

# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## 10 DECEMBER 2017

**Readings for Sunday, December 10:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8.

As we await new heavens and a new earth, let us make clear the way of the Lord by being servants of justice, truth, and peace.

**Readings for Sunday, December 17:** Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28.

**St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish Special Day of Prayer is Monday.**  
**Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament: Monday after 9:00 A.M. Mass to 4:00 PM in the Chapel.**

### MASSES FOR THE WEEK

<u>Date</u>		<u>Intention</u>	<u>Requested By</u>
11 Dec.	MON. 9:00 AM	Pauline Harbach	Husband, Joe
13 Dec.	WED. 9:00 AM	Barbara Albitz	Nancy Lingenfelter
14 Dec.	THU. 9:00 AM	Mary Anne Droege	Anna Droege
14 Dec.	THU. 7:00 PM	Anthony (Tony) Pannella	Ron & Carol Fry
15 Dec.	FRI. 9:00 AM	Helen Pota	Kathy & Ron Bernhard
16 Dec.	SAT. 4:00 PM	People of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish	
17 Dec.	SUN. 9:00 AM	Decd. of Bucciaglia & McHugh Families	The Family



**ETERNAL REST** grant unto them, O Lord. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace, especially JOHN NOVAK.

**PRAY FOR THE SICK AND SUFFERING** of the parish especially those in homes and hospitals.

**REMEMBER OUR TROOPS:** Pray that God will bless and protect our young men and women in the military.



Flowers on the Altar are in HONOR OF ST. LUCY requested by Cindy Nore.

**SECOND SUNDAY HOSPITALITY** on Sunday, December 10 after the 9:00 AM Mass. Come and enjoy a cup of coffee and juice and some light pastries. Free will offering accepted.



**ST. NICK PARTY** - Please join us on Sunday, December 10 after the 9:00 AM Mass in the social hall. We will celebrate with St. Nicholas. There will be crafts, games, card making, and music. Please bring your camera for any photos with St. Nicholas. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON** on Tuesday, December 12 at 12:00 PM in the social hall.

### MINISTRY SCHEDULE - December 16/17:

#### 4:00 PM Mass

Lector - Phyllis Villano  
 Extraordinary Ministers - Mara Tamaro, Vincent Tamaro, Cindy Nore, John Bracaglia  
 Altar Servers - Tony Vitacco  
 Greeters - Marie Hildebrand and Ginger Scheidt

#### 9:00 AM Mass

Lector - Jack Bucciaglia  
 Extraordinary Ministers - Cristin Bucciaglia, Lori Carr, Terry Donnelly  
 Altar Server - Maeve Donnelly  
 Greeter - Sylvia and Tom Marcheskie

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE DESK OF FR. GREGORY J. HICKEY

### *"The Immaculate Conception"*

Just a few days ago, we celebrated the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, which was a Holyday of Obligation. Our Blessed Lady under that title is the Patroness of the United States of America and there is a beautiful shrine in Washington, D.C. dedicated to her. Pilgrims come every day from all over the world to pray and attend the Eucharist there.

The feast on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> was about Mary's conception, that from the instant she began to exist on this earth, indeed from her conception, she was holy, filled with God's grace and without sin. The gospel last Friday can confuse us somewhat because it told us about Jesus' conception. It was read on Friday first of all, because there is no gospel telling us about the moment when Mary was conceived. Secondly, Friday's gospel does give us an important piece of information about Mary related to Friday's feast. The angel greeted her as: "Full of grace." Friday's feast celebrated what the angel stated. There was no moment in Our Blessed Lady's life when God's grace did not fill her.

As we listened in on this conversation between Mary and the Angel, we learned not only about Mary but also about the child she is going to have. Mary's Son to be, would be Son of the Most High and king forever. Her child will be called "holy, the Son of God." In the midst of all our busyness, we paused on this Holy Day to think what it is we are happy about at this time of year.

This is why Mary was full of grace, so she could give birth to the source of all holiness and grace, God's own Son. Why did He come to us? He came so we could become holy. This is what St. Paul told us in Friday's second reading: "God chose us in him to be holy and blameless in his sight."

Holiness is something few people strive for. All of us want to get to heaven, but most of us would probably tend to say I just want to get inside the door. We should do more than just try to get inside the door. We are called to be holy. Most of us never think that becoming holy is our vocation. We usually think holiness is for someone else. When I mention this to people they think I am talking about the saints or people in religious life. That is because we do not understand holiness. We think being holy means spending all day praying or wearing ourselves out doing good things for other people and never having a chance to have fun. I think holy people probably have as much fun as any of us, but there is something greater than fun. It is joy and peace and love. To be holy means to be close to God. The closer we are to God, the more we will be filled with love, joy, and peace, both in this life and throughout eternity. It is loving our self. It is fulfilling our state in life and being the best person we can be.

Our vocation to holiness is illustrated by the two stories we have heard.

The first story was about our first parents who originally were very close to God and were very happy. That was the symbolism of the Garden of Eden but that wasn't good enough for them. They wanted to be like God himself. So they rebelled against God and they lost all they had.

The second story, the Annunciation, illustrates Mary's constant attitude of being willing to say "yes" to God. It was only through her openness that the Son of the Most High has come to us. St. Luke tells us Mary was not only holy and always ready to do whatever God wanted of her, but he also tells us she was joyful. Holiness and joy are always connected. After the angel left Mary, St. Luke told us about Mary visiting her cousin and she was full of joy. She expressed her joy in the beautiful hymn "the Magnificat." My soul gives glory to the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

In reflecting on the holiness of Mary, we may feel as if we were treated unfairly. We were born with Original Sin. The deck was stacked against us from the beginning. However, we forget that we were baptized and filled with God's life. It was the same grace that filled Mary at the moment of her conception that filled us when we were baptized. So holiness is possible for us too. Our two stories can show us there are two ways each of us can go in life. We can follow the example of our first parents, Adam and Eve, or we can follow the example of Our Blessed Mother. The first will lead to sorrow, the other to joy. To imitate Mary, all we have to do is say "yes" to whatever God asks of us.

I hope you enjoyed this beautiful feast, located in the Advent Season, which is the season for waiting. As Our Blessed Lady is known as the Theotokos (the God-Bearer), may each of us carry Christ in our hearts as we prepare to celebrate his birth.

Have a good week!

Fr. Hickey

## Parish Support

WEEKLY BUDGET.....	\$5,000
DEPOSIT FOR DECEMBER 3, 2017.....	\$4,837
Regular Sunday Collection -	\$4,752
Parish Giving -	\$85
WEEKLY DEFICIT.....	(\$163)
Year to Date Budget.....	\$115,000
Year to Date Collections.....	\$93,733
Average per week Collections.....	\$4,075
Year to Date Deficit.....	(\$21,267)
Average per week Deficit.....	(\$925)

### DECEMBER 4, 2016

Deposit.....	\$4,304
2016-2017 Deficit to Date.....	(\$23,903)
Difference from previous year.....	\$2,636



**Raffle Drawing**

**PARISH LOTTERY RAFFLE TICKET** based on the PA Pick 3 Evening Number. Winning ticket number must be the exact number drawn for the PA Pick 3 Evening Number. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are sold on a monthly basis. The prize for the winning ticket is \$50.00 on weekdays and \$100.00 on Sundays and one specially-designated weekday. Tickets are available after the Masses on weekends and at the parish office on weekdays. **This is our major fund raiser for the parish. We encourage each family to purchase at least one ticket each month. Your support is greatly appreciated.**

### LOTTERY CALENDAR RAFFLE TICKET WINNERS

- November 27 - #800 - unsold
- November 28 - #554 - unsold
- November 29 - #543 - Lew Chillot - \$50.00
- November 30 - #800 - unsold
- November Figures: 320 tickets sold - \$1,600.00.
- Payout for winners - \$550.00. Printing of tickets - \$100.00. Profit for November - \$950.00. Thank you for your support of the November Lottery Ticket Sales.
- December 1 - #000 - Fr. Gregory J. Hickey - \$50.00
- December 2 - #736 - unsold
- December 3 - #026 - unsold

### **MASS ATTENDANCE for December 2/3:**

- 4:00 PM Mass - 211
- 9:00 AM Mass - 161
- Total Attendance - 372
- Mass Attendance for December 3/4, 2016 - 358

**“CONSIDER REMEMBERING YOUR PARISH IN YOUR WILL!”** For further information, please call the parish office.

### **WINNER OF THE MONTHLY 50/50 GOLD ENVELOPE**

**DRAWING to support Religious Education:**  
NOVEMBER DRAWING - M/M Joseph Viola - \$307.00.

### **“ADVERTISER OF THE WEEK”**

**ON THE THIRD DAY - THE MASTER’S MERCANTILE**  
610-705-0130



We welcome KATHLEEN DANGLER who recently joined St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish!

**CHRISTMAS BASKET RAFFLE WINNER** - Ticket #3117433, Ken & Helen George. Thank you to everyone who supported this fund raiser. A profit of \$1,020.00 was made.

**PIZZELLE AND CHRISTMAS CANDY SALE** - Beginning Saturday, December 9, the Women’s Society will sell raisin or peanut clusters in milk or dark chocolate for \$6.00 per ½ pound box. The Pizzelles will be \$4.00 per dozen. Sales will continue after the Masses on the weekends until sold out. Candy and pizzelles are all homemade by the Women’s Society members.



Our parish received notification of the performance of our high school students attending Pope John Paul II High School for the First Quarter Report. MADISON MC NAMARA achieved First Honors.

**2018 MASS BOOK** - Requests for Masses to be offered on a specific day during 2018 can be made at the parish office during regular business hours. The Mass stipend of \$10.00 must be paid at the time you request the Mass Intention.

**THE ROSARY PRAYER GROUP** leads the recitation of the Rosary every Sunday before the 9:00 AM Mass. They also pray the Rosary before the 9:00 AM weekday Masses. All are welcome to join in these special Marian devotions.



**CHRISTMAS WAFERS** are available at the parish office. 5 wafers per packet. A donation of \$3.00 per packet or \$5.00 for two packets is requested.



**OUR ADVENT-CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE** is in the vestibule of church until Sunday, January 7. We are collecting items for Birthright of Pottstown for the babies and mothers in need in our area. Items most needed are: 3

month girls outfits, diapers up to size 3, baby wipes, socks up to size 18 month, receiving blankets, baby wash cloths, bibs, bottles, onesies size newborn and 0-3 month, maternity tops size L and XL and Leggings size XL for expectant mothers. Help us decorate our tree by placing an ornament on the tree for each gift you give. Ornaments are in a box next to the Giving Tree. Thank you for your generosity!

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT THE CATHEDRAL** - Come hear the musical offerings of the Archdiocesan Adult Choir, Archdiocesan Boy and Girl Choir and the Cathedral Choir as they perform works by Whitacre, Kodály, Lukaszewski, Poulenc and more. December 10 at 3:00 PM. Visit <https://cathedralphilaconcerts.org/events/> for more information.

**ST. CHARLES BORROMEEO SEMINARY OPEN HOUSE AND CHRISTMAS CONCERT** on Sunday, December 10. Open House begins at 1:00 PM with tours of our beautiful campus between 1:00 and 4:00 PM. Christmas Concert begins at 4:00 PM in St. Martin of Tours Chapel. Prior to the concert, you can visit our International Crèche Display in the Ryan Memorial Library. Light refreshments available prior to the concert in the College Building. The event is free and open to the public. Free-will offering at intermission to benefit the Sisters of Life at St. Malachy's Parish. This charity was selected by the seminarians.

**PRESENTATION AND RECEPTION** featuring The Faithful Traveler in Fatima with Diane von Glahn. Held at Holy Martyrs Catholic Church, Oreland on Wednesday, December 13 at 6:00 PM in the Fr. Szal Conference Room.

**FLAME OF LOVE RETREAT** at Malvern Retreat House for men and women with gifted retreat director Fr. James Blount. Held on December 15-17 and will focus on the theme "Why Shop Until You Drop When You Can Purchase the Pearl of Great Price?" For more information or to register for the Retreat, call 610-644-0400 or visit [www.malvernretreat.com](http://www.malvernretreat.com).

**METANOIA** is an active community of Catholic young adults in western Montgomery County who support Catholics in their 20s and 30s who are looking to deepen their faith and meet fellow Catholics in the area. Upcoming event: Tuesday, December 19 - Christmas Party at Appalachian Brewing Co., Collegeville. Doors open at 7:00 PM; Talk starts at 7:30 PM. For more information contact [metanoiayoungadults@gmail.com](mailto:metanoiayoungadults@gmail.com) or visit [www.facebook.com/users/metanoiayoungadults](https://www.facebook.com/users/metanoiayoungadults).

**SPECIAL MASS AND CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** on Saturday, December 16 at St. Mary's Church and Hall, Conshohocken. This event will benefit St. Mary Polish American Society, a non-profit organization working to promote Polish heritage and culture in Montgomery County. The Mass will begin at 11:00 AM, with a delicious meal in the Polish Christmas Eve tradition of Wigilia immediately following Mass. Tickets for the Wigilia meal are \$15.00 per person. Also taking orders for frozen pierogi for \$9.00 per dozen and cinnamon and cheese babka for \$15.00 each. For tickets, babka, and pierogi pre-orders, email [st.maryconshy@gmail.com](mailto:st.maryconshy@gmail.com) or call Dorothy Swedkowski (610-630-0861). Tickets sales, as well as babka and pierogi orders must all be placed by Tuesday, December 12.

**UNDERGRADUATE COURSE WORK** offered through the School of Theological Studies at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary fosters a greater knowledge and a deeper appreciation of the Catholic Church, its theological traditions and its pastoral mission. It also serves as a pre-requisite program for those who need college level theology and/or philosophy to be considered for acceptance to the Graduate program. It's easy to apply online and start classes as soon as the Spring semester. We will be offering *Creed and the Sacraments* and *Church History* starting in January. Evening classes are scheduled during the week. Admission is open to all and courses may be taken for credit or audit. Visit [www.scs.edu/sts](http://www.scs.edu/sts) for more details.