

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Parish Family

10th & Mahantongo Sts., Pottsville, Pa. 17901 • www.saintjohnpottsville.org

December 5, 2021 • Second Sunday of Advent



Advent

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 4

5:00 p.m. Louise Delaney
(Kathleen Williams)

Sunday, December 5

8:15 a.m. George Smith
(Phil & Carol Lasco)

Sunday, December 5

10:30 a.m. Mike & Anna Fedock
(Jim & Donna Pugh Family)

Monday, December 6

9:00 a.m. Elizabeth McGrordy
(Joe & Ceil Burns)

Tuesday, December 7

9:00 a.m. Anna Mae Wickitsch
(Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Puddu)

Wednesday, December 8

9:00 a.m. Charlie & Catherine Schaeffer
(Maria Schaeffer)

5:15 p.m. Ronald C. Kriston
(Eleanor Kriston & Family)

Thursday, December 9

9:00 a.m. St. John's Parish Family

Friday, December 10

9:00 a.m. Noel Glunz
(Tony & Lucilla Kochol)

Saturday, December 11

5:00 p.m. George & Dolores Lynn
(David, Tony, Joan Marie
& Bob Lynn)

Sunday, December 12

8:15 a.m. Janet Doyne
& Jane Sunday
(Don & Joanne Doyne)

Sunday, December 12

10:30 a.m. Scott Rhoades
(Carol Rhoades)

Next Week's Readings

Third Sunday of Advent (December 11/12)

Reading I: Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Reading II: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

Message from Father Bobbin

Dear Parishioners,

Today we hear the words of our parish patron saint, John the Baptist: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

Advent is a season of preparation. But we must be clear about what kind of preparation. Our society has it backwards. We ignore Advent and begin celebrating Christmas just after Thanksgiving – perhaps even earlier. By the time Christmas Day comes, many people are tired of Christmas music and ready to take down the tree and decorations. As soon as Christmas Day is over, "Happy New Year" replaces "Merry Christmas." As a result, we think of Advent as a time for decorating, shopping, and perhaps baking. While these may be necessary preparations, they are not the kind of preparation John the Baptist is talking about.

Our society has it completely backwards. December 25 is only the *beginning* of the Church's Christmas season. Ideally, we hold off on decorations, Christmas music, and celebrations until we are much closer to the 25th. Advent is a time to prepare *ourselves*. It is a time to reflect on our relationship with our Lord, to see how He is working in our lives, and to invite Him to come into our lives anew, perhaps into new parts of our lives, new challenges and situations we face. When we do this, Christmas becomes more "real" to us and the joy of Christmas becomes more profound because it is not a superficial celebration merely involving all the nice things that please our senses (food, music, gifts, etc.) but a new encounter with Jesus Christ coming into our lives today.

*In Christ,
Fr. Bobbin*

The Joyful Mysteries: An Advent Reflection

... will be offered by Fr. Bobbin on **Sunday, December 12, from 1 to 3 p.m.** in the main church. Join us for an afternoon of talks, music, and prayer to help you prepare for Christmas. There is no cost and no need to register in advance.



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

Patricia Thomas • Sheri Post

Be Reconciled.

As we approach the sacrament of reconciliation during this Advent time we reflect on how God willingly forgives and pardons us. In our families, we ask for the grace to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. We especially ask for this grace with family members where there have been long term unresolved issues.

Upcoming Events

December

5	9:15 a.m.	Parent Meeting	L.H.
5	10:30 a.m.	Little Children's Sunday Preschool	L.H.
6	7:00 p.m.	Eucharistic Holy Hour	Chapel
7	9:30 a.m.	Consecration to Mary	Chapel
8	9:00 a.m.	Mass—Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Church
8	5:15 p.m.	Mass—Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Church
8	8:00 p.m.	St. John's Beneficial Society Meeting	F.R.
12	10:30 a.m.	Little Children's Sunday Preschool	L.H.
12	1:00 p.m.	Joyful Mysteries—Advent Reflection	Church
13	7:00 p.m.	Eucharistic Holy Hour	Church
13	7:00 p.m.	Parish Council Meeting	L.H.
19	10:30 a.m.	Little Children's Sunday Preschool	L.H.
19	11:30 a.m.	Community Meeting	L.H.
20	7:00 p.m.	Eucharistic Holy Hour	Chapel
24	4:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
24	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
24	10:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass	Church
25	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass	Church

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

Tues. 7:15 p.m. Weekly Men's Group Zoom
Meeting ID: 824-780-6433 Password: Mary

Retirement Fund for Religious

A donor to the Retirement Fund for Religious writes, "I still remember the lessons the sisters gave us and how they instilled in us the love of our faith." Show your thanks for the prayerful service of elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. Your gift to next week's collection helps provide care, medicine, and more. Please be generous.



Donations to Local Faith Based Ministries

We are collecting items for the following local Faith Based Ministries during this Advent Season: Jewel, Servants to All, Schuylkill Hope Center for Victims of Domestic Violence (formerly SWIC).

Jewel—requested scarves, hats, gloves, socks, devotionals, journals, lotion.

Servants to All — requested pop top cans of food (example: tuna packets, sausages, spaghetti, ravioli, etc), bottled water, snack bags of chips, candy, cookies, fully cooked soups with pop top lids (no condensed soups), hats, scarves, and gloves.

Schuylkill Hope Center for Victims of Domestic Violence — requested bed pillows, twin sheets, blankets, paper towels, silverware.

Containers will be available in the rear of church. **DO NOT WRAP ANY ITEMS.**

The collection of items will begin December 11 and end December 20.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Weekly Collection

November 27/28.....\$3,225.33

Youth Ministry \$771.00

Candles

BVM

1. IMO Ronald C. Kriston

by Eleanor Kriston

2. IMO Eleanore & Barbara Forney

by the Heenan Family

St. Joseph

1 & 2. St. John's Parish Family

Sanctuary

Special Intention

Guardian Angels

1. Special Intention

2. IMO Leo & Dorothy Lotz

by Ron & Pat Lombel

3. Special Intention

4. IMO Carl & Harold Bartholomew

by Frances Lorenz

Liturgical Minister

Schedule

December 11— 5 p.m. Mass

Reader: Patty O'Neill

Euch.Min.: John O'Neill

Servers: R.J. Post

December 12— 8:15 a.m. Mass

Reader: Jeff Naffin

Euch.Min.: Bob Bechtel

Server: Ethan & Ryan Grabowski

December 12—10:30 a.m. Mass

Reader: Mary Matulevich

Euch.Min.: Debbie Herb

Server: Emma Lieberman

Banns of Marriage

II—Alexandra Disabella

& Matthew Thomas

Welcome Visitors

Thank you for worshiping 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.

Parish Council

Please approach any Parish Council Member listed below and ask that a question, concern, etc. be brought up at the next meeting on **Monday, December 13th.**

Elected Members

Bob Bechtel
John Consugar
Darren DeArment
Joseph Gerchak
Heidi Gorski
Joseph Kurtek
Eric Lieberman
Nannette Major
Kevin McNamara
Al Norkus
Patty O'Neill
John Powers
Nick Quinn
Melissa Scheetz
Martin Smith

Appointed Members

John Consugar
Lucilla Kochol
Patty O'Neill

Ex-Officio

Father Kevin Bobbin
Deacon Larry Lonergan
Deacon Luis R. Visot
Ed Brahrer

Pecans

The Catholic Women's Union still has pecans for sale. Mammoth Halves—\$15.00 per pound. Please call the Rectory for more info 570-622-5470.



Church Decorating

Your help is needed!!

All are welcome to help decorate our church for Christmas. Please call the rectory if you can help or just show up on ...

Sunday, December 19th after 10:30 a.m. Mass.



Season's Greetings

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

Rev. David J. Loeper, 94 Walnut Road, Hamburg, Pa. 19526
Rev. Donald Henry, 4339 Kingston Loop, Sarasota, Fl. 34238
Sister Judith Baldino, 2405 Gulf Gate Drive, Sarasota, Fl. 34231
Sister Barbara Jean Wojnicki, 2755 Holme Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19152
Sister Maryanne Zakreski, St. Joseph Convent, 120 Hilldale Road, Cheltenham, Pa. 19012
Seminarian—Matthew Kuna, 3001 Lindberg Avenue, Allentown, PA 18103
Seminarian—Bobby Rienzo, 6329 Sauterne Drive, Macungie, Pa. 18062

Christmas Wafers "Oplatki"

For centuries on Christmas Eve, families in Poland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia 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.



Cookie Sale To Combat World Hunger

Next Weekend—Buy a Cookie Tray and Combat World Hunger.

Buy a \$15 cookie tray and feed 270 starving children in Haiti. Our church will be selling cookie trays to support the Cookie Sale to Combat World Hunger. These cookie trays make wonderful hostess gifts and affordable gifts for friends and colleagues. The cookie trays are only \$15 each and have 24 cookies; 8 chocolate chip, 8 peanut butter & 8 snickerdoodle, chocolates and are beautifully gift wrapped. Last year's donation efforts provided food for 1.6 million children as part of Cross Catholic Outreach's school feeding program in Haiti. Because the cookies are great tasting and the proceeds do so much good, over 57 tons of trays of cookies have been sold so far. Please buy a tray or two.

Neighboring Events

Spaghetti Dinner

Spaghetti Dinner sponsored by St. Patrick Church on **Sunday, December 5th** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (or sell out) at 313 Mahantongo St., Pottsville.) Cost is \$9.00 per platter which includes pasta with homemade sauce, two meatballs, salad and bread. Extra meatballs and/or sauce available for purchase.

“
**PREPARE
 THE WAY
 OF THE
 LORD, MAKE
 STRAIGHT
 HIS PATHS.**
 ”

(LK 3:4)

Getty Images/besidesigns

December 5, 2021

Second Sunday of Advent

Bar 5:1-9 | Phil 1:4-6, 8-11 | Lk 3:1-6

Written by
 THE
 FAITHFUL
 DISCIPLE

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

Today we have blogs and life coaches, Facebook groups and self-help books, all of which can help us become better human beings. These resources come to mind as I read St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians – I think St. Paul would be the ultimate life coach! All of his letters to the early Church offer wisdom, encouragement, and instruction, and the words we heard today are particularly significant as we prepare for Jesus' coming this Advent: “the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Unlike some of our modern-day resources, Paul's words go beyond simply helpful advice; they are rooted in faith and prayer, and in the truth of the Paschal Mystery. These words assure us that we are not alone on our journey, that what God has promised in the person of his Son will come to fruition: Christ will come again! And so, as John the Baptist did, we who are disciples are meant to witness to his coming, announcing the Good News and preparing for his – second – coming. Repent. Believe. “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” How do we do this? Engage with Scripture – read it and really hear what the Word of God is saying to you. Pray for insight, that the grace of God might transform you to go forth and announce the Gospel.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Even pre-Google, I spent more time than perhaps I should have hunting down the perfect gifts, especially for my young boys. I'd scour the ads, then get up early on Black Friday and hit the stores in search of deals and hard-to-find items. Perhaps that's why these words from St. Paul stopped me in my tracks: “And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, *to discern what is of value* [italics added], so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.” During Advent, these words can both assure and challenge us – to grow in love, knowledge, and a sense of what really matters during our time on earth. For me the challenge will be to spend less time shopping this season and more time focusing on deepening my relationship with God, who is preparing to turn the darkness into light. This doesn't mean we can't take delight in finding that perfect gift; but we ought also to increase our recognition that all gifts come from God, including our ability to have access to and means to purchase material gifts. We can find joy in God's presence (and presents?) among us.

ACTIONS

Re-read today's Gospel, and then consider how Saint Paul followed in John the Baptist's footsteps in his Letter to the Philippians. Think of ways you, like John and Paul, can encourage one another, and be a voice crying out in the desert. Participate in the sacrament of reconciliation and pray that God may cleanse your heart to welcome him at Christmas, and when he comes again.

Saint Nicholas

Feast Day: December 6

The son of wealthy parents in that part of Asia Minor we now call Turkey, Nicholas lived in the 4th century. He believed in Jesus so much that, when his parents died while he was still a teenager, he gave his inheritance to the poor. He became a priest and later the abbot of a monastery. After that, the Pope picked him to be the Bishop of Myra, a diocese that, because it had been neglected, was in need of a good shepherd. Under Nicholas' care, the Diocese of Myra grew strong in the Faith, and its people came to love Nicholas very much.

Nicholas had many secrets. If he heard that someone was in need, he would secretly help them without letting anyone know. The story goes that a poor man had no money to give his daughters for their dowry—in those days a girl could not marry without a dowry [money that was paid to the groom]. With no hope for his children's future, the father was about to sell them into slavery. Nicholas heard about the father's plight and, climbing up onto the roof of the man's house late one night, Nicholas dropped three bags of gold down the cold chimney. It is said that the bags of gold fell into the daughters' freshly-washed stockings hanging over the fireplace to dry overnight. When the father heard strange noises on the roof, he jumped out of bed and chased the intruder into the night. When he caught up to Nicholas, the Bishop made the father promise not to tell anyone who had given him the bags of gold.

Saint Nicholas deeply loved justice. He forced the Governor to admit the innocence of three men he had falsely condemned to death—after which the Emperor Constantine set them free. Sailors loved Saint Nicholas because he miraculously saved a ship doomed to crash in a storm off the coast of Lycia.

In another legend, Saint Nicholas rescued three children who were placed in a barrel by a man who wanted to harm them. In the picture on the right, Saint Nicholas is dressed in priestly vestments and giving his blessing with one hand while holding the Gospels and his Bishop's crozier [shepherd's staff] in the other hand. Note three golden balls on top of the book to represent the three bags of gold he gave to the poor father; note, too, the three children he rescued and the boat that he saved from sinking.

When Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea, he denounced the heresy of Arianism, which had infected most of the Church with false teachings.



Arianism was later condemned by the Church, but in the meantime, Nicholas went to prison for defending the truths of the Faith. He died at Myra in 342.

Nicholas set such a great example of generosity and kindness—especially to children—that a custom sprang up in which children gave gifts in his honor at Christmas time. His name took on many forms; in particular, the Dutch called him “Santa Claus.”

His holy life of charity, humility, and courage has inspired many legends and traditions all across the world, many of which endure to this day. Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of children, of Russia, of sailors, of prisoners, and of pawnbrokers.

Parochial Administrator *Rev. Kevin J. Bobbin*
Deacon *Lawrence Lonergan*

Parish Council President *Robert Bechtel*
Choir Director/Organist *David Derbes*
CCD Coordinator *Lucilla Kochol*

Rectory (570) 622-5470
Rectory Fax (570) 622-4589
E-mail stjbparish@comcast.net
Russell Building (570) 628-3002
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

First Sunday of each month 11:30 a.m.
 Second Sunday 10:30 a.m. Mass
 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

Immaculate Conception

Holy Day of Obligation

Masses

Wednesday, December 8

9:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.



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