

## **DECEMBER 27, 2020**

Tragedy and disappointment are inevitable. What sees you through this? There will be challenges, changes, unexpected circumstances, interrupted plans, hurts, and injustices experienced by every human being at some point in their lives. We will be asked to adjust our plans, change course, and even encounter suffering and death. Where do we learn all of the lessons we need to live life well? Some of them we learn along the way but much of what we bring to life, positive and negative, comes from our early beginnings, our families. This is our early world and provides the blueprint for how we see the bigger, more inclusive world, which unfolds before us.

Our families of origin can be sources of grace, heartache or a combination of both. Families are intended to be pivotal in providing us with proper social structure and understanding, a support system, lessons about relationships and communication, and the unconditional acceptance and love we so desperately crave. They can also determine whether we have an accessible and healthy relationship with God. Many of life's challenges can literally bring us to our knees and require that we possess a strength of character that resides well beyond the superficialities of our world. At some point we will all need three coping gifts that can be given to us only by God: faith, hope, and love. Our families help us learn that we are not the ones responsible for their creation, but God!

Our experience of early family life colors all of our relationships and what we expect to achieve from life in general. Resolving conflicts, dealing with difficulty and suffering, celebrating accomplishments, prioritizing our needs, listening to God's call, understanding relationships, understanding disappointment, learning about the virtues and living a centered focused life are all lessons our families either succeed in teaching or do not. To succeed, as God has designed and ordered our world, is to discover his presence and then trust that Presence. The Holy Family can teach even the most dysfunctional family how to best use God's gifts of faith, hope, and love to find him and do his will. Their simple humble example is always before us, showing us the way. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

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### **Pray For Our Sick**

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

### **The Gift of Family**

What a year it has been! How will we speak of these times a decade from now? As time goes by, our impressions of this past year will certainly change. How we feel today about dealing with a killer virus and all the chaos surrounding that is still fresh for all. I would assume that most of us right now are also holding those we love a little closer and hugging them a little harder. Hopefully, even if the fears and concerns of 2020 dissipate in the future, the way we feel toward our family should never leave us.

Stewardship is certainly about everything. God has given us so much, great and small, profound and common. One of the greatest gifts that all have received is family. Families take all shapes and sizes and some look very different than others. For some, family is a caretaker or temporary guardian. For others it is a friend when everyone else seems to have vanished. The bottom line is that, to quote a song from many years ago, "people need people."

When God gave the world His only Son, the Incarnation did not come on a cloud or with a flash of light. He was born into a family. Jesus understood the gift of family all his life. Do you think that if having a family wasn't important God would have still included this in the plan of salvation?

As this year draws to a close, remember your stewardship many days begins and ends with the people closest to you. Don't misuse or take for granted this precious gift. God gives us gifts on purpose, even to His only begotten Son.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS  
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### **Prayer Shawls**

If you or anyone that you know would like to have a prayer shawl for comfort during a rough time please call the Parish Office at 814-944-4603 the hours are from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Also you may call Lorraine Beck at 814-942-7774.

### **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.

# **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](http://WWW.ALTOONACATHEDRAL.ORG)**

**FAX: 814-942-4337**

**E-MAIL: [ALTCATHEDRAL@DIOCESEAJ.ORG](mailto: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
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**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](http://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](http://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](mailto:lthayer@dioceseaj.org)**

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

# THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

December 27, 2020

## MASS INTENTIONS

December 28, Monday: The Holy Innocents, Martyr  
6:45 AM + John Hume (Jim & Steph Kilcoyne)  
12:00PM + John Luddy, Ann. (Patricia Batkiewicz)

December 29, Tuesday: St. Thomas Becket, Bp. Martyr  
6:45AM + Dave Berger Sr. (M/M Sante Bambocci)  
12:00PM + Annie Bayer, Ann. (Dan Bauer)

December 30 Wednesday: Sixth Day within Octave  
of the Nativity of the Lord  
6:45 AM + Amelia Seiler (Eileen & Bobby Civiello)  
12:00PM + Paul Weible, Ann. (Wife)

December 31, Thursday: Saint Sylvester I, Pope  
6:45AM Vocations (Anonymous)  
12:00PM Elizabeth Smith (Mary Lysinger)  
Vigil: Solemnity Of Mary, Mother of God  
5:30PM Geraldine Petrunak, Birthday (Family)

January 1, Friday: SOLEMNITY OF THE LORD  
8:00 AM + Barry Saletnik (Bill & Marie Crawford)  
12:00PM + Sr. Catherine Mary Malloy (ACCS Teachers)  
5:30 PM NO MASS

January 2, Saturday: Saint Basil the Great, and  
Saint Gregory Nazianzen  
8:00AM + Rose & Sam Benneti (Brian & Connie)  
12:00PM + Ernest Tomassetti (M/M Walter Tomassetti)  
Vigil: THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD  
5:00PM + Robert Beck (Kathy & Jack McGlinchey)

January 3, Sunday:  
8:00 AM + Betsy Cote (Jim & Elaine Weaver)  
10:00 AM + Kimberly Kokolis Moran, Ann. (Mom & Dad)  
12:00 PM + Kathleen Walcutt Birth. (Blazewicz Family)  
5:00 PM Pro Popolo/ For the People

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

You are invited to spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament from after the noon Mass on Wednesday, January 6th, until after the 7:00 P.M. confessions. There is a sign-up sheet on the table at the center of the cathedral.

### Readings for the week of December 27, 2020

**Sunday:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1] or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [7a, 8a]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

**Monday:** 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18

**Tuesday:** 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 [11a]/Lk 2:22-35

**Wednesday:** 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 [11a]/Lk 2:36-40

**Thursday:** 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13 [11a]/Jn 1:1-18

**Friday:** Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 [2a]/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

**Saturday:** 1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [3cd]/Jn 1:19-28

**Next Sunday:** Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 [cf. 11]/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

### Distraction During Prayer

I get annoyed with myself when I am distracted while I pray. Is it a sin? How can I be more attentive?

The mind is a marvelous and complex thing, producing amazing thoughts, images, wisdom and inspiration. Yet at times it is like a two-year-old: it does not follow directions, does what it wants and loves to tell us "no!" This is probably the oldest and most common problem in the spiritual life-dealing with distraction. It comes in all forms: good intentions forgotten, wandering thoughts at Mass, daydreaming, etc. A little poem says it all: When the soul begins to pray, the brain always wants to play!

There are many ways to handle distractions. If we are distracted by thoughts about our families or friends, we should pray for them. If we lose our focus, we need just "re-collect" ourselves. If some worry or concern just won't leave our mind, then we deal with it and come back to prayer or make it part of our prayer. And when words just won't come, the only prayer we might offer is our presence, our suffering, and our desire to be close to the Lord. Most importantly, we need to be patient with ourselves. These things are not sinful, but reminders of our human frailty. Our weaknesses and good efforts are all acceptable to God, who reads the love in our hearts and the good intentions of our minds. ©LPi

### Office Closed

The Parish Office will be closed, Friday January 1st. We will be back in the office Monday, January 4th. We hope that everyone has a Happy New Year!

### OFFERTORY COLLECTION Sunday, December 20, 2020 \$

### 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.

### Spiritual Communion Prayer

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I Love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen!

### Nocturnal Adoration

Will take place at Saint Rose of Lima Church on Friday, January 8, 2021, from 8:00 PM to 11:00 PM.

*Mary, Mother of God*

### 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.)

### Marriage Prep Class

We will be having a marriage prep class on Saturday, January 9th, 2021 in the Cathedral Hall from 9:00 AM till 1:00 PM. We will be doing social distancing. **Masks** are required.

### Baptismal Prep Class Scheduled

There is a Baptismal Prep class scheduled for January 5th, at 6:30 PM in the Cathedral Parish Center Education Room on 14th Street entrance. **Masks** are required. Need not wait till the baby is due.

### Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Joseph serve as the ultimate example of true discipleship and stewardship. They give without measure. Christian stewards are called to "give thanks to God" as we offer our gifts in the "peace of Christ."

We are called to offer everything we have in faith as an offering to God, in the name of the Lord Jesus. This leads to fruits of love, trusts, accountability, and generosity. Good stewards see the evidence of God in all things, small and large. (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response Response in a Nutshell*, Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS, [www.4LPi.com](http://www.4LPi.com)) Can others see the evidence of your good stewardship?

### Joy to the world? Yep

Father Ron Rohlheiser wrote this about Christmas..." Christmas doesn't rid the world of evil...there will still be sickness, senseless hurt, broken dreams, and cold, lonely seasons when love is far away. Christmas doesn't promise heaven on earth...it promises us...here on earth...God's presence in our lives." One might add that Christmas won't rid the world of a pandemic, but as Christians we are convinced that "God's presence is still in our lives."

There is reason for joy in the world because God's abiding presence provides strength to medical professionals and caregivers. God's presence has been experienced through Word and Sacrament. God's presence is also a welcomed guest in so many homes. God's presence has been felt because favors have been done, children have been taught, the sick have been helped, and the dying have been given the hope of eternal glory. We live in a world where a good and loving God accompanies us even when we encounter evil. Jesus, God with us, helps carry our burdens, shares in our joys, and embraces us with a deep and faithful love. I pray that the Holy Spirit will bring you the gift of some joy this Christmas. May you, and those you love, have a few experiences that bring relief to your heart and delight to your homes. God has kept His promise to remain with us always and that's reason enough to be glad. Merry Christmas and Blessings for the New Year.

---Msgr. Stan Carson