface, peace is something much deeper than just the absence of any conflict or trouble. Peace is what we experience when everything is in order. For peace among nations, or within communities, or within families, there must be order. Relationships must be in order. But, before there can be order in relationships, or within families, or communities, or among nations, we must strive for peace *within ourselves*. We must strive for order within our own hearts. This means constantly nourishing our relationship with our Lord so that sin has less and less of a hold on us, so that our desires are purified and oriented toward what is truly good. This creates peace and tranquility within us, which affects how we relate to others, which has positive effects in the communities we belong to: families, groups, work or school, the larger society.

There is a lot of work to be done to foster peace among nations, in society, and within families. But Christmas reminds us that Jesus, our Savior from sin and death, our ultimate Good, is our most important and most necessary source of true peace. Only He can change hearts.

In Christ,  
Fr. Bobbin



## Eucharistic Adoration

We offer opportunities to spend time in prayer with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament ...

- ◆ A holy hour in the **chapel every Monday evening** (unless announced otherwise) from **5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.** This is a simple holy hour without any formal prayer or Benediction. It is not necessary to come for the entire hour. Just stop by as you desire.

## Pray

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

### For our Sick

Sheri Post • Robert Kline • Tony Kochol • Josephine Gallagher  
Tom Jefferson • Christine Kurtek • Dominic Maccarone • Drew Schaeffer  
Shawn Matz • Gerald Hudock • Miriam Tirjan • John Bernetsky  
Sue Mengle • Anthony S. Gaburick

### For our Deceased

Edward Averill



## Upcoming Events

### December

24	4:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass .....	Church
24	8:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass .....	Church
25	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass.....	Church

### January

1	9:00 a.m.	Solemnity of Mary Mass .....	Church
7	9:15 a.m.	CCD Parent Mtg .....	L.H.
7	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School.....	L.H.
21	9:15 a.m.	CCD Community Mtg .....	L.H.
21	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School.....	L.H.
25	6:30 p.m.	Scripture Study .....	L.H.

**L.H. = Longinus Hall F.R. = Rectory Fellowship Room R.B. = Russell Building**

Tuesdays 7:15 p.m. Weekly Men's Group ..... F.R.

# SCRIPTURE STUDY

**Fr. Bobbin's Scripture Study:** will be offered **Thursday evenings 6:30-7:30 on Jan. 25, Feb. 8, 15, 22 March 7, 14, 21, April 11, 18, May 16, 23.** Join us in person in Longinus Hall or at home on Zoom (\*Please email Father for the Zoom link: [kbobbin@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:kbobbin@allentowndiocese.org)). Fr. Bobbin's Scripture study attempts to give an overview and background for the books of Sacred Scripture to be of help with personal reading and study, Bible study groups, and getting more out of hearing the Word proclaimed at Mass. All are welcome.

## Lenten Dinners – Kitchen Coordinators Needed

This past year we were fortunate to bring back our Friday Lenten Dinners at the Russell Building, with the option of dining in or taking out. We are grateful to all the people who took charge and organized the dinners, and to the many volunteers. Unfortunately, some of our key people are no longer able to help organize the dinners because of changes in their personal circumstances. Therefore, future Lenten dinners will depend on one or more persons stepping forward to fill the role of kitchen coordinator(s). This is a leadership role, which would involve taking charge of the kitchen, planning the menu and determining what foods and supplies must be purchased, and delegating responsibilities to the volunteers. This role can be shared by two or three people working together. Please call the rectory or speak with Father as soon as possible if you can help.

## VOLUNTEER



## Candles

### BVM

1. IMO Marie Majestic by Carl & Kathy Hughes
2. Special Intention

### St. Joseph

1. IMO M/M Bruno Tassone by B. Tassone & Ashley Anthony
2. IMO Rick Pugh by Fred & Hilda Maley

### Sanctuary

IMO Living & Deceased of St. John's Catholic Women's Union by Catholic Women's Union

### Guardian Angels

1. IMO Al Majestic by Carl & Kathy Hughes
2. IMO Bill & Dot Moran by Fred & Hilda Maley
3. IMO Doc & Dot Bound by Fred & Hilda Maley
4. IMO Ed & Mary Adams by Fred & Hilda Maley

## Liturgical Min. Schedule

### December 30— 5:00 p.m.

**Reader:** Bill Gianfagna  
**Euch.Min.:** Frank Murphy  
**Server:** Luke Schane  
**Cantor:** Lucilla Kochol

### December 31— 8:15 a.m.

**Reader:** Janet Daubert  
**Euch.Min.:** Bob Bechtel  
**Servers:** Maggie & Rhyan Brennan  
**Cantor:** Ed Braham

### December 31— 10:30 a.m.

**Reader:** Jen Daubert  
**Euch.Min.:** Justina Majestic  
**Servers:** Jackson Daubert  
**Cantor:** Dave Derbes

# Advent



## Moving? Relocating?

### Let us Know!

Have you moved, changed your phone or email address? If so, would you please contact the Rectory Office at 622-5470 ext. 3. Help us update records!

## 2024 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.

## Family Matters

### Christmas Time — the true meaning.

Jesus is the reason for the season. During this Christmas time commit yourself to sharing the true meaning of Christmas with your family. God shared His love fully by becoming human. We too can share His love by being Christ to one another. May God bless you and your family during this season of good will.

## Children's Box Envelopes

If your child(ren) would like to receive a box of weekly contribution envelopes for 2024, please contact the rectory during the week at ... 622-5470 x 3

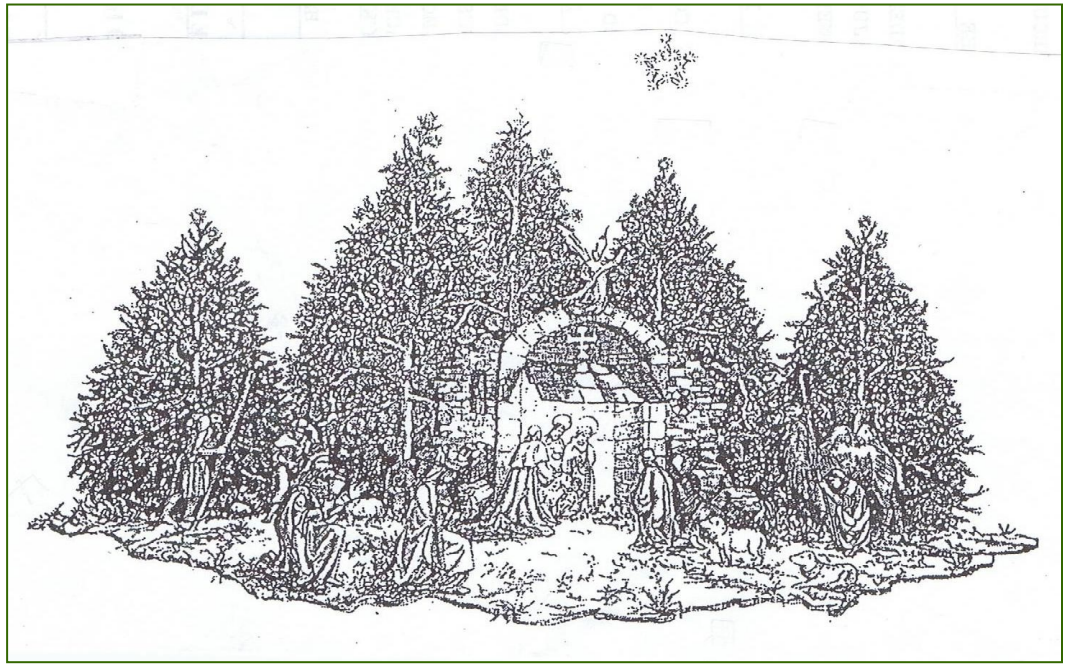
## Welcome Visitors

Thank you for worshipping with us today. If you are visiting our beautiful church, please know you are most welcome!

If you have questions or are interested in joining our parish family, please call the rectory 570-622-5470.

## 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."*



### St. John's Crèche

This sketch by the late Dr. David Marshall depicts St. John's Crèche. It was made of hand-carved wood in the 1870's and shipped to Pottsville from Southern Germany. It is a beautiful and priceless treasure of our parish.

## Christmas Cookie Sale – Thank You

The members of St. John's Catholic Women's Union would like to thank everyone who donated cookies or gave monetary donations, and those who supported us by purchasing treats at our *Annual Christmas Cookie Sale* held December 9/10. The Christmas spirit of giving came through with the wonderful generosity of those who donated cookies. The fundraiser was a huge success! Thank you to the women on the Cookie Committee who gave of their time at this busy season and also anyone who worked at the sale. We are a small group of women, but we are mighty and strong in our efforts to raise money for the church.

*Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Joyous New Year.*

*St. John's Catholic Women's Union*

## St. John's Catholic Women's Union

Women of all ages are invited to join the Catholic Women's Union. Learn how you can become involved with the Catholic Women's Union by joining us on **Wednesday, February 21st at 7 p.m. in Longinus Hall.** Meet the members and learn how you can be part of this unique organization. We share ideas and light refreshments are served. We work to raise money for our parish and have fun doing it. We also share in fellowship by sharing in a Spring and Fall Auction, Christmas Party, and the Covered Dish Dinner. Your ideas, friendship and membership are welcomed. Join us!





## Contemporary Music Ensemble

We are looking for new members! We are interested in both singers and instrumentalists. Commitment is minimal (2-3 hours per month) and musical experience/reading music is NOT required. Children and families are encouraged! We encourage parishioners who are interested in making a joyful noise to the Lord! Please email or call the rectory to join us! See you in the choir loft!



## St. John's Choir

St. John's Choir is welcoming new and current members to the choir to sing Saturday 5:00 p.m. 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. Please email or call the rectory for more information.

## Fourth Sunday

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us."

Matthew 1:23



## Saint of the Day

### SAINT STEPHEN

### Feast Day—December 26

"A man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5): thus Luke introduces Stephen, first of seven deacons chosen by the community for its ministry of charity, first to lay down his life in witness to Christ. As the church's first martyr, Stephen's life and death mirror the preaching and passion of Jesus, "the faithful witness" (Greek, martyr) (Revelation 1:5). Like Jesus, Stephen works "great signs and wonders among the people" (Acts 6:8). Like Jesus, when falsely accused, Stephen's face radiates angelic serenity (Acts 6:15), though his tongue, like Jesus', is a two-edged sword. As the dying Jesus forgave his executioners, even making excuses for them, then commended his spirit into his Father's hands (Luke 23:34, 46), so Stephen intercedes for his murderers and begs Jesus to receive his spirit (Acts 7:60, 59). How fruitful both passions! The penitent thief inherits Paradise; Saul, who consented to Stephen's killing, is transformed into the fearless preacher Paul. Thus Stephen challenges us to bear witness not in words only, but by Christ-like forgiveness toward all.

## Thank You Dept. — *Servants to All*

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the staff, clients, and board of directors of Servants to All, we would like to thank you for selecting Servants to All to be a beneficiary of your special project and donating the beautifully made blankets for the homeless.

We are extremely grateful for your generosity, and thankful for all you do for our community and those in need. We can never thank you enough for your support. Please express our gratitude with your parishioners. We are so impressed and inspired by the love, commitment, and dedication of their efforts to this project.

During the holiday season, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have given generously and made a difference in the lives of those in need. It is in this spirit that we say thank you and best wishes for a joyous holiday season.

Peace in Christ,

Jeanette Driano Sinn, Executive Director.

## Neighboring Events

**Spaghetti Fundraiser** on Saturday, December 30th from 12 to 2 p.m. Pick up at St. Joseph the Worker Parish social hall on Line St. in Frackville. Take Out only —includes Salad, Spaghetti & Meatballs & Garlic Bread. Donation of \$12 to benefit the Artz Family. Must pre-order by December 22 .... Call or text Wendy at 570-617-9085 or the parish office at 570-874-0610 or email frackvillecares@gmail.com.

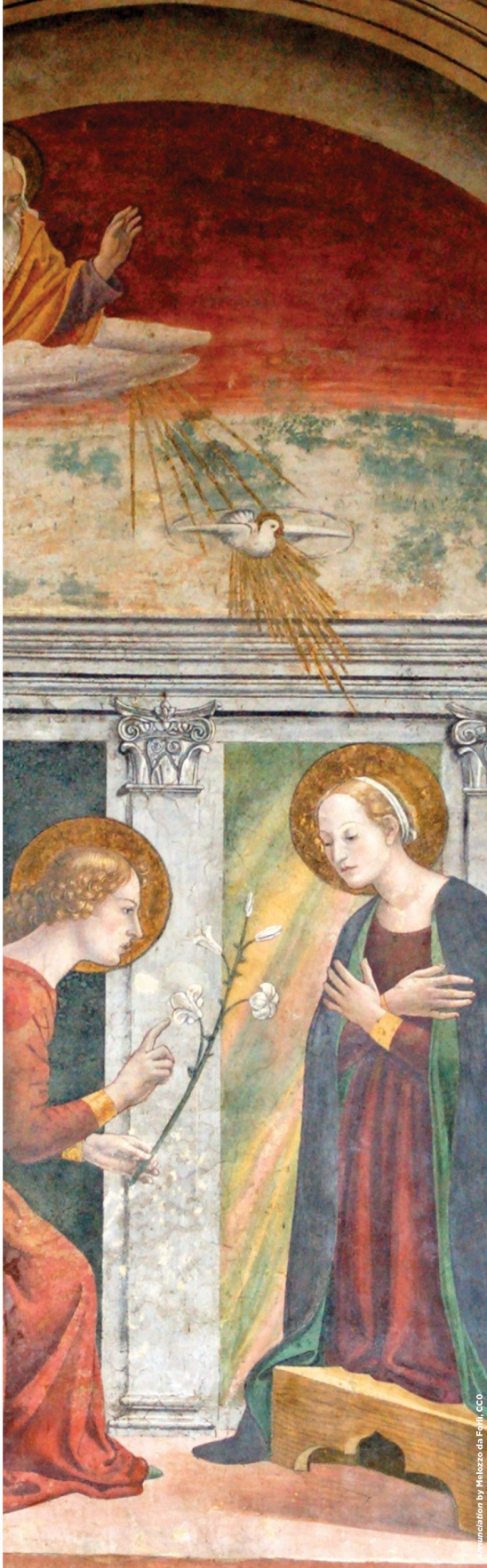


## Communion to the Sick and Homebound

If you or a family member, friend, or neighbor who is a member of St. John is confined to home, a nursing home or assisted living facility because of illness, age, or disability and would like to receive Holy Communion on a monthly basis, please call the rectory. We traditionally visit the sick and homebound on or around the first Friday of the month. Please help us meet the spiritual needs of our homebound parishioners.

## Prayer for Vocations

Heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, call forth vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life from our diocese and our families. Inspire men to imitate Christ, the Eternal High Priest, in sacrificial service to your Church. Move the hearts of men and women to offer themselves wholly to You in poverty, chastity and obedience. Send them as laborers for Your harvest. Inspire the faithful to support them with prayers and sacrifice. Raise up holy families who foster openness to your call. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen



December 24, 2023

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 | Rom 16:25-27 | Lk 1:26-38

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

### **GROW** AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” The angel Gabriel announces this in the Gospel today, and it is a phrase with which we are all familiar thanks to our recitation of the Hail Mary prayer. Although some may be comforted by such a message and its angelic messenger, it is troubling to Mary because the angel goes on to tell her she will conceive and bear the Son of God. Thinking practically, Mary is being told the impossible will happen – who wouldn’t be troubled? And yet Mary offers herself: “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Despite her fear and trepidation, Mary went on to answer God’s call and do his will. Our Blessed Mother became a great example of fortitude at that moment, as she exemplified what it means to step outside of our own uncertainty and trust God completely. Although doing God’s will can be difficult at times, St. Paul reminds us in his Letter to the Romans that we can ask God for the strength to say “yes” in spite of our fears.

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Up until today, December has probably been a whirlwind. Trees and lights, ornaments, parties and presents – all these things help to kick off “the most wonderful time of year” beginning soon after Thanksgiving. Come Dec. 26, however, for many, the decorations become a nuisance and Christmas trees are out on the curb for pickup. Thank goodness for our Catholic faith because for us, Christmas is just beginning! Mary didn’t say “may it be done to me” only to forget about it the next day. No, in the coming months, the Blessed Mother nurtured the baby Jesus in her womb, anticipating the arrival of her firstborn and the Son of God. And on that blessed Christmas night, her work as the Mother of God was only just beginning. So, as we anticipate the arrival of the Christ Child, we are joyful that *our* Christmas season continues until we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord on January 8. Let us use this time to draw closer to God and make every effort in the new year to do his will.

**SING** *Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
With the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*



**Pastor** ..... *Rev. Kevin J. Bobbin*  
**Deacon** ..... *Lawrence Lonergan*

**Parish Council President** ..... *Kevin McNamara*  
**Choir Director/Organist** ..... *David Derbes*  
**CCD Coordinator** ..... *Lucilla Kochol*  
**Rectory** ..... (570) 622-5470  
**Rectory Fax** ..... (570) 622-4589  
**E-mail** ..... *stjbparish@comcast.net*  
**Nativity BVM High School** ..... (570) 622-8110  
**Assumption BVM Elementary** ..... (570) 622-0106  
**St. Joseph Center** ..... (570) 622-4638

**Cemetery Information** ..... (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.

#### **Bulletin Deadline**

Monday prior to publication

#### **New Parishioners**

Please call the rectory for an appointment to register.

#### **Sick Calls**

Please notify the parish office.

#### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Saturdays ..... 4:15 to 4:45 p.m..  
 Sundays ..... 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**

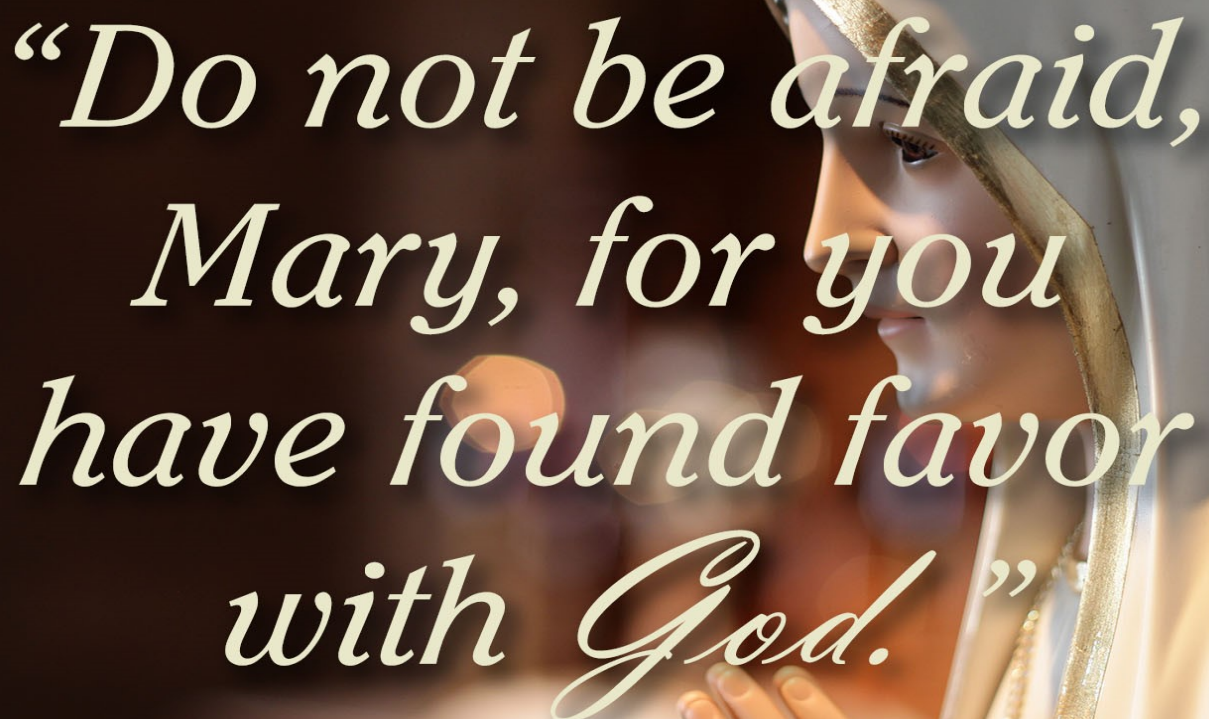
Baptisms are celebrated on Sundays at 11:30 a.m.  
 Baptismal Preparation for Parents must precede the Baptism.  
 Please contact Father Bobbin for an appointment.

#### **Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator**

Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., N.C.C., L.P.C. .... (800) 791-9209

#### **Diocesan Secretary for Youth Protection & Catholic Human Services**

Pamela J. Russo, M.S.W., M.S.  
 Secretary, Youth Protection and Catholic Human Services  
 P.O. Box F, Allentown, PA 18105-1538  
 610-871-5200 ext. 2204  
[prusso@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:prusso@allentowndiocese.org)



*“Do not be afraid,  
 Mary, for you  
 have found favor  
 with God.”*