



St. Mary, Mother of God

A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust
Roman Catholic Church
608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229



Established 1826

December 4th, 2016
Second Sunday of Advent



Father Ronald Maquiñana—Pastor
rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Parish Staff

William Girardi, *Pastoral Associate—412-719-7085*
Claudia Vertosick, *Business Manager/Parish Secretary*
Helen James, *Religious Education Director*
Thomas Koharchik, *Choir Director*
Cynthia Harbison, *Social Hall Coordinator*
David Valencic, *Parish Custodian*
Richard Bertino, *Cemetery Caretaker*

Ministries

Kristen Marhefka/Julie Polana Gardone—*Teen Ministry*
Melissa Kristine/Beth Macurdy—*Evangelization*
John Nemcek—*Homebound Ministry*

Organizations

Jean Miller—*Christian Mothers*
Ray Smetana/Mary Ellen Gray—*St. Vincent de Paul Society*

Office Information

Administrative Center Numbers & Hours :
724-295-2281 (Office) 724-295-3090 (Fax)
Monday through Thursday - 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
Friday - 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Parish Website: www.stmaryfreeport.com

Parish Email Address: thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com

Parish Information

Saturday (Vigil): 4:00 P.M.

Sunday: 8:30 & 11:00 A.M.

Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday—8:00 A.M.

Holy Day of Obligation: 8:00 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.

Reconciliation: Saturday - 3:00—3:45 P.M.

Baptism: Sundays within the 11:00 A.M. Mass (by appointment)

Marriage: Contact the Parish nine months in advance.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: RCIA helps you to learn more about the Catholic faith. Pre-registration is required. Contact Fr. Ron or William Girardi at 724-295-2281.

Hospital or Home Visit: If you would like to receive Holy Communion or if you know someone who would like to have the priest visit, please call Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

Anointing of the Sick: Contact Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

Holy Communion: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are available to bring the Eucharist to the sick and homebound. If you know of someone, please call the Administrative Center at 724-295-2281.

Baptism: To understand the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. To register for one of these classes, please call the Administrative Center at 724-295-2281.

From the Pastor's Desk



Last week we did the blessing of our Advent wreath and the lighting of the first candle in observance of the Advent Season. You may ask, why are we doing this during the Advent Season? What is the significance of the Advent wreath?

Well, the Advent wreath is part of our long-standing Catholic tradition. However, the actual origins are uncertain. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic people using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future warm and extended-sunlight days of Spring.

By the Middle Ages, the Christians adapted this tradition and used Advent wreaths as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. After all, Christ is “the Light that came into the world” to dispel the darkness of sin and to radiate the truth and love of God (cf. John 3:19-21). By 1600, both Catholics and Lutherans had more formal practices surrounding the Advent wreath.

The symbolism of the Advent wreath is beautiful. *The wreath is made of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life found in Christ.*

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. Three candles are purple and one is rose. The purple candles, in particular, symbolize the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead.

The light, again, signifies Christ, the Light of the world. Some modern day adaptations include a white candle placed in the middle of the wreath, which represents Christ, and is lit on Christmas Eve.

In family practices, the Advent wreath is most appropriately lit at dinner time after the blessing of the food. A traditional prayer service using the Advent wreath proceeds as follows: On the First Sunday of Advent, the father of the family blesses the wreath, praying: “O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth Thy blessing upon this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from Thee abundant graces, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.” He then continues for each of the days of the first week of Advent, “O Lord, stir up Thy might, we beg thee, and come, that by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and saved by Thy deliverance, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.” The youngest child then lights one purple candle.

During the second week of Advent, the father prays: “O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare for Thy only begotten Son, that through His coming we may be made worthy to serve Thee with pure minds, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.” The oldest child then lights the purple candle from the first week plus one more purple candle.

During the third week of Advent, the father prays: “O Lord, we beg Thee, incline Thy ear to our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation. Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.” The mother then lights the two previously lit purple candles plus the rose candle.

Finally, the father prays during the fourth week of Advent: “O Lord, stir up Thy power, we pray Thee, and come; and with great might help us, that with the help of Thy grace, Thy merciful forgiveness may hasten what our sins impede. Who lives and reigns forever. Amen.” The father then lights all of the candles of the wreath.

Since Advent is a time to stir-up our faith in the Lord, the wreath and its prayers provide us a way to augment this special preparation for Christmas. Moreover, this good tradition helps us to remain vigilant in our homes and not lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas.

(Source: Saunders, Rev. William. “The History of the Advent Wreath.” Arlington Catholic Herald.)



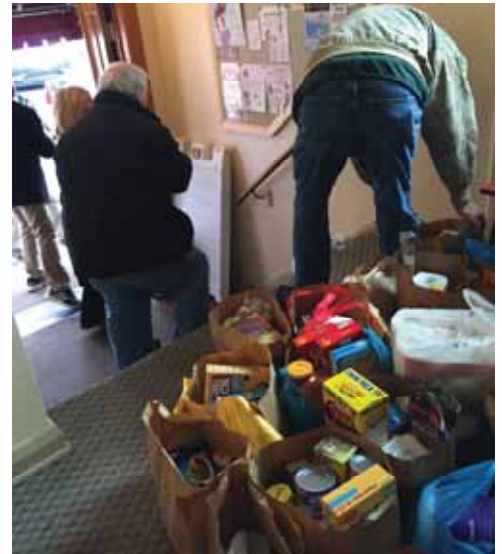
Advent Wreath



**Congratulations to
Samantha Graham
and
Timothy Jones
who were united in
Holy Matrimony
on November 5th.**



Thank you to all the food donors for our annual "Blessing Bag Campaign". 201 filled bags of groceries were received and taken to our Freeport Food Bank. Thank you, also, to Giant Eagle for their support by donating the brown paper bags for this collection. A big thank you to the volunteers who loaded up all the bags and transported them to the Food Bank. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is greatly appreciated!



History of St. Mary's Week 3

Father Mitchell undertook the erection of a new church to replace the old one that was becoming too small. Lots were purchased beside it, and work was commenced without the delay of the ceremony of the laying of a corner stone. The dedication was performed by the Bishop on December 28, 1851. The church was bricked, 85 feet in length, by 45 feet in width, and had a steeple in the center in front. The interior was furnished with two altars, one of which was erected some years later. The building was modeled after the Gothic style of architecture, and was superior to almost all the churches erected at that time; the cost was \$25,000. In 1858, Rev. R. Phelan was appointed and remained ten years. He improved the interior of the church, purchased a few acres of ground for a cemetery, and also bought a pastoral residence. A school house was erected, but remained open only a short time due to a depression in 1873.



Thursday, December 8th is the *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception* and a holy day of obligation. Mass will be celebrated at 8:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.

Becoming a Member of St. Mary, Mother of God Church

Welcome! It is a great joy to welcome new members to our parish community. Please register as soon as possible in order to participate in our various programs, ministries and activities. Just drop this form in the collection basket and we will send you a detailed registration form. If you are already a member and have changed any of your personal information (address, phone number, name, etc.), please return the changes on the form below. It is important to keep our records up to date.

St. Mary, Mother of God Membership Request / Change

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

New Registration

Moving

Change Address/Phone



**Thanksgiving Day
Mass**
November 24, 9:00am



ADVENT
HOPE
PEACE • JOY • LOVE

*May the years ahead be
filled with all the
happiness in the world.
Congratulations!*

*Happy 25th Wedding Anniversary
Mark and Melissa Kristine*



PARISH NEWS

**CALENDAR
of Events**

- December 5th** Christian Mother's Meeting - 7:00 P.M.
- December 8th** Feast of the Immaculate Conception—Holyday of Obligation - Masses - 8:00 A.M. & 7:00 P.M. RCIA - 6:30 P.M. - Conference Room
- December 11th** Religious Education Classes - 9:30—10:35 A.M. Security Guard - "Christina Kapinskis" Choir Practice - 9:45—10:45 A.M.; 11:00 A.M. Mass Advent Program - 6:30 to 8:30 P.M.
- December 12th** Fr. Ron - 10th Sacerdotal Anniversary - 3:00 P.M. Mass followed by a reception in Fellowship Hall
- December 18th** Teen Ministry Meeting - 9:25 A.M. Religious Education Christmas Party - 9:30 A.M. Security Guard - "Christina Kapinskis" Choir Practice - 9:45—10:45 A.M.; 11:00 A.M. Mass Baptism - "Mientus" - within the 11:00 A.M. Mass Christmas Choral Concert - 6:30 P.M.



Have you signed up for FORMED yet? It is as easy as clicking on the FORMED icon (found on the homepage or under "Studying Our Faith" on the parish website: stmaryfreeport.com). This will pre-fill our parish code. Or you can go to FORMED.org, click on the "Register" button and use our Parish Code VNX4G6. If you are using Internet Explorer and having problems, try a different browser.

Suggestions for this week

Programs: Advent, Session 2: Trust in God, YDisciple Advent, Session 2 - Trust in God, Symbolon - Knowing the Faith, Session 9 - Mary and the Saints; The Bible and the Virgin Mary, Lesson 9 - Full of Grace

Audio: Mary: Handmaid of the Lord

Movie: Restless Heart, Mary of Nazareth

Ebook: The World's First Love



The monthly meeting will be held on Monday, December 5th, at 7:00 P.M., in the Christian Mother's Room. The rosary will be prayed at 6:30 P.M.



The Mardi Gras wine tasting festival will be held on Saturday, February 25th, 2017, from 6:00 - 10:00 P.M. Please mark your calendars now and plan on attending. Tickets are \$30.00 each. Proceeds will benefit the Fellowship Hall sound system.

Bag a Buck to Fight Hunger! Go to: www.sharedeer.org or call 1-866-HSH-2141 for details.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 10TH & 11TH, 2016

Altar Servers

*Extraordinary
Ministers
Of Holy Communion*

Lector

Organist

Cantor

Saturday - 4:00 P.M.

Bill Girardi
Fred Walker

Andrea Camerlo
Fred Walker
Jackie DeFelice

Dave Brestensky

Verne Bergstrom

Alex Smith

Sunday - 8:30 A.M.

Samuel Kristine
Jacob Kristine
Ali Brestensky

Lisa Boylan
John Nemcek
Betty Lou Nemcek

Laura Huth

Tom Koharchik

Tom Koharchik

Sunday - 11:00 A.M.

Marie Pelliccione
Megan Rossey; Paige Liti
Mason DeMeno

Lisa Isenberg
Doree Rossey
Marushka Steele

CCD—6th Grade

Dave Wesolosky

Choir

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

MASSES FOR THE 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- SATURDAY:** December 3rd
4:00 P.M. ✦ William R. Burk (Judith A. Kelly)
- SUNDAY:** December 4th
8:30 A.M. ✦ Don Macurdy (Rose Marie Smith)
11:00 A.M. St. Mary Parishioners
- MONDAY:** December 5th
8:00 A.M. ✦ John Costantino (Bill & Mary Fullerton)
- TUESDAY:** December 6th
8:00 A.M. ✦ Richard Bayne (Bob & Judy Bergstrom)
- WEDNESDAY:** December 7th
8:00 A.M. ✦ William Aiello (Brother—Fred)
- THURSDAY:** December 8th
8:00 A.M. St. Mary Parishioners
7:00 P.M. ✦ Kim Lewis (Tom & Jamie Phillips)
- FRIDAY:** December 9th
8:00 A.M. ✦ Leonard Stanoski (Wife—Norma Jane)

MASSES FOR THE 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- SATURDAY:** December 10th
4:00 P.M. St. Mary Parishioners
- SUNDAY:** December 11th
8:30 A.M. ✦ Morris & Elva Berry (Family)
11:00 A.M. ✦ Bill Burk & Mary Louise Ruk (David & Cleatus Burk)



The Altar Bread and Wine were donated for this week in loving memory of **WALTER & HANNAH KONKLE** By **Bill & Mary Fullerton**



In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ, The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn this week in loving memory of **JOHN BONO** By **Kathy & Matt Williams**

Collections

Offertory Collection for November 20th, 2016

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 591
No. of Envelopes Received: 211
Collection: Offertory - \$4,839.00
Loose - \$396.00
Children - \$20.00

Retired Fund for the Religious - \$50.00
Archdiocese for the Military - \$25.00

Offertory Collection for November 27th, 2016

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 591
No. of Envelopes Received: 206
Collection: Offertory - \$4,607.00
Loose - \$480.00
Children - \$29.56

Poverty Relief Fund/Catholic Relief Services - \$1,072.25
THANK YOU!



Saturday, December 10th, 2016
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Keddie Chevrolet



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