

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9 DECEMBER 2018

Readings for Sunday, December 9: Baruch 5:1-9; Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11; Luke 3:1-6.

The Lord has done great things, leading his people out of slavery to the glorious splendor of Jerusalem. Let us make ready the way of the Lord by abounding in love and in works of justice.

Readings for Sunday, December 16: Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18.

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>
10 Dec.	MON. 9:00 AM	Pauline Harbach	Husband, Joe
12 Dec.	WED. 9:00 AM	Fr. James Kinney	Rev. Gregory J. Hickey
13 Dec.	THU. 9:00 AM	Earl Keck	Wife, Cathy
14 Dec.	FRI. 9:00 AM	Frank Gambino	Wife, Nikki and family
15 Dec.	SAT. 4:00 PM	People of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish	
16 Dec.	SUN. 9:00 AM	Mildred Fry	Ron & Carol Fry



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

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 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION requested by Cindy Nore and family.

THE PARISH OFFICE will be closed Monday, December 10 from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM and all day Thursday, December 13.

SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON & MEETING on Tuesday, December 11 at 12:00 PM in the social hall.

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 invited to join in these special Marian Devotions.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE - December 15/16:

4:00 PM Mass

Lector - Phyllis Villano
 Extraordinary Ministers - Vincent Tamaro, Mara Tamaro, Nikki Gambino, John Nester
 Altar Server - Tony Vitacco
 Greeters - Patty Wade and Monica Bauer

9:00 AM Mass

Lector - Sylvia Marcheskie
 Extraordinary Ministers - Jim Bucciaglia, Denise Bucciaglia, Jack Bucciaglia
 Altar Server - Tommy Miller and Madelyn Miller
 Greeters - Jack and Lori Carr

REFLECTIONS FROM THE DESK OF FR. GREGORY J. HICKEY

2nd Sunday of Advent

Father John Jacobs who lives in Washington, D.C. tells an interesting story about going to Dulles Airport to pick up a friend who was coming to visit him from Africa. It was a cold winter day and all the trees were bare except for a few firs and pines. This was the first time his friend had ever left his home country in Africa. As he looked at the trees he said, "I had heard about this, but I did not realize things were so bad." Not knowing what his friend was talking about, Fr. Jacobs asked, "What do you mean?" His friend said he heard about air pollution in America and its effect on trees, "but", he said, "I never thought it was as bad as this with all those trees dead!"

In the part of Africa where his friend came from, the trees were always green and most of the time in full bloom. Some trees would lose their leaves for brief periods throughout the year but never all at once as happens here in the fall and winter in the United States. So the visitor from Africa presumed air pollution had killed them all.

Two men saw the same thing and yet their view was entirely different. One saw only death and destruction, the other saw nothing of the kind, for he could see beyond the winter to springtime and new life. Our readings today demonstrate a similar event. Baruch, in today's first reading, is speaking to God's people during the upheaval of the Babylonian exile. He tells them God is ready to bring the exiles back home, and the return home will be a glorious event. By this time the people had lost hope that Jerusalem would ever be rebuilt, and the exiles believed they would be spending the rest of their lives as captives in a foreign land. The prophet saw beyond their present captivity to a glorious future.

The Jews at the time of John the Baptist, 500 years later, were not a free people. They had their temple; Jerusalem had been rebuilt. But they were part of the great Roman Empire. Rome made the rules. Rome collected the taxes and they were heavily taxed. Roman soldiers marched through their streets and a Roman governor who was noted for his brutality, named Pontius Pilate, controlled their land. Most of us think of Pilate as sympathetic or just plain weak because of the way he handled Jesus when Jesus was arrested. Most of us do not know that in a couple of years Pilate would lose his job because his Roman bosses, who were not nice people themselves, considered him too ruthless and violent. The prophet, John the Baptist, saw beyond all their oppression as he quotes from the prophet Isaiah: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."

In our own day there are enough things going on to depress us if we dwell on them all. It might be world events, what greets us in the morning papers, or the social or moral climate we live in. It might be personal worries about our families or the effects the economy is having on all of us. Sometimes we need help to see beyond our present situations. We look to someone who can give us hope. We look for that person who is a prophet who can tell us that spring will soon be here and the trees will be in full bloom again.

This is what our readings are telling us. This is what Jesus' birth is telling us. This is what His presence with us today in the Eucharist is telling us. Today's readings are telling us one more thing. They are telling us we cannot just sit back and wait for it all to happen. We have to prepare. Quoting Isaiah, the Baptist cries out to prepare the way of the Lord.

There is a danger that when I say the word "prepare" most people start thinking "yeah! I have tons of things to get ready!" Suddenly I'll lose their attention while they're making their list and checking it twice thinking of all the things they have to do. That's not what it's all about. The springtime that we have to look forward to depends on our willingness to open our lives to it through faith or we will remain in the cold and dark. The new life we hope for comes to us only when we submit our lives to Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

So when I say prepare, I want you to look into your lives more deeply than thinking of decorations or parties or gifts or cards. Those are nice, but there is more to it. Saint Paul today gives us an idea of what we should be doing to prepare when he tells the Philippians what he prays for them. He prays that their love for God and for each other may increase, that they keep a sense of what is important in life and that they live pure and blameless lives filled with good works. This is my prayer for you on this Second Sunday of Advent.

Have a good week!

Fr. Hickey

Parish Support

WEEKLY BUDGET.....	\$5,000
DEPOSIT FOR DECEMBER 2, 2018.....	\$3,406
Regular Sunday Collection -	\$3,326
Parish Giving -	\$80
WEEKLY DEFICIT.....	(\$1,594)
Year to Date Budget.....	\$115,000
Year to Date Collections.....	\$91,260
Average per week Collection.....	\$3,968
Year to Date Deficit.....	(\$23,740)
Average per week Deficit.....	(\$1,032)

DECEMBER 3, 2017

Deposit.....	\$4,837
2017-2018 Deficit to Date.....	(\$21,267)
Difference from previous year.....	(\$2,473)



A VISIT FROM ST. NICK - Please join us Sunday, December 16 after the 9:00 AM Mass for fellowship in the social hall. We will celebrate with St. Nicholas. There will be crafts, games, card making, and music.

Please bring some baked goods to share and your camera for any photos with St. Nicholas. ALL ARE WELCOME! *If your child is not in our PREP Program, please call, text, or email (610-506-2455 or mboyer@sqsm62.org) to let us know how many children you will be bringing so St. Nicholas has enough treats for everyone.*

NO SECOND SUNDAY HOSPITALITY ON DECEMBER 9 - COME JOIN US FOR THE ST. NICK PARTY ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16!



OUR ADVENT/CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

will be in the vestibule of church until Sunday, January 6. We are collecting items for Birthright of Pottstown. Items most needed are: size 0 to 3 diapers (especially size 3); Wipes...we never have enough of these; Hand sanitizer for diaper bags; Shampoo, baby wash, diaper cream...no powder please; Size Newborn through 18 months infant cloths for boys and girls (especially 0 to 3 months and 18 months); Receiving blankets and changing pads; Bibs; Bottles; Hooded bath towels and crib sheets; small infant toys for ages newborn to 3 months; Maternity clothing, especially extra large sizes; Maternity leggings. Help us decorate our Giving Tree by placing an ornament on the tree for each gift you give. Ornaments are in the box next to the Giving Tree.

MASS ATTENDANCE for December 1-2:

4:00 PM Mass - 167
 9:00 AM Mass - 150
 Total Attendance - 317
 Mass Attendance for December 2/3, 2017 - 372

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

“ADVERTISER OF THE WEEK”

MORGAN BASEMENT WATERPROOFING
 610-696-0100
www.morganbasementwaterproofing.com

CANDY & PIZZELLE SALE sponsored by the Women’s Society on December 8 and 9 after the Masses. Candy: Raisin or peanut clusters in milk or dark chocolate - \$6.00 per ½ pound box; Pizzelles: \$4.00 per dozen.

2019 MASS BOOK - Requests for Masses to be offered on a specific day during 2019 can be made at the parish office. Mass stipend of \$10.00 for weekday Masses and \$15.00 for weekend Masses must be paid at the time you request the Mass Intention.

CHRISTMAS WAFERS are available at the parish office. There are 5 wafers per packet. A donation of \$3.00 per packet or \$5.00 for 2 packets is requested. Wafers available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

HELP NEEDED! We will be decorating the church for Christmas right after Mass on Sunday, December 23. Volunteers always welcome!





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 26 - #754 - Helen Chaykowsky - \$50.00
- November 27 - #880 - unsold
- November 28 - #817 - Shirley Mohn - \$50.00
- November 29 - #419 - unsold
- November 30 - #040 - unsold

NOVEMBER FIGURES: 327 tickets - \$1,635.00. Payout to winners - \$700.00. Printing of tickets - \$100.00. November Profit - \$835.00. THANK YOU to everyone for supporting our Lottery Raffle.

- December 1 - #933 - unsold
- December 2 - #118 - unsold

OPEN HOUSE AND CHRISTMAS CONCERT at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary on Sunday, December 9. Open House and Seminary Tours begin at 1:00 PM. The Concert featuring the Seminarian Choir begins at 4:00 PM in St. Martin of Tours Chapel.

HOLY HOUR OF REPARATION AND PETITION - All Catholics of the greater Philadelphia area are invited to spend time each month before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to ask for His mercy upon His Church in this moment of profound crisis. We come to make reparation for our own sins and those of our bishops and priests. We come also in confident hope that from Christ's super-abounding mercy will come the purification, healing and restoration of holiness for which we long. Next Holy Hour is on Sunday, December 16 from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia. Confessions will be available beginning at 5:30 PM. Each Holy Hour is followed by 6:30 PM Mass.

ST. PHILIP NERI CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE CENTER EVENTS:

"Purgatory" - Tuesday, December 11 from 7:00-8:30 PM, Cost - Free.
 "Sacraments" - Friday January 4 (Matrimony, Holy Orders) from 7:00-8:30 PM, Cost - Free.
 "Letting Love In" - Friday, December 14 and January 25 from 7:00-8:00 PM, Cost - Free.
 Held at St. Philip Neri Catholic Family Life Center, East Greenville.

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 events: Tuesday, December 11 - Bible Study at St. Rose of Lima Parish, North Wales at 7:30 PM. Tuesday, December 18 - Christmas Party at Appalachian Brewing Co., Collegetown. Doors open at 7:00 PM; Talk starts at 7:30 PM. Contact metanoiayoungadults@gmail.com for more information.

ANCESTRAL INNER HEALING RETREAT for men and women on December 14-16 at Malvern Retreat House. Directed by Fr. James Blount, SOLT and Kathleen McCarthy. Come, learn and experience the overwhelming desire of God the Father to free your family lineage from trauma and the sins of generations. To register go to www.malvernretreat.com/calendar or call 610-644-0400.

WIGILLA ADVENT SOCIAL at St. Mary's Hall, Conshohocken on Sunday, December 16 at 12:30 PM (following the 11 AM Mass). This event is co-sponsored by St. Mary's Quasi-Parish and St. Mary Polish American Society and will feature some of the traditional foods enjoyed at a Polish Christmas Eve Wigilia. There will also be a basket raffle and blessed oplatki wafers to take home. Admission is \$15 and \$6 for children 18 or under. Family rate of \$45 for larger families (parents & children). Pre-ordered cinnamon and cheese babka available for \$15 each and frozen potato pierogi available for \$9 a dozen. To purchase tickets for Wigilia Advent Social and order babka and pierogi, email stmaryconshy@gmail.com or call Dorothy Swedkowski (610-630-0861).

FINDING GOD IN ORDINARY TIME is a new book by Christine Eberle, Director of Campus Ministry at Gwynedd Mercy University. It contains four weeks of daily meditations based on true stories, guiding readers across four "terrains" where the presence of God may be spotted in everyday life. Book retails for \$19.95. To learn more visit christine-marie-eberle.com or any online bookseller.