



Saint Francis of Assisi of Western Fayette County

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

101 West Church Avenue, Masontown, Pennsylvania 15461

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*A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust*

Bishop Larry J. Kulick, J.C.L.



December 3, 2023

**Rev. Dick Anthony Cortado
Administrator**

dcortado@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Masses in Masontown

Monday, Wednesday, Friday ..8:00 am
Saturday6:00 pm
Sunday..... 8:00 am & 11:30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5:00-5:30 pm

Adoration: First & Third
Fridays - 4:30 to 6:00 pm

Masses in Footedale

Tuesday & Thursday8:00 am
Saturday:4:00 pm
Sunday.....9:30 am

Confessions: Saturday 3:00-3:30 pm

Adoration: Second & Fourth
Wednesdays - 12:30 to 2:00 pm

Office Hours: Monday through
Friday - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Bulletin Articles: The deadline
for placing articles in the bulletin
is Monday at Noon.

New Parishioners, Welcome!
Please register as soon as possible.

Communion to the Homebound is
provided on a regular basis. Call the
Parish Office to be added to our list.

Sacrament of Baptism: By
appointment. Prior to your baby's
Baptism, you must be a registered,
practicing member of this parish.

Sacrament of Marriage: Requires
parish membership by at least one of
the parties for six months prior to
making arrangements for marriage.

Weddings should be scheduled
one year in advance.

Prayer Chain: To request prayer,
please call Patty 724-245-9746
or Valeria 724-583-9460



1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“Watch, therefore; you do not know when the Lord of the house
is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at
cockcrow, or in the morning.” - Mk 13:35

Thoughts from Father Anthony - First Sunday of Advent - Year B



Accordingly, there is a distinction between what is urgent and what is important. They are not always the same thing. What is important will eventually become urgent, but what is urgent is not always important. Like for example, making a will is something important, but it may not be urgent (unless we are on our deathbed). I stress this because there are so many things that we feel are urgent at this time of the year. Buy this, send this card, get ready for this event. Some of the urgent things we feel at this time might be important, but we have to be careful not to let them override the most important thing of all; that is preparing for Christ's coming - an event that we often do not feel so urgent about!

This is precisely the message of Jesus in today's gospel reading. Its opening statement is "Be constantly on the watch! Stay awake! Advent directs us towards the necessity of waiting faithfully for our Lord to return. It is a hopeful waiting, cheerful longing, joyful preparation, contrite conversion and jubilant anticipation. The circle of the wreath reminds the Christian of God's eternity and endless mercy as well as the four candles reminds us of our themes for the weeks of preparation before Christmas - namely hope, peace, joy and love.

As we light the first candle of Advent Wreath, we shift to a more serious mode in our Christian life. Somebody and something is coming. Jesus is coming and He will bring us judgment and salvation. We must be ready to welcome them. There are three stages in the coming of Christ. The first is the mystery of Incarnation, God becoming man, to commence the salvation of humans. The second is His presence in us through the Holy Spirit who is especially at work in and through the Church and the sacraments. The last stage is His final coming where He will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

The spirit of Advent is not only to commemorate Christ's birth on Christmas Day - rather the Church invites us to focus on the final chapter of the realization of salvation with Christ's coming at the end of time. As to when the precise moment is, no one knows. The Gospel thus tells us "to stay awake ... for you don't know when the Lord of the house is coming." The notion of being awake is a metaphorical representation of being vigilant. The event will definitely happen, but the exact time is unknown, except by the Father. This is what makes readiness of utmost value. To be caught off guard would be disastrous, for the Lord will come "like a thief in the night." Vigilance is imperative lest we are drawn to the exclusive concern with our everyday activities and earthly existence but failing to consider the fuller dimension of life.

Christ declares "WATCH." The key word is W-A-T-C-H. It is an acronym. It stands for watching our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character, and Hearts.

Words - Our irresponsible use of words can hurt and destroy people. Many relationships have been broken with the onslaught of vile language, cursing, and gossiping. Let our mouths be instruments of blessing rather than cursing, of kindness than condemnation, of appreciation than destructive criticisms, and of praising that blaspheming.

Actions - If we are to be jailed today for being a Christian, what proof can our accusers show that we are really one? If actions speak louder than words, do our actions reflect profoundly our faith? We know that mere profession of faith is not enough. We need to express it concretely in deeds. The invitation of Christmas is to be generous in our acts of mercy. Can we be more loving, forgiving, and caring in our lives?

Thoughts - A wise man once said, "All that we are is a result of what we have thought. It begins with our thoughts and is carried on with our thoughts. For Christ, thoughts are just as important as actions. This demands the purity of our intentions in the performance of seemingly good actions for them to qualify for God's standards of real goodness.

Character - St. Paul says that "fortitude produces character" and "character produces hope." When trials afflict people, some may allow themselves to complain and murmur in despair; others may spur themselves with the opportunities of emerging stronger, greater and nearer to God. Develop our habit with optimistic view of Salvation.

Hearts - According to Mt 6:21 "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." What is inside our heart" is it material things or love or God? Is it full of pride or full of love? Does it aim at sacrifice or selfishness?

If Advent is a spiritual event, then, the preparation must also be spiritual. They should find meaning and purpose from our hearts. They must reflect what we feel and intend. They must be expressions of our love and faith in God. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ, let us ask ourselves, "What will be our gift to Him." (Mk 13:33-37)

Today at the 8:00 am Mass, we celebrate with great joy, the **Rite of Acceptance of Tom Robbins** into the process of Full Communion with the Catholic Church. This Rite is the first consecration by the Church of those seeking Christian Initiation. We welcome Tom and offer him our prayers and support as he continues this journey.

ADVENT begins today! It is a joyful anticipation of the Lord's second coming in glory and a glad celebration of His first coming. Advent rekindles in us that sense of watching and waiting where we see Christ's constant breaking into our daily existence. Advent is one of the most grace-filled seasons of the year. It is a blended season, a mixture of hope, repentance and joy; a sacred time that encourages prayer and intensifies our longing for the coming of Christ at Christmas. *Come, Lord Jesus!*

Today we light the first candle on our Advent wreath. It is the **"Prophecy Candle"** which announces the waiting period that anticipates Christmas and honors those who first spoke the promise of the Christ Child. Their words sparked hope in the hearts of the faithful.



An Advent Prayer: Mercifully hear, O Lord, the prayers of your people; that as we rejoice in the coming of Your only begotten Son according to the flesh, so when He comes a second time in His majesty, we may receive the reward of eternal life. Amen.

This Advent, you are invited to take part in an Advent Tradition begun last year: **Soft Enough For A King.** This activity helps us refocus Advent away from a period of frenzied pre-Christmas busyness to its real purpose - anticipating the coming of Christ. Each worship site has an empty manger on display. You are invited to obtain pieces of "straw" attached to suggestions for individual/family prayer or acts of service to perform and record on the "straw." Return the "straw" to the empty manger each week. By Christmas, our acts of prayer and service will make our manger Soft Enough For A King!

Parish Family Christmas Tree - Everyone is invited to bring an ornament, unique to you and your family, to place on our Parish Family Christmas Tree.



The Miracle of Christmas - November 9
Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, PA

As we begin a new liturgical year, we remember that God our Father has enriched us with His Spirit. At times, however, we ignore what God has done for us and wander off on our own path. As you look back at the past year, how have you failed to keep alert and walk in God's ways? Find a time this Advent season to celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** and to acknowledge your need for God's mercy and guidance.

Regional Advent Confession Schedule

Tuesday, December 12 - 6:00 pm

St. Francis of Assisi, Masontown Worship Site

Thursday, December 14 - 6:00 pm

St. Peter, Brownsville

Saturday, December 16 - 1:00 pm

SS Cyril & Methodius, Fairchance

Sunday, December 17 - 3:00 pm

St. Joan of Arc, Farmington

Tuesday, December 19 - 6:00 pm

St. Mary Nativity, Uniontown

Thursday, December 21 - 6:00 pm

St. John the Evangelist, Uniontown

Third Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 17 - 5:00 pm

at the Footedale Worship Site

Music by the Combined Parish Choir
Scripture Readings proclaimed by the
Youth of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish

Light Refreshments follow in the Social Hall

Join us for a special Advent evening
of Scripture and Song

Christmas of Remembrance Ceremony - 5pm Sunday, **December 3**, at the John S. Maykuth Jr. Funeral Home for the families who lost loved ones during the past year.

This ceremony is dedicated to help alleviate the pain experienced during the holidays after such a loss. Please join John & Susie in sharing the memory of our loved ones and the comfort and peace of the Christmas season.

Golden Group Members are reminded that this weekend is the deadline for reservations for the Annual Christmas Party to be held on Monday, **December 11**, at the social hall in Footedale beginning at Noon. Dinner selections are: roast pork or chicken parmigiana. Cost is \$10, make checks payable to the SFOA Golden Group. Questions? Please contact Rosemary at 724-245-8333.

rest in peace

Parish Sympathy is expressed to the families of

† **Connie (Hostetler) Williams**

buried Tuesday, November 21

† **Genevieve M. (Brice) Outrich, Rhoades**

buried Friday, November 24

† **Max R. Kaydo**

buried Saturday, November 25

† **Aura (Burchianti) Lozar**

buried Tuesday, November 28

† **Bernadette "Dolly" Kroll**

buried Wednesday, November 29

† **Betty Seaman**

buried Friday, December 1

May God grant to them eternal life and comfort their families. May they rest in peace.



Christmas Craft/Bake Sale - December 2, Noon/4pm and Sunday, **December 3**, 10am/1pm at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, Uniontown upstairs social room.

A Christmas Holiday Concert XI presented by the PA State VFW Post 8543 Band of Uniontown, Sunday, **December 3**, 3/5pm (with intermission) at the State Theatre for the Arts.

Programs at Mt. St. Macrina House of Prayer

Christmas Preparation Retreat - Saturday, **December 9**, 9:30am/1pm. Sacrament of Reconciliation, Conference, Prayer Service and Lunch. Cost \$40; **registration due December 4** by phone 724-438-7149 or email: hpmsm@verizon.net

Sanctuary Sessions For Sanity - Tuesdays, **December 12 & 19**, 10:30am/12:00 pm consisting of guided prayer and quiet meditation time in the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help led by Sr. Barbara Jean. Free will offering / no registration needed.

Homemade Ravioli Dinner - Sunday, **December 10**, Noon/5pm at the McClellandtown Firehall hosted by Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church. Dinners \$9 include choice of meat or cheese ravioli, salad, roll/butter and dessert.

Holiday Roll and Cheesecake Sale - Place orders by December 12; pickup December 20, Noon/5pm. Rolls \$12; cheesecakes \$12. To order call or text 724-880-2206.



A Masontown Matters Event

masontownmatters email: masontownmatters@jufco.com

City of Hope
A Cantata for Christmas
presented by the Greater Uniontown Choral

Sunday, **December 3**, 3pm
Trinity United Presbyterian

Monday, **December 4**, 7pm
Newell United Methodist

Sunday, **December 10**, 3pm
1st Baptist of Fairchance

Monday, **December 11**, 7pm
United Methodist, Dawson

Thursday, **December 28**, 7pm
St Mary Nativity Uniontown

Christmas Pine Pick Up This Weekend

All who ordered items from our Christmas Pine Fundraiser are reminded to pick your items up after Mass this weekend - cafeteria in Masontown and social hall in Footedale. Thank you for supporting our cemeteries!

The Practice of Stewardship

We are the servants of God, each with his or her own task. We will be judged good stewards if, at His coming, He finds us ready and conscientiously pursuing the tasks to which we have been called.

Thank you to our RCIA Team for sponsoring the Advent candles in Masontown in honor of our RCIA Candidate, Tom Robbins.

The Giving Tree - All who took tags from the Giving Tree are reminded to purchase the appropriate gift and return it to the Church by **December 12**.

Christmas Flower Memorials - Please use the envelope from your packets to list the names of your loved ones. These will be placed on the altar and remembered in prayer throughout the Christmas season.

Stewardship of Treasure

November 19: \$6,325; loose \$589; monthly \$756; children \$10; online \$297 - totaling \$7,977

November 26: \$5,741; loose \$638; monthly \$315 online \$257; Thanksgiving \$1,515 - totaling \$8,466

Diocesan Poverty Relief/Catholic Services Appeal - \$800

We also collected \$1,225 for the **Care of our Cemeteries:** St. Thomas \$323; St. Agnes \$279; Holy Rosary \$150; OLPH \$218; Madonna \$130; St. Procopius \$125

Our parish is very grateful for your support!

National Catholic Youth Conference November 16-19 - Indianapolis, Indiana



Aly, Lexi, Natalie, Karen, Kim and Rita would like to thank everyone for helping us to attend NCYC in Indianapolis. Your support of our fundraising efforts enabled us to experience our faith on a national level. We celebrated our faith with over 12,000 youth and adults from across the country. What an amazing display of our faith! We are truly Fully Alive!

Youth Ministry will participate in today's 11:30 am Mass and meet afterwards to discuss 2024 and make our craft and cards for the homebound of our parish.

All youth in grades 8-12 are welcome to join us! Questions? Call Rita at 724-208-6779.

MASS SCHEDULE ©LPI

Saturday, December 2 -- Vigil: 1st Sunday of Advent

4:00 pm-F *Michael Reposky (Jeff Baron)*
 6:00 pm-M Don Beck (M/M Ron Frasoni)

Sunday, December 3 -- 1st Sunday of Advent

8:00 am-M Robert Betchy (Julia Dugan)
 9:30 am-F *Pro Populo*
 11:30 am-M Andrew & Carol Mihallik (Family)

Monday, December 4 -- Saint John Damascene

8:00 am-M Wayne Ainsley (Wife & Family)

Tuesday, December 5 -- Advent Weekday

8:00 am-F *Sylvia Volek (Family)*

Wednesday, December 6 -- Saint Nicholas, Bishop

8:00 am-M Andy Spirnak (Wife & Son)
 12:30-2:00 pm-F *Adoration / Confessions*

Thursday, December 7 -- Saint Ambrose

8:00 am-F *Adeline Kiec (MaryAnn/Danny Vlosich)*

Friday, December 8 -- Immaculate Conception of Mary

12:00 pm-F *Alice Niemic (Dolly Kroll)*
 6:00 pm-M Sam Bartoni (Knights of Columbus #4261)

Saturday, December 9 -- Vigil: 2nd Sunday of Advent

3-3:30 pm-F *Confessions*
 4:00 pm-F *Joe Mehalek (Wife, Donna)*
 5:00-5:30 pm-M Confessions
 6:00 pm-M Pro Populo

Sunday, December 10 -- 2nd Sunday of Advent

8:00 am-M Tom Pavlovich (M/M Rick Zatlokovicz)
 9:30 am-F *Brenda J. Otto (Son Louis Otto & Family)*
 11:30 am-M John & Nellie Bozek (Jerry/Cheryl Takacs)

Mass Readings for the Week Ahead

Monday: Is 2:1-5; Mt 8:5-11
 Tuesday: Is 11:1-10; Lk 10:21-24
 Wednesday: Is 25:6-10a; Mt 15:29-37
 Thursday: Is 26:1-6; Mt 7:21-27
 Friday: Gn 3:9-20; Eph 1:3-12; Lk 1:26-38
 Saturday: Is 30:19-26; Mt 9:35-10:1-8
 Next Sunday: Is 40:1-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8



Question of the Week: What will I do this week to prepare for Christ's coming, knowing that it may happen at any time?



Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday, December 6, in Footedale
 12:30-1:30 pm: Exposition / Confession
 1:30-1:45 pm: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena
 1:45-2:00 pm: Benediction



Bombarded with Christmas decorations and music for weeks now, we are undoubtedly already anticipating the celebration of our Savior's birth but today we are reminded that Christ's coming was not a single, one time only event. In the Gospel, Jesus warns us that He will come again when we least expect. He is referring to the end of the world but in truth He can also come to us in our hearts at any time - during a traumatic event, in a chance encounter with a stranger, or even through someone who's prematurely spreading the Christmas spirit. May we remain vigilant for our Lord's coming in whatever way or whatever time it may happen.



The Immaculate Conception: Patron of the United States

On Friday, December 8, we will celebrate the patronal solemnity of the United States of America and the greatest of Mary's Advent festivals as we remember Mary's conception in the womb of her mother. In this liturgy we affirm our belief that God prepared Mary to be the mother of the Son of God by allowing her a share, from the moment of her conception, in the salvation that would be won for all by Christ.

Masses for this Holy Day of Obligation

will be celebrated at Noon in Footedale and 6:00 pm in Masontown.

Memorial Candles burn this week in loving memory of or for the special intention of:

† **Sanctuary** - *John & Betty Reagan* requested by their family

My loving mom Helen Berdar and my loving brother Andrew Berdar requested by Marge Jacobs

† **Blessed Mother** - *Alice Niemic* requested by Dolly Kroll

Alverda Krofcheck requested by niece, Christal Oravets

† **Saint Joseph** - *Joseph Stoffa* requested by daughter Cheryl & Family

† **Saint Anthony** - *Charles & Leona Kois* requested by Carletta

† **Sacred Heart** - *Anna Guerrini* requested by daughter, Dolores Solomon



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