

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### 24 DECEMBER 2023

**Readings for Sunday, December 24:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38.

David's posterity shall endure forever. His kingship finds its fulfillment in the son of Mary, Jesus the Christ. To him be glory and praise forever.

**Readings for Sunday, December 31:** Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Luke 2:22-40.



**St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish Special Day of Prayer is Wednesday. Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament: Wednesday after 9:00 A.M. Mass to 5:00 PM in the Church. Benediction at 5:00 PM.**



<u>Date</u>		<u>Intention</u>	<u>Requested By</u>
25 Dec.	MON.	9:00 AM	Parishioners of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish
26 Dec.	TUE.	9:00 AM	Amy Webb
27 Dec.	WED.	9:00 AM	Leslie A. White
28 Dec.	THU.	9:00 AM	Dorothy Levanovitch
30 Dec.	SAT.	4:00 PM	Parishioners of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish
31 Dec.	SUN.	9:00 AM	Ray & Mamie Swavely-Johnson
			Lori, Jack and families



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

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

**NOVENA IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL** on Mondays after the 9:00 AM Mass. All are welcome to join in this special Marian Devotion.

**MAGNIFICAT BOOKS** - Those who purchased the Magnificat can pick up their JANUARY issue at the Parish Office.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU  
AND YOUR FAMILIES!**



**2024 MASS BOOK** - The 2024 Mass Book is open. Requests for Masses can be made at the Parish Office. There will be a limit of one Mass on the weekends per person and five Masses per person on weekdays.

# Collections

thank you

**DEPOSIT FOR DECEMBER 17, 2023.** ..... \$  
 2023-2024 Year to Date Collections. .... \$  
 2022-2023 Year to Date Collections. .... \$  
 Figures from the December 17 collection will be in the December 31 bulletin.



**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. **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.



**AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES** on January 2 and 15 from 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM in the social hall. Please call 1-800-RED-CROSS to make an appointment.



**CHURCH MAGNETS** are available at the Parish Office. They can be placed on your car or refrigerator. Cost is \$5.00 each.



**APPAREL ALERT!** We are now accepting orders for our parish apparel: T-shirt (small logo on upper left) - \$10; Hoodies (small logo on upper left) - \$25; 1/4 Zip (small logo on upper left) - \$35; Men's & Women's Polo Shirts (small logo on upper left) - \$25. Current colors offered

are: Kelly Green or Sunburst Yellow (logo is black and gray just like the photo). Sizes: S to XL - larger sizes are available (just add \$2) and we have youth sizes too! **PROMOTE YOUR PARISH!!!** Complete the order form in the vestibule of Church and return to the parish office along with payment or contact Maria Boyer ([mboyer@sgsm62.org](mailto:mboyer@sgsm62.org)).

## MINISTRY SCHEDULE - December 30/31

**4:00 PM Mass**

Lector - Warzeski

Ministers of Holy Communion - Front, Deacon; Break, Durante & Durante; Choir, Nester

Altar Server - Holmes

Greeter - Wade

**9:00 AM Mass**

Lector - Boyer

Ministers of Holy Communion - Front, Deacon; Break, Vitacco & C. Bucciaglia

Altar Servers - Francis

Greeter - Hildebrand

## WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

**JEWELRY SHOPPING** - The Women's Society is once again planning a Sunday afternoon of jewelry shopping. Gather any jewelry that you are tired of or never wear and drop off to the parish office for our sale. Don't worry, we'll also have plenty of new to choose. Drop off to office by January 10 then plan for a ladies afternoon of fun on January 21. Details to follow.



**OUR ADVENT GIVING TREE** will be in the vestibule of church until Sunday, January 7. We are collecting items for Birthright of Pottstown. Items most needed include: Swaddlers, winter coats sizes 0-6 month, outfits sizes Newborn to 18 month, Newborn diapers, Size 3

Diapers, Crib sheets, Baby wipes, Baby wash, Baby shampoo, Baby lotion, onesies sizes 0-3 month and 3-6 month, wash cloths and towels, Girls night gowns with elastic bottom. Decorate our Giving Tree by placing an ornament on the tree for every gift you give. Ornaments are in a box next to the Giving Tree.



**2023 ST. GABRIEL PARISH CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS** are now on sale after Masses on the weekends or at the Parish Office on weekdays. Cost is \$10.00 each. A limited number of 2022 ornaments are also available.

**CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE:** Vigil Mass on Sunday, December 24 at 4:00 PM (does not fulfill Sunday Obligation); Mass on Monday, December 25 at 9:00 AM. Mass for Solemnity of Mary - No Vigil Mass on Sunday, December 31; Mass on Monday, January 1 at 9:00 AM.



Somewhere around, there is an old photograph of a lanky sixteen year old, attired in cuffed blue jeans with a rolled-sleeve blue flannel shirt, sporting an afro stylish for the time, and standing in front of **the** most perfect Christmas tree.



It was shortly after his dear mother's death in Advent of that year and it was the first real Christmas tree that he ever had. The artificial tree of his childhood certainly held many beautiful memories from Christmases past, but they all involved memories of his mother – and she was now gone. He decided that it was time to start a new Christmas tradition: a real tree. The tree would not come from some temporary shop set up on the far end of a supermarket parking lot, but would come from an actual tree farm. He, together with his best friend, secretly commandeered the super cab, super sized, new used pick-up truck that his father had so recently acquired. It was really too much truck for city dwellers and would soon enough be resold as a heartbroken father's mid-life crisis peaked.



That truck however, served a most high and noble purpose for the relatively short time had. It would be the sleigh to transport that most perfect tree. The two recently licensed drivers climbed into that massive sleigh and set out for a tree farm discovered in the upper regions of Bucks County. Traversing for miles on a nearly empty tank and after a few wrong turns, they finally arrived. There was a beautiful sea of evergreen trees for about as far as the eye could see. Setting out they meandered row after row sizing up trees. It was a most sunny day and it was the sun shining perfectly upon a particular evergreen that caused the one young man to say, "Here! This is it!" It **was** perfect. The other teen soon found his tree as well. Tree saws in the hands of youth make for quick work and soon they were atop a wagon making the trek back to the barn for purchase of said trees – and for some hot chocolate so kindly offered. The return trip was celebratory. The city dwellers turned arborists had grand success and had conquered, what was for them, a whole new world. Back home the secret commandeering of the truck by two young drivers of so little experience was quickly forgiven by a father whose anger was suddenly soothed by the beauty of a tree that outshone and overcame it. Even the other teen remarked with a bit of jealousy of just how beautiful **that** tree was. Soon decorated, it continued to shine throughout that Christmas season and beyond. Its beauty miraculously helped overcome a tremendous amount of pain and sorrow experienced between a father and his son that Christmas of so long ago. The beauty of that most perfect tree still shines to this day. You may have noticed that quite a few folks had their decorations and lawn inflatables out early this year. Some went right up after Halloween. Our world is filled with much distress. War and violence make for daily headlines such that we no longer seem to notice. There is much confusion and seemingly so little concern. There is fear for what the future holds. Everyone knows this. Christmas decorations and beautiful trees adorned betray our deepest longings. Everyone without exception desires happiness and its preceding hope. All of the Christmas decorations that we see proclaim hope and happiness. They proclaim a desire to overcome fear and confusion with their attending sorrow and sadness. The message of Christmas is a message of hope. In fact, the message of Christmas is preceded by a season of hope. That's what Advent is all about. Amidst the darkness of our world, Hope will be born anew lying quietly and barely noticed in a manger. The Child will grow and the Hope that He offers will grow as well enveloping all like a beautiful sea of evergreens. It all begins with that one most perfect and beautiful tree. It is a tree unlike any other. May you find yours this Christmas!



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Peace!

Fr. Wilson