

DECEMBER 6, 2020

People knew over a year in advance that the Pope was coming for a visit to America and the preparations began. Security, space limitations and requirements, protocols, crowd management, itineraries, invitations, regulations, and so much more was necessary to pull this event off effectively. It's not every day that we get a visit from such a prominent dignitary. Thought, effort, meticulous attention to detail and vision all are necessary to make this thing work. After all, he can't just show up in the ordinary and normal daily routines of life and catch people unprepared! Tickets have to be purchased, buses rented, hotel rooms reserved, and travel arrangements made early because it will be impossible to see him if we wait too long!

We do this kind of preparing not only for prominent religious figures but for political dignitaries, notable sports figures, people of fame, and even actors. If an individual intrigues us, we are going to want to do all we have to do to get a "good seat" in the house. Does Jesus Christ captivate this much of our attention? We are asked to prepare the way of the Lord and to do so not with frantic frenzy but patient enthusiasm. We do not have to stand on a street corner making profound announcements about God's coming or become overly zealous in our embrace of the Good News. Our task is quieter, more interior, captivating, and consuming. We are asked to change. We have to conduct our lives with holy devotion.

Is the cost of that ticket too much for you? Don't you want the "best seat" in the house? You don't want to miss Our Lord's arrival when he comes, do you? After all, if he comes while you are going about your daily routines without you even knowing, he may catch you off guard. Or, he may come in disguise looking like a beggar, a prisoner, migrant, refugee, or someone who is lost. Would you be ready to recognize him then? Preparing for the coming of Christ requires a change of mind, heart, and behavior. It is not adequate to simply do the things we always do. We want our lives to speak of the exciting news of Christ's coming and the joy that the Gospel brings. It has to do with our demeanor, values, priorities, choices, and how we structure daily routines. Of course, it involves sacrifice. All anticipations do! Are you excited, captivated, enthusiastic, and sitting on the edge of your seat eager to celebrate his coming among us at Christmas, and waiting for him to come again? If not, why not?

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Facebook

Our parish has created an official Facebook page and the address is <https://www.facebook.com/cathedralofaltoona> The link is found at the top of our parish's webpage. Our official page will gradually become a convenient way to keep people informed and post notices. (Please do not use the link at the bottom on the page.)

Jubilation to Share

Sometimes you have something to share with people that causes you to well up inside with excitement to the point of going crazy. A pregnancy test, a pay raise, a college acceptance, a wedding or engagement are all examples of moments in life when we might be bursting at the seams to tell somebody the good news. When we finally get the chance to tell somebody, joy just seems to flow through us with ease. We literally want the entire world to share in our jubilation.

When was the last time you shared with a friend or loved one how much your faith in Jesus means to you? You don't feel the same motivation to share? Are you not overwhelmed with a desire to spread the Good News?

Don't feel bad. You are not alone. As Christians, we often fail to grasp the powerful implications of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. We can become complacent and lose sight of what matters the most. That is when sharing with others about our faith seems uncomfortable.

Faith is a gift. As everyday stewards we are called to share with others what God has given us. Advent is a great time to grow in our faith and love of the Lord. The more we cultivate our faith and the closer we draw to Him, the more we will want to share about Him. We might not have the impact of John the Baptist in the course of human history, but our proclamation of the Gospel to another might be the gift that changes their history.

Open Positions

The following positions are available throughout the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese. To apply go to www.dioceseaj.org/employment. Administrative Assistant-Diocesan Human Resources/Children & Youth Protection Offices; Executive Director and Social Worker-Catholic Charities; Business Manager-Holy Name School; Custodian-St.Michael School;General Laborer-Church of the Transfiguration Parish; Music Director- Holy Family Parish; Pricipal-St. Patrick School; Kindergarten Teacher-St. Matthew School; Third Grade Teacher- All Saints School.

THE CHURCH OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN
THE CATHEDRAL
OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT

ONE CATHEDRAL SQUARE, ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA 16601-3315
CHURCH OFFICE: 814-944-4603

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS:

The process of formation for those seeking God through membership in the Catholic Christian community.

INFANT BAPTISM:

Arrange in advance for pre-baptismal instructions.

CONFIRMATION:

Ninth, tenth and eleventh grade students are invited to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process.

RECONCILIATION:

Wednesday: 7:00 PM, Saturday: 12:30 PM.
Communal Penance Services: Advent and Lent.

ANointing OF THE SICK:

Upon Request and Communal celebration

MARRIAGE:

Arrange nine months in advance. Couples expected to participate in pre-marriage preparation program.

DEVOTIONS:

Charismatic Prayer - Normally 3rd Monday of the Month
Eucharistic Adoration - First Wednesday - 12:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Eucharistic Day - Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

September through April: Pre-Kindergarten thru 12.
Sunday morning 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM
Pre-Kindergarten thru 8.
Sunday Evening 6:15 PM- 8:15 PM
Grades 9 thru 12.

WEB: WWW.ALTOONACATHEDRAL.ORG

FAX: 814-942-4337

E-MAIL: ALTCATHEDRAL@DIOCESEAJ.ORG

<https://www.facebook.com/cathedralofaltoona>

Sunday: 5:00 PM (Vigil)
8:00 AM
10:00 AM
12:00 Noon
5:00 PM

Holyday: 5:30 PM (Vigil)
8:00 AM
12:00 Noon
5:30 PM

Weekday: 6:45 AM
12:00 Noon
Saturday: 8:00 AM
12:00 Noon

Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, J.C.D., Bishop

Reverend Monsignor Stanley Carson, Administrator

Reverend Father Dennis M. Kurdziel, Parochial Vicar

CHRISTIAN INITIATION TEAM - 944-4603

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME - 944-4603

MAIL MINISTRY TO ELDERLY, HOMEBOUND,
SERIOUSLY SICK, AND GRIEVING - 944-4603

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
Web: www.holytrinitycatholic.school

Altoona Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 381-7011
Hollidaysburg Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 695-6112
Middle School Campus (Grades 5 thru 8) - 942-7835

BISHOP GUILFOYLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
Web: www.bishopguilfoyle.org - 944-4014

DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Chris Laraia - Pre-K thru 8 - 312-7317
Jean Koury - 9 thru 12 - 949-2777
Religious Education Office: Sundays - 943-7424

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY
Leslie C. Thayer, MM, CAGO
Music Ministry Office - 944-2044
E-mail: lthayer@dioceseaj.org

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA SINCE 1851

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 6, 2020

Readings: Is 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt 3 :8-14; Mk 1:1-8

MASS INTENTIONS

December 7, Monday: St. Ambrose, Bishop & Dr.

Readings: Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26

6:45AM All Priests (Annoymous)

12:00PM + Betty Capouellez Birthday (Family)

5:30PM + John Duffy (Lorraine Bienick)

December 8, Tuesday: Immaculate ConceptionBVM

Readings: Gn 3:9-15, 20/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

6:45 AM + Jane Davidson (Tom & Patricia Forr)

12:00 PM + Patricia Koeck (Vera Nazaruk Family)

5:30PM + Dorothy Berger(Kevin & Jane Byrne)

December 9, Wednesday: Saint Juan Diego

Readings: Is 40:25-31; Mt 11; 28-30

6:45 AM Susan Bauer (Children)

12:00PM + Madeline Vogel(Toots Rhoa and Girls)

December 10, Thursday: Advent Weekday

Readings: Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15

6:45 AM + Hilda Conrad (Dave & Pat Zeak)

12:00PM + Tillie Winkler Harris Ann. (Family)

December 11, Friday: Saint Damasus I, Pope

Readings: Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19

6:45 AM Rose Marie Fedeli (Family)

12:00PM + Deacon John Rys Birthday (Family)

December 12, Saturday: Our Lady of Guadalupe

Readings: Zec 2:14-17; Lk 1: 26-38

8:00AM + Bernard G. Plank Ann/Birthday (Family)

12:00PM + Fred & Margaret Lumadue (M/M Jack Sparks)

Vigil: THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Readings: Is 61:1-2, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

5:00PM + Helen Anderson (Mary Lysinger)

December, Sunday:

8:00AM + Dorothy Stephens (Rus & Mary Ann Pleva)

10:00AM + Todd Campbell (Ed & Lois Simanski)

12:00 PM + Paul Rose Birth. (Kathleen Rose Davies)

5:00 PM Pro Popolo/ For the People

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Radio Mass

Our parish's live radio Mass will be on Sunday, at 10:00 A.M. on WFBG 1290AM. We are pleased to be able to provide this service and we are grateful to our sponsors.

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOK

There are still a few copies of The Little Blue Book for the Advent and Christmas Season available at the entrances. The meditation booklets contain 6 minutes worth of reflections and prayers based upon Scripture and the feasts, customs, and symbols of Advent and Christmas. The handy pocket-sized booklet can be conveniently used in church, at home, or while waiting in an office.

Immaculate Conception

"Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing!" December 8th is one of our feasts celebrating Mary - the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. From the beginnings of the Church, spiritual writers and theologians have acknowledged the innocence and holiness of Mary. St. Irenaeus called her the "new Eve." Both faced with the pure freedom to accept or reject God, Mary began with work of redemption with her yes to Christ! The Church began to celebrate the feast of Mary's conception in the early Middle Ages. In 1854, Pope Pius IX infallibly declared that Mary was free of original sin from the first moment of her conception. On this feast day, we celebrate the beauty and goodness of Our Lady!

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Tuesday, December 8, is the **Solemn Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary**, normally a holy day of obligation, though due to the pandemic Bishop Mark has waived the obligation. A Mass will be celebrated here on Tuesday, December 7, at 5:30 PM and Masses on Tuesday, December 8, will be at 8:00 AM, Noon, and 5:30 PM.

Workbooks for Readers and Lectors

The new 2021 workbooks are now available after all the masses and also at the Parish Office during regular hours. Monday-Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Sunday, November 22, 2020 \$4,528.25

Sunday, November 29, 2020 \$6,560.00



Calendar of Prizes 2021 Are Here!

Calendar of prizes 2021 are being sold at the Cathedral Square Door after all masses starting this weekend. Each calendar costs \$20.00. There is a \$20.00 daily prize; an additional \$1,500.00 in special monthly prizes awarded throughout the year; and a grand prize of \$1,000.00. If you have a favorite three digit number, call the Parish Office at 814-944-4603 weekdays between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM to check for availability or stop by the Cathedral door after Mass on the weekends. These make great Christmas gifts and stocking stuffers.

Religious Ed PK-8

We will be collecting new hats, scarves, mittens, toys, and personal care items during Advent to be distributed to the Blair County Family Services Abuse Shelter. Collection will end on January 1st. Items may be taken to the Parish Main Office Mon-Fri 9-4:30 or to the former church baptistry before and after all Masses. Contact Chris Laraia at 814-312-7317 or claraia@dioceseaj.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your help with our program's Advent project.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

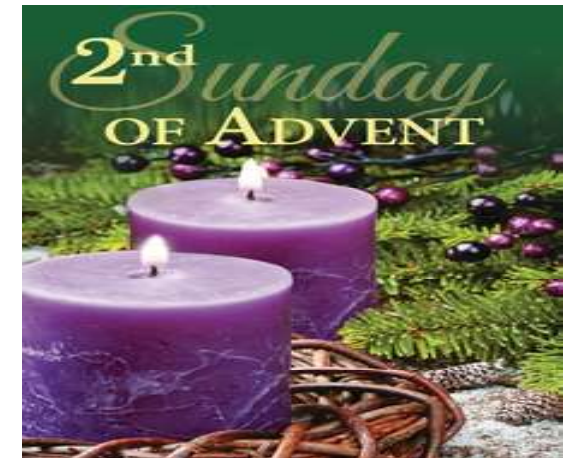
This year, we will have Masses on Christmas Eve at 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Our Masses on Christmas Day will be at Midnight, 8:00 AM and Noon.

Parish Council

The Parish Council Communication Committee would like to improve communications with parishioners and establish a better avenue to keep you informed of parish events. We would like to gather email addresses at this time. Please complete the form online at <https://forms.gle/hTCZaboAG4ZJb7nE6> or their are forms available in the church office during office hours. Completed forms can be returned through the Sunday offering or sent to the Parish Office.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

During Advent this year, since we are not able to have a Communal Celebration of the Sacrament, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available on Sundays at 4:00 P.M., Wednesdays at 7:00 PM and on Saturdays at 12:30 PM. The Sacrament will also be celebrated following the daily Masses the week of December 14.



Gospel Activity Sheets For Children

We now have "Growing with the Gospel" activity pamphlets for the children in gades Kindergarden to first grade, and also second to third grade. They are located on the table in the cross aisle. They are available for the children to take, it reflects on the Gospel of each Sunday.

Thank You

I would like to thank the following people that came in and helped with the Advent mailing: Mary Ann Bell, Patty McCloskey, Paula Miller, Grace and Bill Smith. It was greatly appreciated.

Pray For Our Sick

Remember our sisters and brothers who are weakened by illness in your prayers. Prayers are sometimes the best prescribed medicine.

VOTIVE CANDLES

The light signifies our prayer offered in faith coming into the light of God. With the light of faith, we petition our Lord in prayer, or petition a saint to pray with us and for us to the Lord. The light also shows a special reverence and our desire to remain present to the Lord in prayer even though we may depart and go about our daily business. The donation is \$4.00 per candle and the envelope can be placed in the weekend collection basket or put in the rectory door slot.