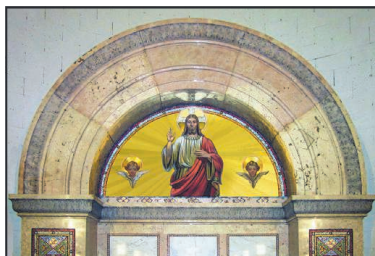


# The Catholic Community of Rankin and Swissvale

## MADONNA DEL CASTELLO PARISH

2021 S. Braddock Avenue • Swissvale, PA 15218

December 3, 2017



## Word of God Catholic Parish

7446 McClure Avenue • Swissvale, PA 15218

Administrative Office: 2021 S. Braddock Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15218

### MASS SCHEDULE

<b>Daily:</b>	<b>Monday (Madonna)</b> .....	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>
	<b>Tuesday (Word of God)</b> .....	<b>9:30 A.M.</b>
	<b>Wednesday (Madonna)</b> .....	<b>8:00 A.M.</b>
	<b>Thursday (Word of God)</b> .....	<b>9:30 A.M.</b>
	<b>Friday (Madonna)</b> .....	<b>8:00 A.M.</b>
	<b>Saturday (Word of God)</b> .....	<b>9:30 A.M.</b>
	<b>Saturday Vigil (Madonna)</b> .....	<b>4:00 P.M.</b>
	<b>Saturday Vigil (Word of God)</b> .....	<b>6:00 P.M.</b>
	<b>Sunday (Word of God)</b> .....	<b>9:00 A.M.</b>
	<b>Sunday (Madonna)</b> .....	<b>11:00 A.M.</b>

*Consult the bulletin for Holy Day and Holiday Mass schedule*

### PARISH STAFF

Fr. John Lynam .....	<i>Pastor</i>
Keith Kondrich .....	<i>Deacon</i>
Ron Demblowski .....	<i>Deacon/Pastoral Associate</i>
Edward Kapsha .....	<i>Madonna Music Director</i>
Michael Burke .....	<i>Word of God Music Director</i>
Kelly James .....	<i>Madonna Parish Secretary</i>
Karen Flynn .....	<i>Word of God Parish Secretary</i>
Marcia Murello .....	<i>Coordinator of Religious Ed.</i>

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday, 12:00 Noon  
(Word of God church)

### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Contact the Parish Office  
for an appointment

### SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Contact the Parish Office  
for an appointment at least  
6 months before the wedding

### SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Available after Mass  
and upon request

### CONTACT INFORMATION

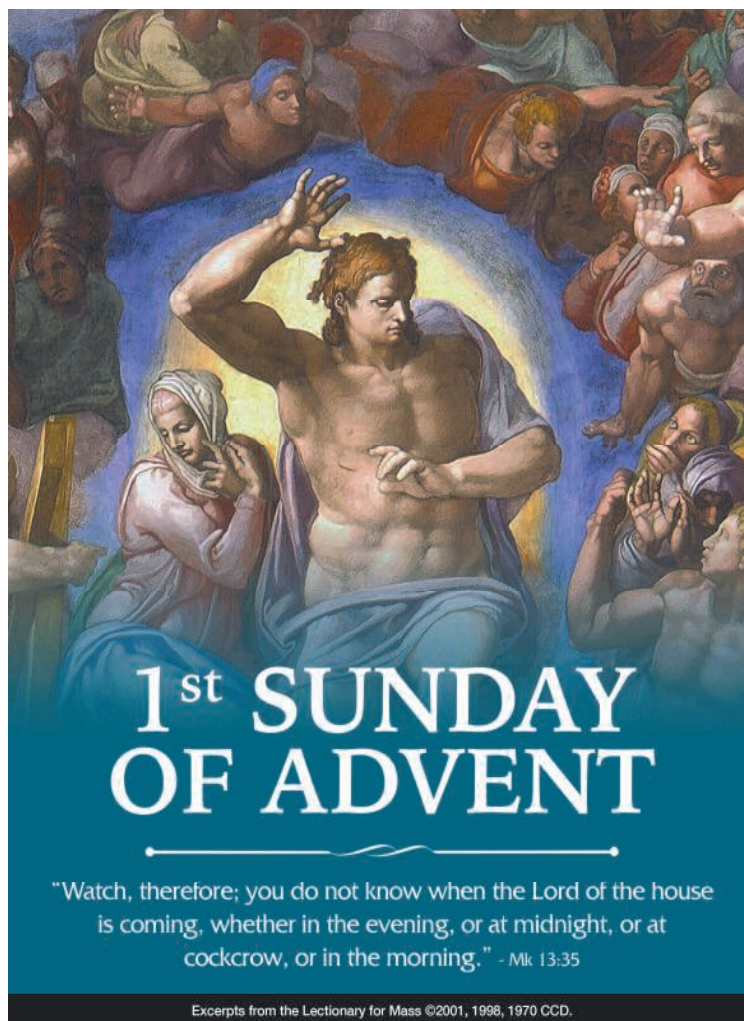
Parish Office (Madonna) .....	412-271-5666
Parish Office (Word of God) .....	412-241-1372
Parish Office Fax .....	412-271-2335
Religious Education Office .....	412-271-5666
Music Ministry (Madonna) .....	EKAPD5965@gmail.com
Bp. Dattilo Social Hall .....	412-271-3959
Madonna Website .....	www.madonnadelcastello.org
Madonna Email .....	madonnadelcastello1920@gmail.com
Word of God Email .....	wordofgod1994@gmail.com
Church Street Convent .....	412-271-3346
Parish Prayer Line .....	412-804-8858

East Catholic School ..... 412-351-5403 || 2001 Ardmore Blvd., Pgh., PA 15221 | |

Sr. Judith Stojhovic, RSM ..... *Principal* || School Website ..... | www.eastcatholicschool.org |

*A member of the East Catholic School Consortium*

**Bulletin Deadline Monday at Noon.**



### A NOTE FROM FATHER JOHN

**Thank you** to the Kutch and the Nied Funeral Homes for donating calendars.

**Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb:** Such a blessing sustains the parents by imparting grace and comfort in time of concern and need, unites the parish in prayer for the unborn child, and fosters respect for human life within society. The blessing will be given after all Masses on the weekend of December 9th & 10<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the parish office by noon on Thursday, December 7th to request the blessing and indicate which Mass you plan to attend.

† † † †



**Thanks to you**, three needy households from Word of God and five households from Madonna were provided Thanksgiving meals. May God bless you.

**Our Lady of Guadalupe Talk—The Secret of Her Eyes-Wed., Dec. 6, 7:00 p.m.,** St. Paul Seminary, 2900 Noblestown Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15205. The cost is \$10. For more info. call 412-337-7268 or check the webpage of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org).

**Our Lady of Guadalupe Prayers-Tues., Dec. 12, 8:30 a.m., Word of God Church.** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary, Litany of the Blessed Virgin, Prayer to the Virgin of Guadalupe, and Benediction. **Mass follows at 9:30 a.m.**



### WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS

#### Saturday Vigil - December 2

4:00 PM Gennaro Donofrio (Angie Cheyne-Bottles)  
6:00 PM For the People

#### First Sunday of Advent - December 3

9:00 AM Priscilla Keller (James & Melinda Edwards)  
11:00 AM Zenone Family (Mafalda Zenone)

#### Monday - December 4 - St. John Damascene

7:00 PM Beloved Deceased of the Bonacci & Martin Families (John & Janice Bonacci)

#### Tuesday - December 5

9:30 AM Cecelia Stecik (Bernie Stecik)

#### Wednesday - December 6 - St. Nicholas

8:00 AM Carl & Carmella Scaramucci (John Scaramucci, MD)

#### Thursday - December 7 - St. Ambrose

9:30 AM Edwin Goldbach (Vigil Ministers)

#### Thursday - December 7- Vigil - Immaculate Conception

6:00 PM (W) Dec. of Burkovich & Urban Families (Karen & Michael Burke)

#### Friday - December 8 - Immaculate Conception

8:00 AM (M) For the People  
7:00 PM (M) Peggy Crombie (Ed & Dan Harrington)

#### Saturday - December 9 - St. Juan Diego

9:30 AM Gwen Poland (Jeanine Saunders)

#### Saturday Vigil - December 9

4:00 PM For the People  
6:00 PM Audrey Morgan (Colleen Redinger & Family)

#### Second Sunday of Advent - December 10

9:00 AM Margaret Rengers (Library & Gift Shop Committee)  
11:00 AM John & Stella King (Daughter, Miriam King)

### THIS WEEK

#### Saturday

3:30 PM to 7:30 PM - Gift Shop open - Parish Center

#### Sunday - Parish Family Socials

9:00 AM to 11:00 AM - Gift Shop open - Parish Center

#### Monday

6:30 PM Word of God Choir Rehearsal - Word of God

#### Wednesday

10:30 AM Legion of Mary—Swissvale Towers  
7:00 PM to 8:00 PM - Sunday Scripture Sharing Madonna

#### Thursday

7:00 PM Ladies of Charity-Word of God Parish Center

#### Friday - Immaculate Conception of the Bl. Virgin Mary

1:30 PM Hi Rise Mass—Swissvale Towers Community Room

#### Saturday

12:00 PM Reconciliation - Word of God Parish  
5:00 PM to 7:30 PM - Gift Shop open - Parish Center

#### Next Sunday - Utilities Collection

9:00 AM to 12:30 PM - Gift Shop open

#### Festival of Carols & Praise-Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30p.m.- 9:00p.m., St. Paul Cathedral, 108 N. Dithridge Street,



Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Join the choirs from throughout the diocese to fill the Cathedral with joyful song. Hosted by Holy Apostles Parish. Presider: Bishop Zubik, Witness Speaker: Michael Woshner. Hosted by Holy Apostles Parish. For info. email [praise@holypostlesparish.org](mailto:praise@holypostlesparish.org), call 412-884-7744, or check [www.holypostlesparish.org](http://www.holypostlesparish.org). If you are in need of a ride please contact Peggy Evans at 412-398-0776.



**LOOK FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE MEDIA**

Advent is the season of waiting. We place ourselves in the position of those, who, over the centuries, waited for the coming of the Messiah. With them, we cry out, "How long, O Lord!"



What do we make of all of this? DO we really think He is going to come again and walk on the earth? We stay awake in our waiting if we pray on a regular basis; if we educate ourselves in the faith; if we participate in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; if we perform the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; if we become people of love. (Bishop Robert Barron - Advent Gospel Reflections)

**Please be sure to place your suggested donation in the money slot on the display so the ministry can be self-supporting.**

**TUESDAY & FRIDAY EVENING HOLY HOURS SUSPENDED until Fri., Feb. 16, 2018.**

This will save on utilities and snow removal expenses as well as the effort to host them in the cold and snowy winter months.

**PARISH FAMILY SOCIAL-Sat., Dec. 2nd & Sun., Dec. 3rd:** Hosted at Madonna by the St. Vincent de Paul Conference and at Word of God by the Finance Council.



**Community Clothing Drive-Sat., Dec. 2, 3:30p.m.-6:30p.m.,** Swissvale Fire Station, 7400 Irvine Street, during

**Swissvale's Night of Lights Celebration**, sponsored by the Swissvale Economic Development Corp. (SEDCO) & St. Vincent de Paul. The Swissvale Rotary Club is hosting a Holiday Stroll through the business district 3:30p.m.-5:30p.m. and family friendly Night of Lights activities including Santa & Mrs. Claus 5:30p.m.-fire station; tree lighting-6:00p.m.



**Traditional Polish Christmas Dinner-Sun., Dec. 3,** St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 419 S. Dithridge St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Doors open 1:30p.m. Christmas Carols in Polish & English, Gift Auction & Polish Mart. Cost: adults/\$45, children/\$20 (ages 2-12). Register: polish-falcons-heritage-foundation.myshopify.com., or call 844-203-9917.

**Mass of Healing-Mon., Dec. 4, 7:00 p.m.,**

St. Christopher's at the Lake, 229 N. Franklin St., Prospect, PA 16052. The rosary will be recited at 6:30 p.m. Fr. William Kiel is celebrant with Fr. Philip Farrell and Fr. Joseph Feltz concelebrating. For info. call the parish office, 724-865-2430.

**MASS SCHEDULE: (Holy Day of Obligation)**

Thurs., Dec. 7: 6:00p.m.-Word of God

Fri., Dec. 8: 8:00a.m.-Madonna

1:30p.m.-Swissvale Towers

7:00p.m.-Madonna



**THE LIGHT IS STILL ON FOR YOU! Wed., Dec. 14, 5:30p.m.-8:30p.m.,** the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be

available at Madonna and Word of God. Now is the time. God is waiting to offer you forgiveness, healing and peace. The light is on and the confessional door will be open. Please share this news with others, and invite those who may not have gone to confession in awhile to come back to the Sacrament.



**PRAYER AND PRAISE GROUP** meets at 7:00p.m. the 2nd & 4th Thursdays each month at Madonna. For info. call Mike, 412-241-1254.



**Sunday Scripture Sharing** on readings for the upcoming Sunday will be **Wednesdays, Nov. 29-Dec. 27, 7:00p.m.-8:00p.m.,** Madonna. Attend when you can. This informal sharing can deepen your faith and prayer life. Bible suggested. Facilitated by the Bible Study leaders. The regular Bible Study returns in January.



**MADONNA & WORD OF GOD'S MASS BOOKS have opened.** There are 2018 Mass intention forms in the literature racks/on the tables. Please drop off forms at the parish office, mail, or put them in the offering basket.

**JUST RELEASED: The Pittsburgh Catholic Christmas Traditions Magazine** featuring unique stories, a faith-centered trip to Downtown Pittsburgh, a chance to win 4 tickets to Kennywood Holiday Lights and more is now available. Look for your copy in the racks/on the tables.



**Keep Christ in Christmas Car Magnets** are available for \$5 from the Swissvale Knights of Columbus. To purchase contact Dan Pulcini, 412-351-5575. Proceeds benefit the special needs adults.

**Advent Season Day of Reflection-Sat., Dec. 9, 9:30 a.m.-5:00p.m.,** St. Paul Seminary, O'Connor Hall, 2900 Noblestown Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15205.



"Women Living with Joy: Preparing the Way of the Lord." Guest speaker, Holly McIlwain, Praise and Adoration with Father Richard J.

Zelik, OFM, Cap., and confession. Sponsored by The Pittsburgh Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, The Day of Reflection is entitled The day will conclude with a 4:00 p.m. Vigil Eucharistic Celebration presided by Bishop David A. Zubik. Fair Trade items, religious gifts, basket raffle, music and fellowship. Offering is \$25, RSVP required. For more info. or to register, email pghccw@gmail.com or call Bernadette, 412-563-3857. All are welcome.

**Cookie Walk & Soup to Go Sale-Sat., Dec. 9,**

**9:30 a.m.,** Waverly Presbyterian Church, 590 S. Braddock Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15221. Homemade holiday cookies \$12/small box & \$20/large box; Soup \$7/qt. For more info. visit [www.waverlychurch.org](http://www.waverlychurch.org) or call 412-242-0643.

**Ecumenical Carol Festival: Sun., Dec. 10th, 6:30p.m.-7:30p.m.,** City Reach Church, 7327

McClure Ave, Swissvale. Carols sung by the audience will be interspersed with music, readings, storytelling, etc. from members of area churches. A money offering will be taken for the local Food Pantries. A reception will follow. If you can provide cookies or wish to perform, please contact Deacon Ron Demblowski at 241.1372 or [wordofgodpa@gmail.com](mailto:wordofgodpa@gmail.com). Sponsored by the Swissvale Ministerial Association.



## Madonna del Castello



The Altar Candles are in memory of PETE IANNUCCI from Mary Iannucci.



The Tabernacle Lamp is in memory of PETE IANNUCCI from Mary Iannucci.



The Altar Bread & Wine are memory of PETE IANNUCCI from Mary Iannucci.



The Altar Flowers are memory of PETE IANNUCCI from Mary Iannucci.



Reborn in Baptism: JOSEPH BENJAMIN, son of Victoria Perla & Benjamin Holler.



Received into the Faith: DAVID ALAN YEARSLEY.

Rest in Peace: MILAN BEKETIC, JR., son of Ann and the late Milan Beketic, Sr.

### **MADONNA COLLECTIONS**

November 19.....	\$2,534.00
Retired Religious.....	\$1,059.00
November 26.....	\$1,995.00



**Cookies for Christmas** can be bought in Dattilo Hall after weekend Masses. There will be no pre-orders.

Anyone who would like to have any or all of the gifts celebrated in memory of or tribute to a loved one(s) at **Madonna del Castello Parish**, should complete the form below, place information and money in a plain envelope and deposit the sealed envelope in the collection basket, mail it to the parish office or deposit in mail slot.

### **Madonna del Castello Memorial/Living Tribute Request**

I would like to offer:

Altar Flowers (\$50) _____	Altar Candles (\$10) _____
Altar Bread (\$25) _____	Tabernacle Lamp (\$10) _____
Altar Wine (\$25) _____	Complete Offering (\$120) _____

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Tribute to \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Child Protective Services Law:** Report any acts of child abuse to Commonwealth of PA Hotline 1-800-932-0313.

**Diocesan Victim Assistance Hotline: 1-888-808-1235.**

Diocesan website, [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org), under "Protecting God's Children." Sessions available on-line.

**Diocesan Safe Environment Certification:** Contact Kelly James at the parish office.

## WORD OF GOD



**Throughout This Week in Word of God Parish Masses**, we will use the Altar Bread, Wine, Candles & Sanctuary Lamp in memory of MARY VENTURA from the Family.

### **WORD OF GOD COLLECTIONS**

November 19.....	\$5,740.00
Retired Religious.....	\$2,979.00
November 26.....	\$5,885.00

**WORD OF GOD CHOIR NEWS:** The Word of God Choir has started rehearsing for the Christmas season and particularly for the Christmas Mass at Midnight. New members are ALWAYS welcome and it is not too late to join! Please consider participating in the choir to sing just for this joyous time of the year, especially if a weekly Sunday commitment may not be possible right now. Choir rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at 6:30p.m. in the choir gallery at Word of God Church.



### **Canterbury Corner Gift Shop and Parish Library News:**



The Gift Shop has everything needed for a meaningful season including Advent wreaths and replacement candles, Advent calendars, and boxed Christmas cards from Abbey Press and Printery House. The Gift Shop is also featuring special Christmas greeting cards to send to those who

have lost a loved one. Traditional **Christmas Oplatki** wafers are available for an offering of \$2.00 for an envelope of 4 wafers. **Special Raffle:** Purchase tickets from the Gift Shop for a beautiful Nativity set or a Steelers-themed baby/lap quilt! Stop in the Library to view the **Fontanini Nativity** display with over 200 sculpted figures, which is making a special comeback this year!



### **Additional Special Saturday/Sunday Hours at the Library/Gift Shop in December:**

**December 9 and December 16: 5:00p.m.-7:30p.m.**

**December 10 and December 17: 9:00a.m.-12:30p.m.**

The Library and Gift Shop will be closed December 24 and December 31 and will re-open the weekend of January 6-7.

### **Readings for the Second Sunday of Advent, Dec.10**

**1st Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11... "A voice cries out in the desert prepare the way of the Lord."

**2nd Reading:** 2 Peter 3:8-14... Peter tells us to be always holy because the return of the Lord cannot be predicted.

**Gospel Reading:** Mark 1:1-8... John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized the people, in preparation for the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

**Question for reflection:** What most hinders you now in growing in your relationship with God?



**PRO LIFE CORNER:** Lord, you formed my most inner being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works! Abortion destroys God's creation. Choose life today.







# School News

**Story-time-Wed., Dec. 6,** East Catholic School, 2001 Ardmore Boulevard, Forest Hills, PA 15221. It is a free story, rhyme, song and craft program designed to entertain and engage young children 2 ½ to 5 years old. It will give them a positive introduction to books and the habit of reading. Each program features appealing books, favorite stories, and lively activities. The theme of this Story-time is: “St. Nicholas Day.” There will be one session from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. We invite all children along with their parent or guardian to come and visit Story time at East Catholic Library. Registration-call East Catholic School Office (412-351-5403) during school hours, 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Final date for registration is Mon., Dec. 4. Join us for some “St. Nicholas” fun.

Is your child ready to start Preschool or Kindergarten? Please join us at East Catholic School for a tour and see firsthand what we have to offer from pre-K through 8th grade. Registration is required for the walking tours. Call the school office at 412-351-5403.

Thursday, December 7 — 9:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, January 10 — 9:30 a.m.

**CENTRAL CATHOLIC H.S.-Placement/Entrance Test** for 8th grade boys who wish to attend Central beginning in the fall of 2018 **will be administered Sat., Dec. 9.** There is no fee to take test. Register online at [www.centralcatholichs.com/apply](http://www.centralcatholichs.com/apply). For more info. call the Admissions Office, 412-621-7505.

**ENJOY 2018 COUPON BOOKS** are available from the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill through Dec. 30 for \$30. Included are hundreds of half-off and two-for-one coupons for travel, dining, shopping, sporting events, and regional attractions in Allegheny, Westmoreland, Washington, and Fayette Counties. To reserve your book, call Sr. Agnes Steedle, 724-836-0406, ext. 6646, or Sr. Patrice Hughes, Elizabeth Seton Convent in Brookline, 412-343-1382.

**Christmas Discernment Retreat-Dec. 15-17, St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, 148 Monastery Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15203.** How can you be equipped to boldly go where the Lord is calling you? For college and post-college men. Come to deepen your relationship with Christ, seek to know your vocation, and learn more about discerning a vocation to the priesthood. The weekend will include Mass, Adoration, conferences, an opportunity for Confession, and solid brotherhood. No cost; must be 18 or older. For info. or to register visit [PGHPriest.com](http://PGHPriest.com). **The deadline is Dec. 8.**



**BINGO:** Good Shepherd Social Club will sponsor their next Bingo **Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>** starting at 1:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Hall, 1600 Brinton Road, Braddock Hills, PA 15221. Admission is \$20.00 paid at the door (no ticket pre sale); 16 regular games and 4 specials. Refreshments will be available for purchase. For more info., please call Peg at 412-8



**Sale:** Cards sketched by Sr. Martha. This year's card is cream with a green sketch of Mary holding baby Jesus. The previous year's cards are also available. Cost: 7/\$10, (\$2 shipping), 12/\$15 (\$3 shipping) or 30/\$25 (\$6 shipping). Check online at [www.littlesistersofthepoorpittsburgh.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorpittsburgh.org) or call 412-307-1100, or send a check made payable to Little Sisters of the Poor, 1028 Benton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15212 or stop at the main entrance of the home. All proceeds help to support the elderly poor residents at the home.

**Annual Turkey, Ham & Roast Drop-Sat., Dec. 9,**  
**9:00a.m.-2:00p.m.** at the home. Sr. Margaret Mary and her “elves” will graciously accept donations of frozen turkeys, hams or roasts in the auditorium. Stay for some cookies and hot chocolate. Santa Claus will be handing out goodies to the little ones. If this date doesn’t work with your schedule they will accept meat donations at any time. Call 412-307-1100 for more information.

[Note: There will be no adoration before the Christmas Masses.]



**Sun., Dec. 24** 4:00 p.m. - Madonna  
6:00 p.m. - Word of God  
Midnight - Word of God

**Mon., Dec. 25** 10:00 a.m. - Madonna

**MARY MOTHER OF GOD: [Not a Holy Day of Obligation]**

**Mon., Jan. 1      7:00 p.m. - Madonna**

# MADONNA/WORD OF GOD CHRISTMAS GIFT GIVING



**GIVING TREE:** Help us make Christmas more special for needy families in the area. Take an ornament from the tree in the back of the church, listed on the ornament will be a suggested gift for the needs of a person from one of our families. Bring your gift back to the church from whose tree you selected your ornament, wrapped and with the ornament tag attached. Each family's gifts will be put together and delivered before Christmas. Please have your gift in by December 10th at the latest. If you are giving a gift card, you may place that in an envelope (with the ornament tag) and put it in the collection basket.



**P.O.W.E.R.:** Many Of The Women at P.O.W.E.R have no one to remember them at Christmas time. By donating small items for women ages 20-50 you will help brighten their Christmas. Place all items in the boxes set up in the back of the churches by December 17th. Wallets, purses, pens & pencils, stamps, dusting powder, stuffed animals, socks, hair accessories, body lotions, nail polish, knee highs, toothpaste, slippers, jewelry, and hand cream/lotion are some suggestions. Hats, scarves or gloves are not needed.

## ANGEL'S CORNER



**ANGEL'S CORNER:** Angel's Corner is always collecting new & gently used infant and toddler clothes. Disposable diapers are of great need. Baskets will be placed in the back of church for your donations through December 17th.

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# Advent 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>B</b> uy or make an Advent wreath. Bless it and light the first violet candle each night this week. Read <i>Mark 13:33-37</i> .	<b>A</b> dvent is about waiting for the Savior to come. Offer a prayer anytime you have to wait during Advent.	<b>L</b> et your Bible fall open and contemplate the reading the Holy Spirit puts before you.	<b>S</b> how love on St. Nicholas Day by making at least one generous act today.	<b>O</b> ffer your parish the gift of your time, talent, or treasure. Describe it in a Christmas card and send it to your pastor.	<b>T</b> oday honors the feast of the Immaculate Conception celebrating Mary's birth without Original Sin. In her honor, attend Mass.	<b>S</b> et a timer or other reminder to help you pray every morning and every evening this month. Continue after Advent.
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>L</b> ight two violet candles in the Advent wreath each night this week. Sit in silence and enjoy the quiet. Read <i>Mark 1:1-8</i> .	<b>P</b> ick one habit that is keeping you from holiness. Resolve to conquer it during Advent.	<b>T</b> o honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, place a rose in a vase in your home and pray a "Hail Mary" whenever you pass it.	<b>T</b> oday, try to remember stories from the Bible of God's merciful treatment of sinners.	<b>I</b> clude in your Christmas cards a note about the blessings you have received this year as a witness to God's love.	<b>T</b> he presence of Jesus in our lives speaks of our hope in God's mercy. Today, list your reasons for hope in the future.	<b>P</b> erform a thorough examination of conscience today. Then attend Confession to ready your soul to greet the Savior.
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<b>T</b> oday is Gaudete Sunday - the halfway point of Advent. Light two violet candles and the rose one for joy. <i>John 1:6-8,19-28</i> .	<b>L</b> ight a candle and sit in silence for 15 minutes. Focus on whom it is you are waiting.	<b>P</b> ray for the men and women in the armed services who won't be able to spend Christmas with their families.	<b>M</b> ake time today to feed the hungry. Look for someone who is physically hungry or one who is hungry for kindness, too.	<b>T</b> his can be a sad time for those who are alone. Include anyone in your own gatherings who might otherwise be forgotten.	<b>S</b> et up your Nativity scene. Picture yourself in the scene and think about how you would act if you were there.	<b>E</b> ven if you live alone, put up a Christmas tree. Put just a few ornaments on each day and finish up on Christmas Eve.
24	25	<p><i>"In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."</i> (Luke 2:1-7)</p>				
<b>L</b> ight all four candles in the Advent Wreath tonight and all week. Reread today's Gospel reading. <i>Luke 1:26-38</i> .	<b>R</b> ejoice! Read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-20. Think about how joyful it will be to finally meet Jesus when he comes.					



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