



## 3RD 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, December 13

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

### Friday, December 16

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Saturday, December 17

5:30 p.m. John McCabe, req.  
Eileen McCabe

### Sunday, December 18

8:00 a.m. Alice & Marcy O'Connor,  
req. France Kennedy  
10:30 a.m. Francis Mattiello, req.  
Eileen McCabe

*Santa Claus is coming to St. John's*



*Sunday, December 18th  
Following the 10:30 Mass  
(bring your cameras)*

## Parish Calendar

### Sun., Dec. 11 - 3rd Sunday of Advent / Retirement Fund for Religious Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
8:00 a.m. K-6 Family Faith Formation (Valley View)  
9:00 a.m. Speaker on Catholic Social Teaching (Valley View)  
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Nativity Pageant (Church Center)-(during Mass)  
3:00 p.m. OCP Reading (Church Center)

### Mon., Dec. 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe

10:00 a.m. S.H.I.P. Church/Office Kitchens)  
7:30 p.m. Pastoral Council (Upper Room)  
6:00 p.m. K-6 Family Faith Formation (Church/Office Center)

### Tues., Dec. 13 - Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting (Drexel Room)

### Wed., Dec. 14 - Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

12:30 p.m. Staff Christmas Luncheon (Neumann Residence)  
7:00 p.m. Community Reconciliation followed by  
Individual Confessions (Church & Reconciliation Room)

### Thurs., Dec. 15 - Advent Weekday

10:00 a.m. Nursing Home Caroling (Little Brook)  
Set up Baoxes for Food Pickup  
7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

### Fri., Dec. 16 - Advent Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)  
6:00 p.m. Christmas Cookie Pickup (Church Center)  
7:00 p.m. Christmas Food Pickup (Church Center & Kitchen)

## Mass Schedule - December 17/18

### Saturday

5:30 p.m.

Celebrant ..... Fr. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Youth Mass Reader  
Altar Server ..... Youth Mass Altar Server Group  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Gloria Cucchiara  
..... Mary D'Avella, Mary Connolly

### Sunday

8:00 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Rev. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Christ Bitters  
Altar Server ..... Mastro Family  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Debby Kelemen  
..... Sharon Janks, Jane Klawunn

### Sunday

10:30 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Rev. Abraham Orapankal  
Reader ..... Joann McNamara  
Altar Server ..... Malone Family  
Music Eucharistic Minister ..... Donna Torczon  
Ministers of the Eucharist..... Anita Sawczuk, Sheena Carew  
..... Cindy Carroll, Mark Brisson, Dick Wickel

### Sat., Dec. 17 - Late Advent Weekday / Pick up Flower Orders

8:00 a.m. Christmas Food Basket Delivery (Church Center)  
5:30 p.m. Youth Mass (Church Center)  
6:30 p.m. Youth Nite (Church Center)

### Sun., Dec. 18 - 4th Sunday of Advent / Christmas Flower Offering / Pick up Flower Orders

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass with Bells (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)  
11:30 a.m. Santa Visit (Narthex)  
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Catechesis (Church and Office 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: **Floyd Opdyke, Thomas Barnum, Susan Dziki Marx, Albina Aulert, Erna Harvst. Eleanor Mastro, Eleanor Fazekas, Joseph Aulert and Susanne Dauguste.**

**Deceased:** **Floyd Opdyke**, husband of Evelyn Opdyke, **Thomas Barnum**, cousin of Ron Pojedinec, **Susan Dziki Marx**, friend of Pojedinecs, **Albina Aulert**, Great Grandmother of Brandon Auleert, **Erna Harvst**, mother of Shirley Harvst, **Eleanor Mastro**, mother of Mike Mastro, **Eleanor Fazekas**, mother of Nadine Fotta, **Joseph Aulert**, uncle of Brandon Aulert and **Susanne Dauguste**, wife of Deacon Frank Dauguste. 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,

As we light the third candle on our Advent wreath this weekend, (use the prayer in this bulletin in your family) we are reminded of how we all need that light of Jesus Christ to dispel the darkness within us. Brighter the light, clearer the vision. Our parish offers us opportunities and challenges for this very reason. These challenges are both spiritual and corporal in nature. Our Christmas Giving Tree has been fully taken care of – thanks to the generosity of our parishioners. This project, so faithfully and meticulously coordinated by Karen Porto, will benefit individuals or families at SHIP, Anderson House, Newton Guest House, Little Brook Nursing Home, Freedom House and St. John's families in need. Similarly, the efforts of our Social Ministry, Religious Ed Office and other Ministries and individuals to help the needy continue relentlessly and they encourage us to follow their good example.

Our "Tasting Event" was a great success. The efforts and passionate interest of the great organizing team of Marlene Milko, Maggie Baumann and Barbara Pannone, resulted in an amazing time for the participants and an excellent return to our parish. (Next weeks bulletin will carry the names of many angels who helped to make this event a great evening for all.) Last Sunday I had shared with you all about a challenge one of our parishioners had told me in response to my talk about parish financial situation few weeks ago: *"Father, I have an idea: I want to give a little help to the parish this Christmas. Let me know what was the least Christmas collection in the past 3 years, and this year, whatever amount our parishioners will donate beyond that amount, I am willing to match it with an equal amount!"* As I checked our records for three years, our least collection was \$24,052 for the Christmas of 2013 (2014 = \$24,316; 2015 = \$27,151). Obviously our challenge is clear: whatever amount we raise above \$24,052 will be matched and added to our collection. Thank you to this parishioner who wants to remain anonymous while desiring to make a difference in the life of our parish from sharing the blessings God gave.

The First Reconciliation of our children last week is a reminder to ourselves of our own need for the same. The Parish Penance Service this Wednesday 7pm offers us an opportunity to come together, to reflect on the mercy of God through God's Word and experience the forgiveness that the Lord offers us. Pope Francis says: *"Jesus' attitude is striking: we do not hear the words of scorn, we do not hear words of condemnation, but only words of love, of mercy, which are an invitation to conversation. "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." Ah! Brothers and Sisters, God's face is the face of a merciful father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience He has with each one of us? That is His mercy. He always has patience, patience with us, He understands us, He waits for us, He does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to Him with a contrite heart. "Great is God's mercy," says the Psalm."* Let us bask in the sunshine of God's merciful love and spiritually prepare for the coming of the Savior.

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

### CHRISTMAS GIVING: A PARISHIONER'S CHALLENGE:

After my last talk about parish financial situation, a parishioner told me: *"I have an idea: I want to give a little help to the parish this Christmas. Let me know what was the least Christmas collection in the past 3 years, and this year, whatever amount our parishioners will donate beyond that amount, I am willing to match it with an equal amount!"* I wanted you to know that. Now it is a challenge for us all to think of our contribution to our Church this Christmas, even as we thank God for this parishioner who wants to make a difference in the life of our parish from sharing the blessings God gave.

### PLEASE DO NOT DRIVE ON THE FRONT PLAZA

We have just completed repairs and some changes to the front plaza for safety and to make it easier for those with walkers. Please do not drive vehicles onto the area for unloading or loading now or in the future. Thanks.

## 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 11, 2016

**"You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand." JAMES 5:8**

Patience is another one of those things many of us struggle with. We want things to go according to our plan and our schedule. Any change brings anxiety and fear. Through daily prayer we better align ourselves with God's will and His plan, which is far better than anything we can come up with on our own.

## HAVE YOU SAID A PRAYER TODAY?

While you are praying for the parish families you picked, remember to pray for God's guidance in your own family's life. AND drop off a Christmas Card in the narthex - everyone wants to know who prayed for them! If you don't have a card - we have them on the credenza for you write before or after Mass! We want all cards by Dec 18 so each family can pick up their card at Christmas Mass!

*Bells will be playing at the 10:30 Mass on Sunday, December 18th and at the 7:30pm Mass on Saturday, December 24th, Christmas Eve and at the 10:30am Mass on Sunday, January 1st.*

### 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..... [kaldaro@ccsjn.org](mailto:kaldaro@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

## 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, Dec 18th 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, Jan 22nd. To join the list serve and to stay up to date on more events, email Susan at [acquirethefire@ollwhs.org](mailto:acquirethefire@ollwhs.org).

## COMMUNITY RECONCILIATION

Come and see for yourself! Our Advent Reconciliation Service will be an experience of God's touch of mercy to us. This Wednesday (14<sup>th</sup> December) evening at 7 p.m., we have our Community Reconciliation Service followed by Individual Reconciliation. I invite all of us to come and celebrate God's forgiving love and mercy and experience the freedom of the children of God.

## GALLON MILK CARTONS

We still need some clean gallon sized plastic milk cartons for the Christmas Eve luminaries. They can be left in the Seton Room.

## DECEMBER SOUP KITCHEN SERVICE



Service to the SHIP Soup Kitchen in Somerville will take place on Monday, December 12 and Thursday, December 22 from 11am-2pm on both days. If you would like to help serve the meal or can provide food for either dates, please contact Anne Germino at [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org).

## COOKS NEEDED

We would like to include packages of cookies with each of our deliveries, so if you can bake a dozen, wrap them up and get them to us by 6:00PM on December 16 @ the Church Center that would be great. Thanks for all your blessed help ! Amen !



## 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.

## ADVENT SPIRITUALITY



Advent often seems like just a busy "home stretch" before Christmas "break." However, if we do not develop a personal spirituality for **Advent**, we are not really in a position to teach others its significance. As has often been said, "You can't give what you don't have."

Advent, put simply, is waiting in joyful **hope** in a world that often looks pretty hopeless. But what does that mean? The *Catechism* defines hope as "the confident expectation of divine blessing and the beatific vision of God." (2090) Christians are a people who expect blessing and expect to see God someday. How different from the values of the secular world, where relying on one's own abilities is key! Yet do we, as Catholic people, behave any differently? Do we give witness to Christian hope through our speech and actions?

Why not take time before **Advent** this year to get in touch with hope? This simple process can help. Read the first readings and Gospels for the Masses of the four weeks of Advent. Reflect over these readings and consider the following. If you have a journal consider writing your answers in your journal.

- *How do these readings give me hope?*
- *What signs of hope do I see in my life and ministry?*
- *Can I allow Christ to be the source of my hope?*
- *How can I share my hope with others?*

When you can answer those questions, you will truly be ready to celebrate and communicate to those around you the joy of the season of Advent.

*Edited from Joyce Donahue article in Catechist Journey*

# Social Ministry

## THE HOMESTRETCH

Today, December 11 puts us into the homestretch of our Christmas Food Drive and we must get some details out to all of you prior to our drop-dead date of Thursday, December 15. That's the day when all items required must be at the Church. There are lists of food needs in the Narthex where you can also find sign-up sheets for helping with the Pack-Up on December 16 @ 7:00 PM in the Church Center and also for assisting with Deliveries on December 17 beginning @8:00 AM. Please help us in our quest to help others.



## CHRISTMAS CAROLING - 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).

## A REMINDER

Please check our table in the Narthex for an envelope that may have your family name on it



## OPLATEK – THE CHRISTMAS WAFER

### *Start your own Family Tradition*

The word Bethlehem means “House of Bread”. The breaking of the bread is a sign of charity, unity, and friendship. Religious family traditions and customs bring the truths of Faith into the home. One of these beautiful Christmas customs is the Christmas Wafer. A Wafer bearing a simple design commemorative of Christ’s birth is broken by the head of the family and distributed to each member. With a simple prayer for God’s grace and the welfare of the present and absent members of the family, the head family member breaks the Wafer and distributes it, a piece to each one at the table. While doing so each member of the family is kissed and is wished a joyful feast. The other family members then greet one another in the same way.

All this brings to mind clearly out charity for one another, to seek salvation together. Family customs remind us that we seek and obtain salvation with the help of others at all times.

So try it with your family this year. There is Oplatek in the Narthex in envelopes. Take one and leave a donation



## CHRISTMAS DECORATING PARTY

*Tuesday, December 20, 6:00 p.m.*

Everyone is invited to the St John's Christmas Decorating Party. Adults and kids are welcome. While we enjoy socializing with fellow parishioners, music, appetizers and desserts, we have something fun to do – decorate the church. You can bring a goodie to share, but it’s not required; cookies, sweets, appetizers or any kind of drink. Come join us for decorating, connecting, eating, drinking, and Christmas merriment.

## STEWARDSHIP CALL FOR MEMBERS

Great news! The Stewardship Ministry is looking for new members. We want to expand our membership so that we have more ideas and input into our planning process. This is a fantastic opportunity to join a fun and meaningful ministry here at St. John’s. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Seton Room. We laugh, share personal stories, and plan for Stewardship at St. John’s. The Stewardship Ministry has three primary objectives: (1) Promote Parish engagement; (2) support Social Justice; and (3) encourage environmental responsibility. Stewardship members take on as much or as little as their schedule allows. We have some exciting activities planned for 2017 and want you to join us! Contact Anthony DeStefano at [radestefano@earthlink.net](mailto:radestefano@earthlink.net) or just show up to our next meeting. We look forward to hearing from you.

## "I'VE BEEN DOING AUTOMATED GIVING FOR 4 YEARS!"

Recently you received an invitation to begin using the automated giving option here at St. John’s. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to consider this easy sensible approach to giving. I have been using the automated giving option for about 4 years. It is so easy! Once a year, I complete a one page form indicating the amount I would like to give and that’s it! Each month, the bank deducts my giving amount. I never have to worry about forgetting envelopes, having money or writing checks. If my circumstances change I can easily update my giving amount by contacting the church office to update my form. Most important, automated giving provides predictability to St. John’s financial planning. Each week, the weekly collection varies. Imagine managing your household without being able to consistently predict your income. It would be very difficult to plan for expenses not knowing how much money you would have each week or month. Automated giving provides St. John’s leadership with more information about expected income, which in turn allows them to better plan for the Parish’s needs and enrichment. Automated giving has provided me with a digital solution for consistently contributing to the financial well-being of the Parish. I hope you will prayerfully consider this easy and beneficial approach to your giving. **Sharon Lohrmann, Stewardship Ministry member.**

## 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)



## CHRISTMAS CASH 50/50

### *And the Winners Are:*

Total in tickets sold	\$7,120.00
1st place Sima Family	\$1,780.00
2nd place Sharon Lohrman	\$1,068.00
3rd place Janks Family	\$ 712.00

## GROCERY CARDS



Thanks to **38 families** who purchased Shop Rite and Kings and Bishops gift cards the last week, totaling **\$6,425.00**. The stores gave us **\$179.63**. Cards are available after Mass or at the office weekdays.

## WEEKLY COLLECTION

### **For December 4, 2016**

99 Donors Weekly.....	\$5,373.50
52 Yellow Brick Road .....	\$1,620.00

### **For December 7, 2015**

83 Donors Weekly.....	\$6,232.00
61 Yellow Brick Road.....	\$2,062.00

## VALENTINE'S DINNER DANCE 2017

For our Catholic Heart Workcamp trip. Friday, February 10, 2017 at 7:00pm It will be here before we know it! More information to follow but for questions or to get involved please contact Mary Connolly at [mandmconnolly@gmail.com](mailto:mandmconnolly@gmail.com) or 908-930-0784.

## 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  
 Fr. Alban Harmon  
 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

## SUNDAY REFLECTION - A Letter of Gratitude

**"Go and tell what John what you hear and see . . .**

**"Matthew 11: 2-11**

After suffering a devastating asthma attack, Laura Levis died in a Boston hospital. She was 34. Her husband, writer Peter DeMarco, composed a beautiful letter of thanks to the intensive care unit staff of CHA Cambridge Hospital who cared for her. Peter's letter read in part: *As I begin to tell my friends and family about the seven days you treated my wife, Laura, in what turned out to be the last days of her young life, they stop me at about the 15th name that I recall. The list includes the doctors, nurses, respiratory specialists, social workers, even cleaning staff members who cared for her. "How do you remember any of their names?" they ask. How could I not, I respond.*

*Every single one of you treated Laura with such professionalism, and kindness, and dignity as she lay unconscious. When she needed shots, you apologized that it was going to hurt a little, whether or not she could hear. When you listened to her heart and lungs through your stethoscopes, and her gown began to slip, you pulled it up to respectfully cover her. You spread a blanket, not only when her body temperature needed regulating, but also when the room was just a little cold, and you thought she'd sleep more comfortably that way . . . Then, there was how you treated me. How would I have found the strength to have made it through that week without you . . . ? How many times did you check in on me to see whether I needed anything, from food to drink, fresh clothes to a hot shower, or to see whether I needed a better explanation of a medical procedure, or just someone to talk to? How many times did you hug me and console me when I fell to pieces, or ask about Laura's life and the person she was, taking the time to look at her photos or read the things I'd written about her? How many times did you deliver bad news with compassionate words, and sadness in your eyes?*

And then, Peter DeMarco wrote, there was a final — and most memorable — gift of all: *On the final day, as we waited for Laura's organ donor surgery, all I wanted was to be alone with her. But family and friends kept coming to say their good-byes, and the clock ticked away. About 4 p.m., finally, everyone had gone, and I was emotionally and physically exhausted, in need of a nap. So I asked her nurses, Donna and Jen, if they could help me set up the recliner, which was so uncomfortable, but all I had, next to Laura again. They had a better idea. They asked me to leave the room for a moment, and when I returned, they had shifted Laura to the right side of her bed, leaving just enough room for me to crawl in with her one last time. I asked if they could give us one hour without a single interruption, and they nodded, closing the curtains and the doors, and shutting off the lights . . . I will remember that last hour together for the rest of my life. It was a gift beyond gifts, and I have Donna and Jen to thank for it. Really, I have all of you to thank for it.*

**The imprisoned John has sent friends to ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. Jesus tells them: Go tell John what you see and hear: the broken people who have been made whole; the crosses that have become the means to new hope and resurrection; the stories of those who refuse to yield to darkness and find forgiveness and peace in the light of God. Tell John — and everyone you encounter — that God is in our midst in every act of love, in every healing of a heart or spirit broken, on every bridge built over the chasm of hatred and violence. In the spirit of Peter DeMarco's touching letter of gratitude to the medical team who cared for his wife and family, tell everyone the true story of Christmas peace in our midst.**

## ADVENT PARISH PRAYER FAMILY

Blessing on all our families this Advent and everyone praying! Thank you for your prayers. Bring in a Christmas card to the families you are praying for by Dec 18. If you don't have Christmas cards handy you can use the ones we have in the narthex. Everyone wants to know who was praying for them!



## CONGRATULATIONS

Blessing on the Carew and Sepe Families whose children were baptized at the 10:30 Mass on Dec 4. Fred and Sheena's son, Frederick Joseph Carew V (Freddie) and Anthony and Chris' daughter, Adrianna Maria Sepe were joyfully welcomed into the church by family and friends.

# Parish News

## PRAYERS FOR LIGHTING THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ADVENT CANDLE

**AT HOME (Assign readings among family member)**

**Reader #1:** Today is the third Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for God to send divine love and light into our dark world.

**Reader #2:** How does this happen?

**Reader #1:** 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.

**ALL:** *"Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us. Let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us, through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

**Reader #3:** A reading from the prophet Zephaniah: "Jerusalem, the time is coming, when it will be said to you: 'Don't be discouraged or grow weak from fear! The LORD your God wins victory after victory and is always with you. He celebrates and sings because of you, and he will refresh your life with his love.'"(Zephaniah 3:16-17)

**Reader #1:** We continue to wait for the coming of Jesus. Last Sunday, we began in the dark, and then we lit two candles. Today, on the third Sunday of Advent, we light three candles.

**First, second and third candles are lit. While this is being done, the following is read:**

**Reader #2:** Every week in Advent, we light another candle. Each candle that we light reminds us that the Light of the World will soon come to us in the human form of the baby Jesus, the Messiah who will show us the way back to God.

**ALL:** *The Messiah is on the way to us. As we prepare for his coming, may we repent of our sins. May we remember our baptisms with water. May we be ready to be baptized with God's Holy Spirit and fire. May we be ready to help our Lord proclaim the good news of God's love to all people, so that the world will be filled with joy. Amen.*

### Christmas Season Mass Schedule 2016-2017

#### Community Reconciliation

followed by Individual Confessions

Wednesday, December 14 .....7:00 p.m.

#### Weekday Masses - Residence Chapel

Tuesday, December 20 .....8:00 a.m.

Friday, December 23 .....7:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 27 .....NO MASS

Friday, December 30 .....NO MASS

#### Christmas Eve Masses

Saturday, December 24 .....4:30 p.m.

(with Bell Choir) .....7:30 p.m.

#### Christmas Day Mass

Sunday, December 25 .....10:30 a.m.

#### New Year's Eve

Saturday, December 31 .....5:30 p.m.

#### Solemnity of Mary - New Year's Day Masses

Sunday, January 1 .....8:00 a.m.

(with Bell Choir) .....10:30 a.m.

#### First Friday

Friday, January 6 .....No Holy Hour



### SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



After a particularly strong sermon on tithing, Pastor Johnson was surprised to see Henry, an old bachelor farmer, waiting for him after worship. "Pastor," said Henry, "I know I've not given as much to God as I should have, but I've decided to tithe this year." "God be praised" said Pastor Johnson. "May I ask what changed your heart, Henry?" "Well, your sermon got me to thinking that with the price of everything rising so much, I'd better commit to 10% before God raises the cost to 15%."

### PARENTING TUNE-UP

The purpose of Advent is not to shop but to learn to wait. Teaching your child to delay gratification is an important life skill. Perhaps this W.A.I.T. acronym could help: W-Waiting give us time to make a good decision or to buy the right thing. A-Anticipation can enhance appreciation. I-Instant gratification is often fleeting. T-Take stock of your blessings. What do you already have.

### MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

"Be patient, brothers and sisters...Do not complain about one another." (James 5:7-9). Preparation for Christmas can strain even the best relationships. Be gentle and patient with each other as you do the many tasks to prepare for Christmas. (Susan Vogt)

### STORE CARD SALES AFTER MASS

We hope to find someone willing to stay after Mass once a month at the Saturday 5:30 Mass and sell the store cards. It is an easy fundraiser for the church. And you would only need to do it once a month. To volunteer or get details see us after Mass or call the office.

### VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

#### Office Angels

Tues., December 13 A. Sawczuk

Wed., December 14 M. D'Avella

#### Store Cards

##### December 10 & 11

5:30 p.m.. B. Cestone

8:00 a.m. V. Hoffart

10:30 a.m. D. Hunt

##### December 17 & 18

5:30 p.m.. C. Crescenti

8:00 a.m. M. Kearns

10:30 a.m. S. Pojedinec

#### Church Center Plant Watering

Week of 12/11 L. Livoti

Week of 12/18 M. Cangelosi

#### Church Center Cleaning

December 16 Team B

December 23 Team C

#### Altar Flowers

December 10

December 17

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