

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

To my family of St. Joseph,

Come Lord Jesus! We continue to focus on inviting Christ into our lives more fully and to prepare ourselves for His Second Coming at the end of time. Even though we associate St. John the Baptist from this weekend's Gospel with Jesus' First Coming, the church emphasizes the message of repentance from the Baptist to exhort us to also repent now in preparation for Jesus' Second Coming. We recall that there is no more complete and effective way for us to repent than the Sacrament of Reconciliation. See elsewhere for the schedule of Advent Penance Services as well as separate times for private opportunities.

On another note, we have finalized the TEMPORARY Mass schedule for the Warren County Parishes. Here it is:

Saturday-	4:30pm	Holy Redeemer
	5:30pm	St. Joseph
Sunday-	8:30am	Holy Redeemer
	9am	St Luke
	10:30am	St. Joseph
	11am	St. Anthony

We will try this until the end of the Faith Formation Year in April and then reevaluate. **WE WILL START THIS NEW SCHEDULE NEXT WEEKEND!** We are aware that this will require sacrifices and changes for some and I continue to hope and pray that we can be open to this change and allow God to help us make the best of it. As far as OFFERTORY envelopes are concerned, you can put your envelope in the collection at any church and it will be sent to the parish for which it is designated.

May God bless our Advent Season.... and our week ahead!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Rich

Our Lady of Perpetual Help ...pray for us!
 St. Patrick, patron of the Diocese of Erie.... pray for us!
 St. Joseph pray for us!
 St. Luke pray for us!

Notes from the pastor...

****Transition Gatherings with St. Luke** One way to foster an effective transition and allow God to bring us new life and vibrancy as we approach our merger with St. Luke in Youngsville is our **Gatherings for Prayer and Fellowship scheduled for Sunday, December 4th at 6:30pm at St. Joseph and Sunday, January 22, 2017 at 6:30pm at St. Luke.** These gatherings are an important way for both communities to show that we are invested in working at making this a smooth and effective transition. I really hope that all of us at St. Joseph make an effort to be a part of this to help pray for this transition and build up our "new" community.

****Solemn Feast of the Immaculate Conception Thursday, December 8th** is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and is a Holy Day of Obligation. We honor our Blessed Mother as the crown of God's creation being conceived without original sin but also as the preeminent example of discipleship and surrender to God's will. **Masses** will be held at St. Joseph at 12:05pm (school) and 5:30pm. Other Area Masses: Holy Redeemer, Wednesday night at 7pm and Thursday at 7am; St Luke in Youngsville AND St. Anthony in Sheffield BOTH at 5pm Wednesday. The Immaculate Conception is also the Patronal feast of the Church of the entire United States of America so we will pray for our American Catholic Church in a special way.

****Transition Prayer** To reinforce that we are at a new stage in the planning process as we move toward implementation, our Pastoral Council has composed a new prayer that we will say every weekend after the intercessions in order to keep this intention at the forefront of our spiritual minds. It can be found on the back of the Mass of Renewal Booklets and below and I encourage you to say it in your personal daily prayers as well.

Transitioning Prayer

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for the many blessings bestowed on St. Luke and St. Joseph.

We have come this far in this pastoral planning process and step into the future with courage and hope.

We praise you God, who bring us healing and salvation, who always provide for your people, and who lead us through uncertainty to a place of peace and trust.

We give thanks to you God who give us all good things through Christ our Lord.

Amen

****Pastoral Associate/ Advancement Director** Betsy Williams, one of our own parishioners and coordinator of our Confirmation program for years, started last week our new Pastoral Associate and Director of Advancement. As Director of Advancement for the parish and school, she will focus on building our School Endowment, Planned Giving, Alumni Communication, Marketing, Annual Appeals and other areas necessary for regular revenue for our parish and school. As Pastoral Associate, she will help supervise our outreach ministries both internally (Parish Care and Concern) and externally (Helping Hands and other ministries). Betsy will be working in and out of the building but can be contacted through the parish office.

****Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12 (USA) and St. Juan Diego, December 9** When we reflect on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe we learn two important lessons, one of faith and one of understanding. Missionaries who first came to Mexico with the conquistadors had little success in the beginning. After nearly a decade, only a few hundred Native Mexicans had converted to the Christian faith. Whether they simply did not understand what the missionaries had to offer or whether they resented these people who made them slaves, Christianity was not popular among the native people. Then in 1531 miracles began to happen. Jesus' own mother appeared to humble Juan Diego. The signs -- of the roses, of the uncle miraculously cured of a deadly illness, and especially of her beautiful image on Juan's mantle -- convinced the people there was something to be considered in Christianity. Within a short time, six million Native Mexicans had themselves baptized as Christians. The first lesson is that God has chosen Mary to lead us to Jesus. No matter what critics may say of the devotion of Mexicans (and Mexican descendants) to Our Lady of Guadalupe, they owe their Christianity to her influence. If it were not for her, they would not know her son, and so they are eternally grateful. The second lesson we take from Mary herself. Mary appeared to Juan Diego not as a European Madonna but as a beautiful Aztec princess speaking to him in his own Aztec language. If we want to help someone appreciate the gospel we bring, we must appreciate the culture and the mentality in which they live their lives. By understanding them, we can help them to understand and know Christ. Our Lady of Guadalupe is patron of the Americas.

Helping Hands

In December, we are collecting non perishables for the Christmas Baskets to be delivered on December 17th. Be sure to keep checking the board in Meyer Hallway as we are always adding new tags. Your generous hearts continue to touch so many lives.

PARISH NEWS

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TAGS Please return your unwrapped gifts to the parish office by December 5th. After that, you can return them directly to the Salvation Army.

CCY BASKET RAFFLE We will have our baskets on display after Masses this weekend. Come see what we have this year. Tickets are 1 for \$1; 10 for \$5 and 25 for \$10. All proceeds support youth activities right here in Warren County.

CHWC ROANOKE We have 15 spots for Catholic Heart Workcamp Roanoke, VA this July 16-22. The cost is \$150.00 and may be paid in installments. If you are interested, please contact Jennifer at 688-3842. Going into grade 9 up to adults are welcome.

SCRIP Our profit for the month of November is \$909.71. This money is free and supports catholic education here in Warren County. The gift season is upon us and gift cards always fit! Stop by the parish office, email or call in your order. The deadline to ensure the cards will be here for Christmas is December 12th.

WORD AMONG US books for December are available by the parish office. A simple request, if you pick up a book, please give a \$1.00 donation or more. This test is running through Christmas. If we get people to donate, we will continue the program. The book has very interesting articles, reflections and daily readings. Pick one up and give it a try for a month. You won't regret it!

CHRISTMAS FOOD FOR THE NEEDY COLLECTION – From now until Thursday, December 15th Nonperishable donations of peanut butter, canned meats, tuna fish, pasta, tomato sauces, spam, soups, mac and cheese, chili, canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, instant oatmeal, mixes of all kinds (muffin, cookie, cake, pudding, jello, brownie, pancake, bread, etc.). Donations of paper towels, toilet paper, napkins are needed as well as hygiene/cleaning supplies (soap, toothpaste, shampoo, plus dish soap and laundry detergent). **Please do NOT bring in turkeys-we have no space to store them.** You may leave your nonperishable donations on the altar steps. Monetary donations are also needed to purchase perishables. Designate on the envelope or check (made out to St. Joseph Church) that the money is for **Christmas Food for the Needy** and place your envelope in the collection baskets during Mass or leave in the parish office or mail to the church address. Box packing will be on Friday, **December 16th**, at 6:30pm in the school gym and deliveries will start with Mass at 8:00am Saturday, **December 17th**. Confirmation and Salt and Light students will receive service hours.

DEEPEN YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS THIS ADVENT through Eucharistic Adoration. Pope Francis says, "One cannot know the Lord without the habit of adoring, of adoring in silence," Consider praying before the tabernacle or Monstrance for 10 minutes this week.

ADULT FORMATION NEWS

Due to the need for Father Rich to celebrate Mass at Saint Luke on December 11th, he will no longer be the catechist for Confirmation class that day. Jennifer will be teaching Confirmation so we will have to cancel Adult Formation that day. Thank you for your understanding. If you would like to attend the class on Mary, you are welcome to sit in on Confirmation class. Please let Jennifer know that you will be joining us.

AROUND THE AREA

Follow the Star Christmas Concert Holy Redeemer will host the concert this year on Sunday, December 18th, at 3pm. There's a new cast and new songs! Tickets are Adults-\$15.00 and Students-\$5.00. Tickets can be purchased in advanced at Holy Redeemer parish office or at the door the day of the concert. Treat yourself and others to a wonderful afternoon filled with the sounds of Christmas. For additional information please call 723-4444.

Advent Services at United Methodist The First United Methodist Church in Warren will host Thursday noon services followed by a luncheon and dessert. This is a fantastic Advent opportunity on Dec 1, 8, 15, & 22.

Liturgy Corner

Perhaps the best-known of all Advent symbols is the **Advent wreath**, a custom which originated among German Lutherans but was soon adopted by Catholics. Consisting of four candles (three purple and one rose) arranged in a circle with evergreen boughs (and often a fifth, white candle in the center), the Advent wreath corresponds to the four Sundays of Advent. The purple candles represent the penitential nature of the season, while the rose candle calls to mind the respite of Gaudete Sunday. (The white candle, when used, represents Christmas.) We have one in the sanctuary here at St. Joseph and you are encouraged to put one up in your home and to use it as a focal point for family prayer during this special season.



Liturgical Symbolism for Advent The Church continues to stress the penitential and preparatory nature of Advent. As during Lent, **priests wear purple vestments**, and the Gloria ("Glory to God") is omitted during Mass. The only exception is on the Third Sunday of Advent, known as **Gaudete Sunday**, when priests can wear rose-colored vestments. As on **Laetare Sunday** during Lent, this exception is designed to encourage us to continue our prayer and fasting, because we can see that Advent is more than halfway over.

SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Our Christmas Concert is December 7th at 6:30pm. Mrs. Harvey has worked really hard preparing us and we'd love to sing for all of you. We invite everyone to come hear the sounds of the season.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, 12/4 - Second Sunday of Advent
 8:00am Linda Hays by John & Patty
 10:30am Living and Deceased Parishioners of Saint Joseph (Youth Choir)

Monday, 12/5 - Advent Weekday
 9:00am Mass at St. Luke in Youngsville

Tuesday, 12/6 - Saint Nicholas
 12:05pm Jordan McTavish by Family

Wednesday, 12/7 - Saint Ambrose
 9:05am Alice Tomasone by Cheri Taylor, Jeff and Anthony Ceriola
 10:30am Mass at Rouse Home
 5:00pm Vigil Mass at St. Luke in Youngsville

Thursday, 12/8 - The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 12:05pm School Mass - George & Trudy Murphy by LeMeur Family
 5:30pm William Massa, Sr. by Theresa, Bill and Mary

Friday, 12/9 - Saint Juan Diego Cauhtlatatzin
 8:00am Sp Int. for John Pulice by Family

Saturday, 12/10 - Advent Weekday
 8:00am Francis & Rita Hultquist by Family
 5:30pm Sam & Jennie Castagnino by Grandchildren (Adult Choir)

Sunday, 12/11 - Third Sunday of Advent
 9:00am Mass at St. Luke in Youngsville
 10:30am Joan DeStefano by Carl DeStefano Family (Praise and Worship)

Monday Isaiah 35:1-10; Gospel - Luke 5:17-26
Tuesday Isaiah 40:1-11; Gospel - Matthew 18:12-14
Wednesday Isaiah 40:25-31; Gospel - Matthew 11:28-30
Thursday Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11; Gospel - Luke:1:26-38
Friday Isaiah 48:17-19; Gospel - Matthew 11:16-19
Saturday Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Gospel - Matthew 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8
Sunday Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Gospel - Matthew 3:1-12

WEEKLY SANCTUARY CANDLES in memory of
 Francis & Rita Hultquist by Family

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 4
 9:00am K-9 Faith Formation (School)
 9:30am Praise Team Rehearsal (Church)
 10:30am Youth Mass (Church)
 11:30am Christmas Choir Practice (Church)
 6:30pm Prayer and Fellowship with St. Luke (Church and Meyer Hall)
 7:00pm HS CCY (Youth Room)

Monday, December 5
 4:30pm RCIA Team Meeting (Meyer Hall)

Tuesday, December 6
 4:30pm Soup Kitchen (Cafeteria)
 6:30pm Pastoral Council Meeting (Boardroom)

Wednesday, December 7
 10:30am Faith Share (Boardroom)
 10:30am Mass at the Rouse Home (Youngsville)
 5:00pm Vigil Mass at St. Luke (Youngsville)
 6:30pm SJCS Christmas Concert (Gym)

Thursday, December 8
 8:00am Adoration (Mother's Chapel)
 12:05pm School Mass (Church)
 5:30pm Mass (Church)
 6:30pm RCIA (Meyer Hall)
 6:45pm School Feasibility Meeting (Library)

Friday, December 9
 12:45pm School Penance Service (Church)

Saturday, December 10
 4:30pm Reconciliation (Church)

Sunday, December 11
 9:00am K-9 Faith Formation (School)
 10:30am "Call to be Confirmed" Mass for Confirmation Candidates (Church)
 Coffee / Donuts after Mass (Cafeteria)
 1:00pm Christmas Choir Practice (Church)
 3:00pm Corry Penance Service (Corry)

In your charity, please pray for the soul of **Richard Scalise**, father of **Randy & Michelle Scalise**, whose Rite of Christian Burial was celebrated on Monday, November 28. Also keep in your prayers Joseph Guadagnino, father of **Steve & Carol Guadagnino**, and Homer Peck, father of **Gary & Patsy Peck**, who passed away recently. We extend our sympathy to all their families and ask God's love and strength to bring them peace and consolation.

LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULES

	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Extraordinary Ministers</u>	<u>Altar Servers</u>
12/10 5:30pm	K Jones	F Perrin, P Tack, P Bailey, D Labowski, D & K Weigel,	L Walker S Walker
12/11 10:30am	Confirmation Students	S Cole, G Grosch, B Harvey, K Morse, A Kirkpatrick, *C Luppino, M Trachier	C Smelko N Smelko R Shattuck

Weekly Donations - November 27: \$ 6,055
 CSA Pledged: \$124,572; Paid to date: \$ 108,541
 Thank you for your continued generosity!

VOCATIONS ICON
 We would like to thank **Dena & David Pearson** for taking the Vocations Icon this week and praying for an increase in vocations here at St. Joseph Catholic Church.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

Nancy J. Shattuck
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