



FIRST SUNDAY OF *Advent*

**Mission Statement**

*Catholic Community of St. John Neumann*

*FOUNDED on the teachings of Jesus Christ,  
NOURISHED by the hospitality of the Califon Christian  
Communities,*

*FORMED with a commitment to Social Ministry, and  
STRENGTHENED by the Holy Spirit*

*The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann is  
a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual journey of hope:*

- TO CELEBRATE and DEEPEN our faith*
- TO SHARE our unique gifts, talents and treasures*
- TO CHERISH all life*
- TO LIVE in openness, acceptance and love.*

**Annual Parish Goal**

*We, as ministers, will foster  
an inviting and spiritual Catholic community for all,  
especially to those away from the Church,  
by growing in and witnessing to our faith in the mercy of God.*

*A Christian Community of the  
Catholic Tradition*

Diocese of Metuchen

Most Rev. James F. Checchio,  
JCD, MBA  
Bishop of Metuchen

Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, D.D.  
Bishop Emeritus

www.diometuchen.org

*Our Parish*

- Rev. Abraham Orapankal, Ph.D. ....  
..... Pastor
- Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....  
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus
- Earl Roberts.....Deacon
- Mary Cangelosi.....Trustee
- Fred Heimall..... Trustee

*Mailing Address:*

PO Box 455  
Califon, NJ 07830

*Office Center:*

398 County Route 513  
Califon, NJ  
908-832-2513  
908-832-7618 fax  
www.ccsjn.org

*Worshipping at:*

398 County Road 513  
(Church Center)

- Saturday Vigil Mass ..... 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m.
- Sunday ..... 10:30 a.m.
- First Friday Holy Hour ..... 7:00 p.m.

*Worshipping at:*

390 County Road 513  
(Neumann Residence)

\*Check the bulletin for any changes\*

**Weekday Masses:**

- Tuesday ..... 8:00 a.m.
- Friday ..... 7:00 a.m.

**Reconciliation:**

- Saturday..... 5:00 p.m.
- Or anytime by appointment.

# This Week at Saint John's

## Mass Intentions

### Tuesday, November 29

8:00 a.m.. Intention of the Celebrant

### Friday, December 2

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Saturday, December 3

5:30 p.m. Mark Johnson, req.  
Susan and Bill Rinaldi

### Sunday, December 4

8:00 a.m. Mary Furlong, req.  
The Environment Committee  
10:30 a.m. Kyle Hargadon, req.  
Marion and Kevin Kucharski

First Friday Holy Hour  
December 2nd - 6 p.m.  
Neumann Residence



Join us for an hour of Prayer  
and Meditation before the  
Blessed Sacrament.

## Parish Calendar

### Sun., Nov. 27 - First Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy  
3:00 p.m. Nativity Practice (Church Center)

### Mon., Nov. 28 - Advent Weekday

7:00 p.m. Fund Raising Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)  
7:30 p.m. Children's Liturgy Meeting (Seton Room)

### Tues., Nov. 29 - Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:00 p.m. Connxions Meeting (Office Center Kitchen)

### Wed., Nov. 30 - Saint Andrew, Apostle

### Thurs., Dec. 1 - Advent Weekday

7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

### Fri., Dec. 2 - Advent Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)  
6:00 p.m. First Friday Holy Hour (Neumann Residence)  
7:00 p.m. Tasting Event (Church Center)

## Mass Schedule - December 3/4

Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Celebrant .....	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader .....	Alexa Johnson
Altar Server .....	Johnson Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Eileen McCabe
.....	Lyle Garcia, Debby Kelemen
Sunday	8:00 a.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal
Reader .....	Allan Piechowski
Altar Server .....	Stanski Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Barbara Gates
.....	Bob Martalus, Barbara Martalus
Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal
Reader .....	Gary Porto
Altar Server .....	Cucchiara Family
Music Eucharistic Minister .....	Gloria Cucchiara
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Donna Torczon, Anita Sawczuk
.....	Anthony DeStefano, Sheena Carew, Mark Brisson

Please note for December:  
Change of time and location for  
First Friday Holy Hour.

### Sat., Dec. 3 - Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

11:00 a.m. 1st Reconciliation and Reception (Church Center)  
5:30 p.m. Mass (Church Center)

### Sun., Dec. 4 - 2nd Sunday of Advent / Yellow Brick Road Collection / End Christmas Giving Tree

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
9:00 a.m. Liturgy Enrichment (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass - Carew and Sepe Baptism (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)  
12:00 p.m. Christmas Cash Drawing (Church Center)  
3:00 p.m. Nativity Practice (Church Center)  
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Catechesis (Church Center)

### Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharistic: **Joseph Aulert, Gary Bergmann.**

**Deceased: Joseph Aulert**, uncle of Brandon Aulert, and **Gary Bergmann**, husband of Kathleen and father of William and Annalee. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord and comfort and support from family and friends.

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....**

Dear Friends,

The Year of Mercy was concluded last Sunday with Pope Francis officially closing the Holy door at St. Peter's Basilica on the feast of Christ the King. Last Saturday, Bishop James Checchio, the new Chief shepherd of the Diocese of Metuchen, led a Diocesan Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., in order to mark the closing of the Jubilee Year as well as to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Metuchen. A number of priests, religious and laity, in many buses from different parishes, joined him in this pilgrimage. Our own parish was represented by two parishioners – Mary D'Avella and Lynn Johnson. It is estimated that over 20 million people participated in the Church's Jubilee Year of Mercy visiting Vatican – and a billion people may have participated in churches worldwide.

Does that mean that as we start another liturgical year today, time for mercy is over, or mercy moves to the background? In fact a friend asked me this question a month ago: *"Father, I'm confused to hear a priest preach that we have just a month more to pass through the door of mercy, and that once it is closed on November 20, we will lose the chance of receiving God's mercy!"* I assured him that the priest was only encouraging everyone to use this opportunity to pass through the Holy Door and receive the mercy of God. But in his enthusiasm, he unwittingly gave the impression of mercy being terminated with the closing of the door! That is far from the truth, because Jesus said: "I am the gate" (John 10:7) and he is always inviting and welcoming us. Pope Francis himself made it very clear that the Door to God's mercy is never closed: *"let every Church be witness to the Mercy of the Heavenly Father, Who never closes the door of His pardon in the face of those who are repentant..."*

Hence our focus should be, in the words of Pope Francis, *"to rediscover the richness encompassed by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The experience of mercy, indeed, becomes visible in the witness of concrete signs as Jesus himself taught us."* The holy season of Advent reminds us of this mercy of God who sent his only begotten Son into the world to save us and not to condemn us (John 3:16). Let us enter this season with an eagerness to experience the love and mercy of this God-with-us, Emmanuel.

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

**READY OR NOT, HERE I COME!**

When you were a child, did you play the game, Hide and Seek? If you did, you will remember that the person who was "it" closed his eyes while the rest went to hide. To give them time to hide, the child started counting: 5, 10, 15, 20 and up to 100. Then he would say, "Ready or not, here I come!" The point of the game was to hide oneself so well that the leader could not find you, for if he found you, and beat you back to the goal, you had to be "it" the next go-around. The secret of the game was preparing oneself against being found and caught. With excitement we heard the words, "Ready or not -- here I come!" *In today's Gospel lesson Jesus is saying to the world, "Ready or not -- here I come." In chapter 24 of Matthew, Jesus tells us: "So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." As in the game, only this is not a game, there is a counting and an accounting going on right now, not to frighten us but to remind us of God's expectation for us. It is a countdown before the blast of his appearance on earth a second time to judge the world and to gather his faithful to himself so that we who live by the values of Jesus will be welcomed into heaven.*

**4TH ANNUAL TASTING EVENT - DON'T MISS OUT**

**December 2nd at 7:00 p.m.**

**Great Food - Wine - Chocolate - Vendors - Music**

Only 1 week left to get your tickets for this Event.

\$35 per person, tickets available after Mass or at the office.

For more information contact 908-832-2207 or St. John's 908-832-2513



**1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**November 27, 2016**

***"For you do not know on which day your Lord will come." Matthew 24:42***

People who have had health issues or near-death experiences generally have a greater appreciation for each day being a gift from God. The rest of us usually take for granted that we will be around tomorrow. But when you start to look at each day as a gift, you realize all the little miracles that happen daily and grow in gratitude for all that we have been given.



**WELCOME NEW PARISHIONERS**

The Jackie and Lauren Alligood were welcomed at the 10:30 Mass on Nov 20 along with the Sepe Family, Anthony, Chris and Adrianna. Check out their photos in the narthex so you can introduce yourself when you see them.

***"Much that is true of human relationships is also true of our relationship with God. Human relationships of friendship or marriage need time, attention, and care for them to continue and to grow. The same is true of our relationship with God. We have been called to union but we need to respond."***  
**Ralph Martin**

**Parish Contact Information**

**Church Center (weekend use)..908-832-6343**

**Office Center.....908-832-2513**

Fax ..... 908-832-7618

Email..... [sjn@ccsjn.org](mailto:sjn@ccsjn.org)

Rev. Abraham Orapankal ..... Pastor

Email..... [abraham@ccsjn.org](mailto:abraham@ccsjn.org)

Earl Roberts..... Deacon

Email..... [earlr1@verizon.net](mailto:earlr1@verizon.net)

Sharon Janks..... Pastoral Administrator

Email..... [sjanks@ccsjn.org](mailto:sjanks@ccsjn.org)

France Kennedy ..... Pastoral Associate

Email..... [fkennedy@ccsjn.org](mailto:fkennedy@ccsjn.org)

Kerri Caldaro ..... Financial Administrator

Email..... [kcaldaro@ccsjn.org](mailto:kcaldaro@ccsjn.org)

Wayne Infusino..... Maintenance

**Religious Education..... 908-832-2162**

Renee Ciszewski, Director of Religious Education

Email..... [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org)

Jo Ann Jarvis..... Office of Catechesis

Email..... [jjarvis@ccsjn.org](mailto:jjarvis@ccsjn.org)

Social Ministry..... [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org)

Anne Germino and Greg Wilson

Bulletin..... [bulletin@ccsjn.org](mailto:bulletin@ccsjn.org)

Youth Ministry..... [sjnygroup@gmail.com](mailto:sjnygroup@gmail.com)

# Christian Formation - Catechesis

## Religious Education Program

### FIRST RECONCILIATION



**Saturday, December 3**

The Holy Communion class will be celebrating the sacrament of First Reconciliation on Saturday, December 3, 11am, in the Church Center. A reception for the children and their families will follow.

### CLASS MASS GRADE 6



Thank you to all the six grade students who enthusiastically participated in the celebration of Mass on Sunday. It is wonderful to watch the students grow in faith as they become active member of the parish community.



### MONTHLY ADULT FAITH FORMATION

*Faith Formation is more than a subject to be taught it is an invitation to a way of life.*  
**Joe Paprocki**

Consider joining us during the adult faith sharing portion of the family faith formation program at Valley View Elementary School on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 AM or Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, in the Church Center at 6:30 PM. All are invited to attend! You do not need to have a child in the program to participate. For more information, contact Renee or Jo Ann 832-2162.



### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD THANK YOU

It felt like Christmas came early as we collected many shoe box gifts from Religious Ed. students and parishioners for Operation Christmas Child! These gifts will be distributed through Samaritan's Purse to suffering children around the world in time for Christmas. Thank you so much for your participation!

### ADVENT CALENDAR



Advent is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas. Advent means 'Coming' in Latin. This is the coming of Jesus into the world. Christians use the four Sundays and weeks of Advent to prepare and remember the real meaning of Christmas. Advent calendars were distributed to each family this month as a great way to focus as a family on the meaning of Christmas. Remember to use your calendar this Advent season!

# Social Ministry



### CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT LITTLE BROOK NURSING HOME



Join us on Thursday, December 15 at 10am as we bring Christmas cheer to the residents of Little Brook Nursing Home in Califon. All ages are welcome--bring the little ones! If you can provide a tray of Christmas cookies to share that would be very much appreciated. For more information contact Anne Germino at [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org).



### CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

St. John's Christmas Giving Tree is set up in the Narthex. We need your help to make a difference in the lives of so many challenged by their circumstances. We are supporting six different organizations this year: Anderson House, Freedom House, Little Brook Nursing Home, Newton's Guest House, SHIP and St. John's individuals and families in need. Some tags have more than one gift listed, feel free to purchase one or more of the gifts on the tag. Please:

1. **Take a tag from the Tree.**
2. **Sign it out on the appropriate Log Sheet.**
3. **Purchase and wrap your gift, attaching the tag you took as the label.**
4. **Drop off your gift in the Narthex or the Seton Room by Sunday, Dec. 4th.**

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Porto at 908-832-9820 or [kporto@aol.com](mailto:kporto@aol.com).  
Thanks for your generous giving!

### DONATIONS TO NEWARK FAMILIES

Many of you donated clothing to the children in Newark who lost their homes and all of their possessions. Please checkout the table at the Social Ministry station in the Narthex to see if there is an envelope addressed to your family. Take it home and share the good tidings! Bless you all !

## A WONDERFUL ADVENT WREATH STORY

"What are you doing, great-grams?" She looked at me over the tops of her glasses, the way she does when she's reading to me from the Bible to see if I'm paying attention. I really was interested, she could tell. I know because she took off her glasses, letting them hang by the silver beaded chain around her neck. "I'm making the Advent wreath for the church." "What's the Advent? And why do they get a fancy wreath?" I reached for the purple ribbon with a finger. "Can I feel it?" "Are your hands clean? Is your heart pure?" I could feel my nose wrinkle. "I'll go wash. And say a prayer."

Grams smiled, putting her glasses on again. "When you come back, I'll tell you the story of the Advent wreath." Another glance over her glasses at me. "Don't cut your washing or your prayers short, or the story will be very short." "Yes, ma'am." I ran off, not noticing her loving smile follow me. I was back with my face pink and a peaceful heart in almost no time. Grams did her sideways-look at me. I could feel the blush make my freckles jump out. "I washed behind my ears, too!" She nodded, tying the last bit of wire holding the evergreens to the small spoked wheel. "You know Christmas is coming?" Nodding, I glanced at the Nativity set up on the corner table. "The birth of the Christ child." "Exactly. Well, in the old days..." "When you were my age?" "A bit before then, dear. Would you like to help?" She turned the wreath, checking the greens for gaps. "The Advent wreath is special to the church. There are a lot of symbols." She touched the purple silk. "The purple ribbon is the old symbol of royalty. Christ was also known as 'The Prince of Peace.'"

She pointed, "These candles all have names. The first is the Prophet's candle. It means 'Hope' for the Coming." She looked at me, "You understand about hope?" "I hope so!" I said, handing her the candle. "Hope is not about what will happen, it's about what may happen. You have to believe in order for hope to work." She said. "It's not about what you want or need. It's the devout wish for something beyond your experience. Something greater than yourself." "Yes, ma'am." I reached out and touched the second candle, the wax silky smooth. "This one is named?" "The Bethlehem candle. For the town where Christ was born. It means 'Peace'." "And this one? It's not purple, it's pink!" I sniffed. "It smells good. Like roses." "That's because it's special. The Shepherds candle. It means 'Joy'. It goes here." she pointed. "Can you guess the name of the last candle?" "No..." "It's called the Angel's candle." We put in the Advent wreath together. "I love you, Grams." "I know, dear. That's what this candle means. And the reason we remember the birth of Christ."

## ADVENT PARISH PRAYER FAMILY

Thank you for supporting the parish in prayer. Advent is here, for the next four weeks pray for the families that you picked. If you usually pray alone, why not ask your family to join with you to double the effort of bringing families together!

Please bring in a Christmas card to tell the families that you were praying for them! Drop it off in the basket in the narthex by Dec 18 with their name on the envelope.

## TAI CHI FOR MEDITATION AND HEALTH

The Prayer Ministry Team of the Parish will be presenting a six week series entitled "Tai Chi for Meditation". Sessions will be held on Wednesday evenings beginning on January 11 and ending on February 15. Sessions will be held in the Church Center, beginning at 7 pm.

The sessions will include the Eight Brocades of Silk, a sequence which encompasses eight posture positions, helpful in promoting health, relaxation, personal meditation, and breathing techniques. Depending upon group interest, we may introduce the initial elements of the "24 Form", a more complex and physically active set of movements which encourage more physically active meditation.

Space is limited to 20 parishioners, sign up early by contacting Bonnie Garcia at 908-975-3003 or [bonnie.garcia210@yahoo.com](mailto:bonnie.garcia210@yahoo.com).

There will be a \$5 charge per session.

## SMALL FAITH GROUPS

Our fall session of small groups concluded with a nice celebration of all the groups in a joint session. Over half of the participants were able to attend the collaborative evening session and appreciated talking to people in other groups. Participants commented on the benefits of insights of others throughout the small group process.

## WRAP PRESENTS AND BE PRESENT

Advent is the season we prepare for Christmas. We shop, bake, decorate, shop, cook, and visit till we are ready to drop. This is all part of the season, but at its heart, Advent is about getting ready to encounter Jesus. A free email program from Dynamic Catholic will help you slow down and focus on what really matters during this busy season.

Sign up at: [BestAdventEver.com](http://BestAdventEver.com)

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Nov. 27 Take an Advent Prayer card to pray for
- Dec. 2 First Friday Holy Hour 6pm at Residence
- Dec. 2 Tasting Event-7pm Church
- Dec. 3 First Reconciliation
- Dec. 4 Giving Tree Items Due
- Dec. 4 50/50 Raffle Drawing after 10:30 Mass
- Dec. 6 Poinsettia Orders are Due
- Dec. 9 Narthex Christmas Tree Install 7pm
- Dec. 11 Nativity Pageant 10:30 Mass
- Dec. 18 Return a Christmas card for the families you prayed for
- Dec. 18 Santa will be here after the 10:30 Mass
- Dec. 20 Christmas Decorating Party

## AQUIRE THE FIRE

Acquire the Fire, the combined young adult group of Our Lady of Lourdes and St John Neumann, will be having their next meeting on Sunday, Nov 27th at 7 PM in the Old Church Hall. Join us for a night of fellowship, games, and snacks. Save the date for our next meeting on Sunday, Dec 18th. To join the list please email Susan at [acquirethefire@ollwhs.org](mailto:acquirethefire@ollwhs.org).

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Virgilio Alves  
Joan Cardierre  
Eugene Cifranic  
Bill Ciszewski  
Jean Crickenberger  
John D'Almeida  
Barbara DelPiano  
Tino DeSantis  
Sophia DeVita  
Brent Evans  
Paul Ferri  
Helen Gallagher  
Sophie Geist  
Marion Hergert  
Jay Heyman  
Fred Holub  
Barbara Jiroushek  
Lou Livoti  
Iole Matthews  
Dick McCall  
Maggie McKeon  
Jan McLeavey  
Christine Meyer  
Fran Miceli  
Danny Mulvey  
Joan Myers  
Mary Lou O'Brien  
Floyd Opdyke  
Nilsa Perez Parsons  
John Pfeufer  
Ali Redling  
Anne & Joe Sacco  
Diane Siti  
Noah Skinner  
Michael Slivka  
Al Sterphone  
Julie Suplee  
Nicholas Troiano  
Don Velli  
William Weimer  
Josh Wilkes  
Caden Zane  
Jill Zane  
Joey Zieba

## MILITARY PERSONNEL

If you have someone in the military you would like us to pray for, call the office or drop the name into the collection basket. As military personnel leave the Service, please notify us so we can remove them from the list. Please remember the following in your prayers:  
Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army  
HM Bullis, Christopher, U.S. Navy  
C3C, Geerinck, Joshua, U.S. Air Force  
Private, Linzer, Matthew, U.S. Army  
Seaman, Linzer, Stephanie, U.S. Navy  
SR O'Leary, Thomas, U.S. Navy  
Captain Royal, Benjamin P., USMC  
Lieutenant JG Simila, Nicole, U.S. Navy

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Under the gun

*" . . . stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come . . . "*

*Matthew 24: 37-44*

She was miserable: stuck in a job she hated, no one special in her life. While her friends were busy celebrating weddings and having adorable children and prospering in careers they loved, she was alone, mired in self-pity.

But her perspective changed in an instant.

She just had lunch with her mother. Her poor mom listened to her daughter's litany of unhappiness and tried to offer what support she could. Then she returned to her small apartment. While in the kitchen, she heard a noise in the hall — and suddenly remembered that she had forgotten to lock the door behind her. She got up and looked down the hall. At the top of the stairs a masked man was pointing a handgun at her. She had never experienced such fear in her life.

He demanded her cash. But she explained that she didn't have any, that she relied on her debit card. Again he demanded money, and again she said she had none. She offered to go with him to an ATM. "You can take my computer," she pleaded.

All she could do now was wait for the stranger to determine how this would play out.

And in that moment of waiting, she felt her whole life — the beauty, the love, the darkest moments. She remembers: "The one regret, the unfinished business I had with this life of mine. My mother would always think of our conversation and believe that her only child had died a miserable person, unfulfilled and greatly at odds with life. That is what brought tears to my eyes. I realized what a beautiful life I had actually lived; I just hadn't always appreciated it . . . I'm sorry, Mom, I thought."

A second later, the intruder turned and ran.

"A meaningless act of violence" her family and friends said when they heard about what happened. But she disagrees: "Every day, I have the option to decide: Is my story going to be about anger, fear and unhappiness? Or can my story be about peace, forgiveness and walking a new path of gratitude and compassion? . . . It is only by God's grace that I am able to locate those virtues at all but they are there, bubbling along like an underground stream beneath the stony ground of my heart."

*[From "Under the gun: New life after a home invasion" by Brittany Conkle, America, December 7-14, 2015.]*

**Her confrontation with the intruder is an Advent awakening for this young woman. In the midst of her fear, she realizes the preciousness of her life, that life is a gift that God gives her — and all of us — in order that she might discover God in the love of others and come to realize the goodness of this world in anticipation of the next. Advent calls us to "watch," to pay attention to such signs of God's unmistakable presence in all that is loving, in all that is beautiful, in all that is life-giving and nurturing.**



## SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



A man once had a conversation with God. He asked, "Lord, I have always wondered about time. What is a thousand years like for you?" God answered, "For me a thousand years is like a second." The man then asked, "What about money? What is a million dollars like for you?" And God answered, "For me a million dollars is like a penny." The man became eager and said, "Lord, could you give me one of those pennies?" God answered, "No problem, but you will have to wait one second."

Four weeks before Christmas, the pastor was leading a children's service featuring an Advent wreath. He had told them what the three purple candles represented. Then he asked: "does anyone know what the pink one means?" No one answered. Finally little Sara's hand went up. "Are they expecting a girl?"

## THE ADVENT WREATH IN YOUR FAMILY

The Advent wreath, four candles on a wreath of evergreen, is shaped in a perfect circle to symbolize the eternity of God. In our church, three of the candles are purple and one candle is rose or pink, to represent joy.

During each Sunday of the Advent season, we focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brings us: Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. Others consider the lighting of the first candle to symbolize expectation, while the second symbolizes hope, the third joy and the fourth purity. It is a common practice for families to light Advent wreath candles at home. Here is a suggestion to have a little family prayer for lighting the first candle this Sunday:

**The family gathers around the Advent wreath. Begin with the sign of the cross.**

**Father::** Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for God to send divine love and light into our dark world.

*Child #1:* How does this happen?

*Father:* God's light comes through Jesus, who became a human being just like you and me, so that he could show us the way back to God's divine love and light.

**Family:** *"Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."*

*Mother:* A reading from the prophet Jeremiah: "The Lord said, 'I made a wonderful promise to Israel and Judah, and the days are coming when I will keep it. I promised that the time will come when I will appoint a king from the family of David, a king who will be honest and rule with justice. In those days, Judah will be safe; Jerusalem will have peace and will be named 'The LORD Gives Justice.'" (Jer 33:14-16)

*Father:* Today, we wait for the coming of Jesus. We begin in the dark, and on this first Sunday of Advent, we light the first candle.

**First candle is lit by one of the children.**

*Child #2:* Every week in Advent, we will light another candle. Each candle that we light will remind us that the Light of the World will soon come to us in the human form of the baby Jesus.

**Family:** Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation

May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R/.** Amen.

## CAN NON-CHRISTIANS ENTER HEAVEN?

Do we still believe in Limbo? Can a Protestant receive Communion in our church? Do you want to know the answer to these and other such questions? Try our one night Bible Study to explore interesting topics! Join us on Tuesday December 6 at 7:14 p.m. for a one hour discussion with Fr. Abraham to discuss topics you have been curious about.



## IT'S TIME TO PASS THE TORCH

*(actually the Christmas Luminaries)*

We are seeking a family who would like to begin their own Christmas Eve tradition. What began as a service project when our boys were young, grew into family tradition lasting into their college years. Our family has enjoyed preparing the luminaries and placing them out on the church driveway for the Christmas Eve Masses. The boys are grown and starting out on their own and we have decided to pass the torch to an interested family. You will find it's a fun and meaningful family tradition that you will all share in to help ready the Church for the celebration of Christmas. If you are interested in this experience with your family for Christmas 2016 or would like more information, please contact us now or the parish office. We are happy to lend you a hand if needed! Linda and Hunt Patterson @ 537-9488 or the parish office @ 832-2513.

## YOU ARE WITH HIM, GO ON IN

A few years ago, Pastor Erwin Lutzer and his daughters were visiting Washington, D.C. While there, they met a man who served on former President Bush's Secret-Service security team. The gentleman offered to give them a guided tour of the Oval Office. Pastor Lutzer and his daughters passed through many security checkpoints the next day on the way to the Oval Office. At each checkpoint, they expected to be searched and questioned. But instead, the guards took one glance at the Secret-Service man and announced, "You are with him; go on in." Pastor Lutzer wrote that he expects **our entrance into Heaven will be like that. We will have no credentials of our own that could possibly get us in. But Jesus will be walking along beside us. And at each gate, the angels will take one look at Jesus and announce, "You're with Him: go on in."**



## Stewardship

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## VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

### Office Angels

Wed., November 30	J. Santoro
Thurs., December 1	L. Caprio
Wed., December 7	S. Griffin

### Store Cards

#### November 26 & 27

5:30 p.m..	B. Cestone
8:00 a.m.	K. Dabrowski
10:30 a.m.	G. Ambrosky

#### December 3 & 4

5:30 p.m..	E. McCabe
8:00 a.m.	J. Klawunn
10:30 a.m.	J. Varicadipane

### Church Center Plant Watering

Week of 11/27	C. Fortenbacher
Week of 12/4	B. Lee

### Church Center Cleaning

December 2	Team F
December 9	Team A

### Altar Flowers

November 24	A. Sawczuk
December 3	

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