

Parish Leader and DRE:
Deacon Randy Smith
330-323-5904

Office/ St. Mary Site:
1602 Market Ave. S.,
Canton, OH 44707
330-453-2110
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Monday - Friday

St. Benedict Site:
2207 Third St. SE.,
Canton, OH 44707

**Sunday Eucharistic
Celebrations:**
8 a.m.
St. Mary Worship Site

11 a.m.
St. Benedict
Worship Site

**Weekday Eucharistic
Celebration:**
8:30 a.m.
Wednesday & Friday
St. Mary Worship Site

**Liturgy of the Word
with Communion:**
8:30 a.m.
Tuesday & Thursday
St. Mary Worship Site

Facilities Manager:
Shawn Roush

Sacristan:
Brenda Jones

Secretary:
Christine Freese

CCD Principal:
Lee Ann Smith
330-575-0918

Website:
StMary-StBenedict.com

Email:
OfficeStM-StB@sbglobal.net

Facebook:
St Mary/St Benedict
Catholic Church



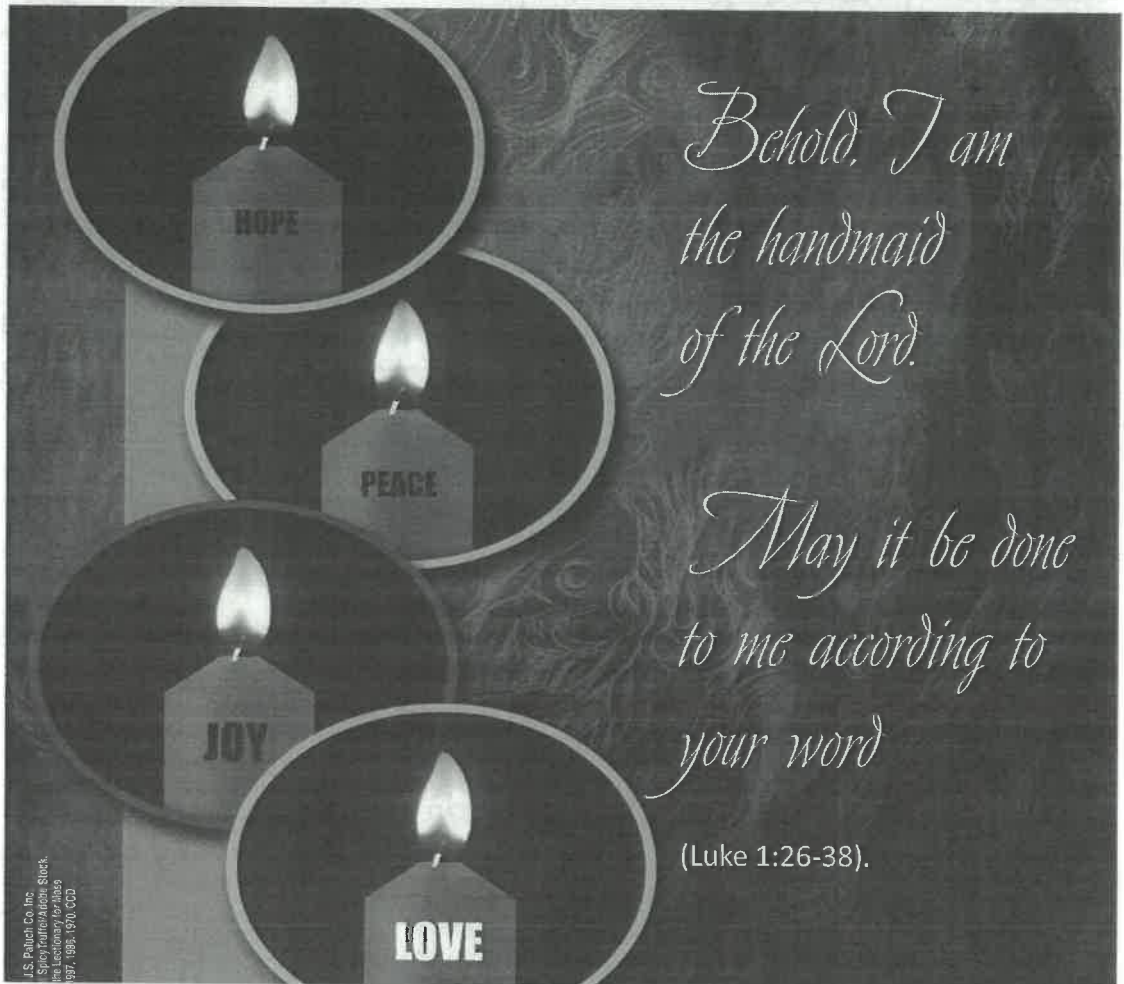
St. Mary/St. Benedict Parish Family

One Parish, One Mission

MISSION STATEMENT: We are people of God, celebrating our faith as a parish. With diverse roots and unique talents, we strive to live our baptismal commitment to love and serve God and neighbor. As we gather in prayer and worship to praise our Lord, we share a communion of faith, grace and service. We endeavor to live as Christians by reaching out to our brothers and sisters, proclaiming the Word, demonstrating compassion, and by sharing our faith through evangelization in order to make our parish a community of love and service.

DECEMBER 20, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



*Behold, I am
the handmaid
of the Lord.*

*May it be done
to me according to
your word*

(Luke 1:26-38).

King David wished that the ark of God might have a more permanent home. David may have envisioned something like the cedar palace where he resided. God had in mind something more: a throne where David's descendants would rule for ever, a kingdom where Jews and Gentiles alike would be welcome.




Mary's prayerful nature led to an even more disturbing message. She would conceive and bear a Son though she was not yet married. "How can this come about?" Mary wondered. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you," she was told (Luke 1:35).

Mary's acceptance of this difficult challenge ushered in this, the final age of God's reign. What was once a secret known only by chosen people like King David and his descendants must now be made clear to all so that, as Saint Paul wrote to the Romans, we can be brought to the "obedience of faith" "according to the command of the eternal God" (Romans 16:26).

YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN
A GREAT Gift...
A WONDERFUL LIFE
IN *Christ*

With a full heart, we open our arms to you in friendship. We're honored to share this day with you as we worship God. We hope that the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and other events posted on our website and Facebook page will touch your heart and that you experience a sense of peace. We also hope you'll continue in the knowledge that St. Mary/St. Benedict parish is a home away from home. Deacon Randy is always available to you. You're welcome to contact him directly: 330 323 5904.

Thank you for your patience & understanding and complying with the different changes in place due to the Pandemic.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December 20 MASS: 8am @ St. M & 11am @ St. B. FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Blessing of Expectant Couples VISIT WITH SANTA! Drive-Thru 5-7pm @ St. M Decorate St. Benedict Site	December 21 WINTER BEGINS	December 22 Liturgy of the Word & Communion 8:30am @ St. Mary	December 23 MASS 8:30am @ St. Mary	December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS 4PM @ St. B. 	December 25 NATIVITY OF THE LORD MASS 9AM @ St. B. 	December 26
December 27 MASS: 8am @ St. M & 11am @ St. B. HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY Blessing of Families	December 28	December 29 Liturgy of the Word & Communion 8:30am @ St. Mary	December 30 MASS 8:30am @ St. Mary	December 31 Liturgy of the Word & Communion 8:30am @ St. Mary	January 1 FEAST OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD MASS 9 a.m. @ St. Mary 	January 2
January 3 MASS: 8am @ St. M & 11am @ St. B. EPIPHANY	January 4	January 5 Liturgy of the Word & Communion 8:30am @ St. Mary	January 6 MASS 8:30am @ St. Mary	January 7 Liturgy of the Word & Communion 8:30am @ St. Mary	January 8 MASS 8:30am @ St. Mary	January 9 FOOD DISTRIBUTION Starting 9am @ St. M



UPCOMING!

Confessions: First Sunday of the month. (January 3rd) After the 8am Mass and before the 11am Mass

Special Year dedicated to St. Joseph!

JANUARY 1ST - Mass - "Mary, Mother of God"

JANUARY 3RD - EPIPHANY

ONLINE GIVING IS COMING!
 Making donating simple, safe, and secure.

Parishioners who make regular giving a priority say:

"You grow up attending Mass every Sunday with your mom and dad, going to religious education classes, receiving the sacraments. One of my earliest memories was being in the crying room with my dad. But, suddenly, you find yourself married with a child. It's your turn to pass on the faith, to help them nurture that relationship with Jesus Christ. I thank God every day that I have a whole faith community to help me do it. That's why I give to my parish." ~Aaron L.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday:** Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
- Tuesday:** 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8abcd; Lk 1:46-56
- Wednesday:** Mal 3:1-4, 23-34; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66
- Thursday:** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
- Friday:** Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
 Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
- Saturday:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
- Sunday:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3; Ps 128:1-5 or Ps 105:1-6, 8-9; Col 3:12-21 [12-17] or Hb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]

3rd Sunday of ADVENT



LOVE

ADVENT CANDLES

The last purple candle is called the "Angel's Candle." It represents peace.

Dear Jesus, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts.

As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Our hearts are open to you, Jesus. Amen.

Shepherd on the Search

A good young shepherd (along with his trusted friends) are searching for the new born baby Jesus. Will you help him? Please track his journey by going to our parish Facebook page.

A Prayer for Pregnant Mothers:

O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers. Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help us become instruments of God's love and compassion. Mary, Mother of the Church, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life. Amen.

Christmas Eve Mass
Thursday, December 24th
4 p.m. at St. Benedict Site

Christmas Day Mass
Friday, December 25th
9 a.m. at St. Benedict Site

Feast of the Holy Family
Sunday, December 27th
Regularly scheduled Masses include blessing of Families

New Year's Feast of Mary, Mother of God
Friday, January 1st
9 a.m. at St. Mary Site

2nd Sunday of Christmas
January 3rd
Regularly scheduled Masses

PRO-LIFE STARK COUNTY OHIO

www.usccb.org/committees/pro-life-activities/secretariat-pro-life-activities

Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) Here are key facts:

7. PPFA is *not* "pro-choice" for women. In light of the failure of contraceptive programs to reduce unintended pregnancies or abortions, PPFA has increasingly "promoted" LARCs (long-acting reversible contraceptives)—implantables, injectables, and intrauterine devices—that can sterilize women for months or years at a time. These now make up over 35% of its contraceptive services. Most women had rejected these methods in the past due to their inflexibility and side effects . . . LARCs disregard a woman's own changing reproductive goals, and IUDs and implants cannot be discontinued by women without medical assistance. PPFA has even abandoned "prochoice" as a slogan, insisting instead that contraception and abortion are basic "health care" that all women need access to -- whether women ask for that or not.

! RECORDS UPDATE !

THANK YOU to all the families who have already responded! The effort you have taken is greatly appreciated. To those who have not yet submitted the form, remember there are two important goals to achieve with this initiative. 1: reaching out to individuals during these difficult times. 2: Fixing gaps to maintain accurate records. **PLEASE NOTE:** children are registered under their parents until the age of 21. Once they have reached maturity they need to formally register under their own name.

We are asking that all members provide their information, and return the completed form to the parish office.

NOTE: The information provided is for internal purposes ONLY.



COME ONE COME ALL!

WE WILL BE VISITED BY SANTA SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20TH
All are invited to **DRIVE-THRU** St. Mary's parking lot between

5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Santa and his friends will be giving out a special gift bag of treats to the first 150 children. Safety precautions will be in effect. If there are any questions contact Deacon Randy.

WOULD YOU LIKE THE BULLETIN EMAILED OR MAILED?

Would you or someone you know like to receive the bulletin? Contact the parish office today!

MASS OF ORDINATION

On November 17, 2020 Pope Francis appointed **Reverend J. Bonnar** the sixth Bishop of Youngstown. The Mass of Ordination and Installation will take place on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Due to limitations imposed by the pandemic, you are invited to watch the ceremony via live stream on the diocesan website at doy.org/media/cathedral. A rebroadcast on ETC-Ecumenical Television Channel is scheduled on Thursday, January 14th at 12:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, January 16th at 12:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

BIRTHDAYS

We will be posting birthday blessings each month to parishioners 90 years old and above. Send a card if you are able. NOTE: Contact parish office if you do not want your name listed.



FOR BODY & SPIRIT

- | | |
|---|--|
| FOR YOUR BODY | FOR YOUR SPIRIT |
| Wash your hands often. | Make an act of Spiritual Communion. |
| Avoid close contact with other people. | Pray the Rosary. |
| Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. | Participate in a televised or live-stream Mass. |
| Stay home of you are sick (expect to receive medical care). | Take time for family prayer. |
| Cover coughs & sneezes/Wear a mask. | Practice Lectio Divina. |
| | Don't forget to help your parish with donations. |

STEWARDSHIP

We are about to receive one of the most mysterious gifts: the gift of God's Son in the form of a baby. God could have come to us in any other way, but he chose to become human. Recalling the struggles in Jesus' life as a human, he could have easily stopped preaching and setting an example of the Father's will, but he persisted. He did this for us simply because he loves us. Jesus is the ultimate steward because he recognized the gifts from his Father and shared them freely with others. How do we live our lives in this way?

2021 MARCH FOR LIFE AND RELATED EVENTS

The March for Life in Washington D.C. is expected to proceed as scheduled on Friday, January 29th. This year's theme is **"Together Strong, Life Unites!"** EWTN will be televising the March for Life including the Pre-Rally Concert, the Rally Program as well as the March itself. For more information go to <https://marchforlife.org/national-march-for-life/>.

Masses for Life in the Diocese of Youngstown: Each will include the special *Blessing of Children in the Womb*.

Sunday, January 24 at 11:00 a.m. in the Barrette Center at Walsh University, 2020 E. Maple St., North Canton. (Note: COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate a change of venue. Contact the Office of Pro-Life, Marriage and Family Life at the Diocese of Youngstown.)

Friday, January 29 at 12:10 p.m. at St. Columba Cathedral, followed by a local "March for Life" at 1:00 p.m. sponsored by Right to Life of Mahoning County, which will include a prayerful vigil at the Thomas D. Lambros Federal Building at 125 Market St., Youngstown. For more information call 330-799-6160.

Sunday, January 31 at 4:00 p.m. at St. Columba Cathedral, Youngstown. Contact dschmidt@youngstowndiocese.org or 330-744-8451 ext. 272.

RETREAT DAY

Marriage Preparation Engaged Couple Retreat Day The next diocesan-sponsored one-day marriage preparation retreat day for engaged couples will be held **Sat., January 9, 2021 at St. Columba Cathedral Hall,** Youngstown. **Reservations are required.** Social distancing protocols will be followed. Registration information may be found at www.doy.org; go to the "Ministries" drop-down menu and press on "Pro-Life, Marriage & Family Life." For more information on these, and other opportunities for marriage preparation formation, contact dschmidt@youngstowndiocese.org or 330-744-8451, ext.272

RECONCILIATION OPPORTUNITIES

(EACH CHURCH OFFERS "BY APPOINTMENT" AS WELL AS THE SET TIMES.)

St. Mary/St. Benedict: First Sunday of the month. after the 8am Mass at St. Mary and before the 11am Mass at St Benedict.

Little Flower, North Canton: Every 2nd & 4th Saturday, 2:30-3:30pm

Queen of Heaven, Green: Friday, 9-9:30am, Saturday, 3:15- 4:15pm

St. Anthony/All Saints: Saturday, 3-3:45pm

St. Joan of Arc, Canton: Saturday, 12pm

St. Joseph, Canton: Saturday, 3 pm

St. Joseph, Massillon: Saturday, 3 pm

St. Mary, Massillon: Saturday, 11 am (School, canopy entrance)

St. Michael the Archangel: Sat., 11am - 12pm

St. Paul, North Canton: Saturday, 8:30am

St. Philip & James, Canal Fulton:

Wednesdays 5:30pm; Saturdays 10am

Walsh University Chapel:

Monday - Friday: 11- 11:30am

Sunday: 10:30am or 7:30pm



Pope Francis proclaims "YEAR OF ST JOSEPH"

(see full article: [Vatican News](#))

In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris corde* ("With a Father's Heart") Pope Francis has proclaimed a special "Year of St Joseph," beginning on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception 2020 and extending to the same feast in 2021. The Letter marks the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church...

The Holy Father wrote *Patris corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of "ordinary" people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, "the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence," who nonetheless played "an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

Pope Francis says that St Joseph also teaches us "the value, the dignity and the joy of ...one's own labour and how to trust.

Joseph stands out, therefore, as an exemplary figure for our time, in a world that "needs fathers," and not "tyrants"...

In his letter, Pope Francis notes how, "Every day, for over forty years, following Lauds [Morning Prayer]" he has "recited a prayer to Saint Joseph ...This prayer, he says, expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph," on account of its closing words: **"My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do every-thing with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power."**

At the conclusion of his Letter, he adds another prayer to St Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together:

**Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.**

**Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy,
and courage, and defend us
from every evil.
Amen.**

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING 101

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In the following brief reflections, we highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of Catholic social tradition.

THE DIGNITY OF WORK & THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS: The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected - the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Mass or Sanctuary Candle Intentions:

A beautiful way to honor your loved ones.

Thank you for the
\$10 stipend per request.

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 20, 2020—8 am

+Gladys Weekley

+Gordon Rodocker

Offered by Shari & Roger Rodocker

Sunday, December 20, 2020—11 am

**Living & Deceased of the
Altar Rosary Society**

+Joan & Dale Wardle

Offered by Cynthia Schiltz

Wednesday, December 23, 2020 —8:30 am

+Catherine Tinlin

Offered by Pat Koller

Thursday, December 24, VIGIL—4pm

**Deceased of the Smith,
Langenfeld, Girt Families**

Friday, December 25, CHRISTMAS—9am

+Gabe & Lois Cuenot

Offered by Rick & Debbie Cuenot

+Helen & Martin Lehotay

Offered by Roger & Dorothy Vincent

Sunday, December 27, 2020—8 am

+Cornell Matronia

Offered by Matronia Family

**+Louise Taylor
& Robert Lee Taylor**

Sunday, December 27, 2020—11 am

+Robert Risaliti

Offered by Andrea Harrison & Family

+Sam & Betty Flott

SANCTUARY CANDLE

December 20th-27th—St. Mary

+Norris Family

Offered by Family

December 20th-27th—St. Benedict

+Michael Corbett

Offered by Ruth Chipko

REAL REASON The Diocese's Guidelines asks that everyone please wear face coverings when at Mass or at Parish Events. The wearing of face coverings by all liturgical ministers, especially during the distribution of Holy Communion is being observed. Please keep trying your best to stay six feet apart when choosing the pew to sit in. **Above all, stay focused on the real reason we are at Mass: Your relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the cross and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.**

Dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass (especially those who are sick, or at high risk of becoming sick) continues to be in effect until further notice. Thankfully, there are numerous digital and televised opportunities for viewing Mass and participating in Spiritual Communion.

BAPTISM: Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as members of Christ. We are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission. Parents (when possible Godparents as well) are asked to attend a class of preparation. Scheduled as needed.

CONFESSION: 1st Sunday of the Month or by appointment. First Sundays: directly after the 8 am Mass at St. Mary's and before the 11 am Mass at St. Benedict's.

CONFIRMATION: The reception of this Sacrament is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace and enriches one with special strength of the Holy Spirit. We combine preparation with St. Anthony/All Saints. CONFIRMATION FOR 2020-2021 IS SET FOR 7PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 27TH AT ST. JOAN OF ARC PARISH. Please contact Deacon Randy.

CRY ROOM: To maintain the sanctity of the Mass, you are asked to take advantage of this special space. Clean, well lit and you are still able to be part of the celebration.

FAITH FORMATION: is a commitment by all baptized Catholics to lifelong learning and openness to grow in knowledge of the faith. Suggestions: Youth Religious Ed, RCIA, Bible study group; books, CD's; Catholic Radio; talk with our Deacon Randy or a priest; read your Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and pray always.

HOSPITAL CALLS: Please notify the Parish office when your loved one is hospitalized. Due to HIPAA privacy laws, hospitals do not notify us. Please understand that the office message system is not connected to private cell numbers. You are also welcome to call Deacon Randy directly.

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS at this time, all processions have been stopped. A basket at the front of the church for Offertory donations can be found at the entrance of the church. You also have the option of mailing the envelopes.

RCIA: The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a formal process developed for prospective candidates to introduce aspects of Catholic beliefs and practices. Anyone seeking instruction in the Catholic faith, or who has questions about celebrating sacraments they missed, is welcome and encouraged to call Deacon Randy.

VOCATIONS: Discerning a vocation to the priesthood or religious life? Contact Fr. Scott Kopp 330-744-8451 skopp@youngstowndiocese.org or Deacon Randy Smith.

PASCHAL BANQUET: CCC 1382-1390

To receive communion is to receive Christ himself. The altar is the symbol of Christ, present in the midst of the assembly of his faithful, both as the victim offered and as food from heaven who is giving himself to us. To respond to this invitation we must prepare ourselves for so great a moment. The faithful should observe the fast required. Bodily demeanor, clothing—ought to convey the respect, solemnity and joy of this moment. We are strongly urged to examine our consciences, and if aware of grave sin, seek the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving communion. If in doubt, Spiritual Reception of the Eucharist is a perfectly legitimate alternative.



December 13th

Information not available
at time of printing

We wish to sincerely thank you for your support of divine worship, and Apostolic works of charity. Your help also sustains our Diocesan clergy and religious.



The intentions of the Pope:
For a Life of Prayer.
We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

May our Bishop-elect enjoy good health of mind and body to serve the diocese faithfully.

All affected by the Pandemic

All affected by
natural disasters

The end to blind hate
and violence

All sick & shut-ins
of our parish family

All parish family members
who are, or are about to be,
hospitalized

All recently departed
parish family members

All our beloved enrolled
in the perpetual
memorial fund

Prayer Chain:
Please speak with
Sue Ritzert 330-488-0721
or the parish office.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 20, 2020

Blessing of a Christmas Tree

Christmas is almost here! Have you blessed your Christmas tree yet?

According to custom, the Christmas tree is set up just before Christmas and may remain in place until the Solemnity of Epiphany. The lights of the tree are illuminated after the prayer of blessing.

In the home the Christmas tree may be blessed by a parent or another family member, in connection with the evening meal on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time on Christmas Day.

When all have gathered, a suitable song may be sung. The leader makes the sign of the cross, and all reply "Amen."

The leader may greet those present in the following words:

Let us glorify Christ our light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and forever.

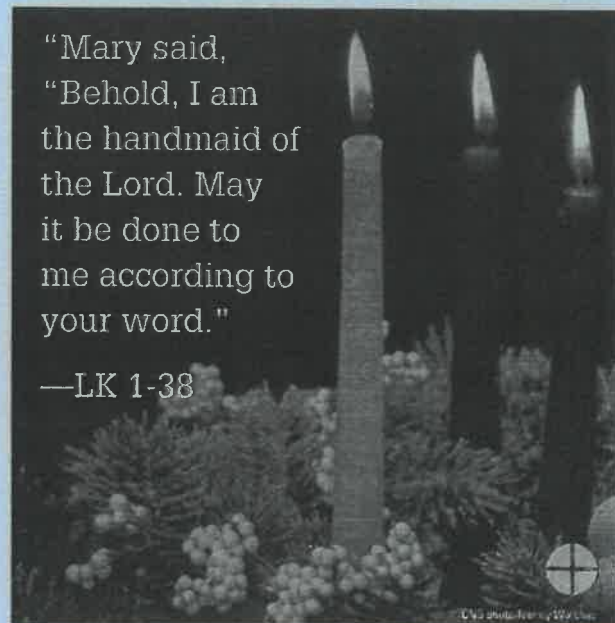
R/. Amen.

In the following or similar words, the leader prepares those present for the blessing:

My brothers and sisters, amidst signs and wonders Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea: his birth brings joy to our hearts and enlightenment to our minds. With this tree, decorated and adorned, may we welcome Christ among us; may its lights guide us to the perfect light.

"Mary said,
"Behold, I am
the handmaid of
the Lord. May
it be done to
me according to
your word."

—LK 1-38



One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Titus 3:4 (lines 4-7) or Ezekiel 17:22 (lines 22-24 4; I will plant a tender shoot on the mountain heights of Israel.)

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

The intercessions are then said. The leader says:

Let us ask God to send his blessing upon us and upon this

sign of our faith in the Lord.

R/. Lord, give light to our hearts.

That this tree of lights may remind us of the tree of glory on

which Christ accomplished our salvation, let us pray to the

Lord. R/.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

That the joy of Christmas may always be in
our homes, let

us pray to the Lord. R/.

That the peace of Christ may dwell in our
hearts and in the

world, let us pray to the Lord. R/.

After the intercessions the leader invites all
present to say the Lord's Prayer.

The leader says the prayer with hands joined:

Lord our God,

we praise you for the light of creation:

the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.

We praise you for the light of Israel:

the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the
Scriptures.

We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:

he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of
Peace,

who fills us with the wonder of your love.

Lord God,

let your blessing come upon us

as we illumine this tree.

May the light and cheer it gives

be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.

May all who delight in this tree

come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

The lights of the tree are then illuminated.

The leader concludes the rite by signing
himself or herself with the sign of the cross
and saying:

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace
and joy, now

and forever.

R/. Amen.

The blessing concludes with a verse from
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;

disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to thee, O Israel.

—*From Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers*

