

PARISH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Selvaraj Lucas, M.S.C.

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Finance Manager: Carolyn Marchese

Dir. of Religious Education: Donna Sciacca

Parish Office Manager: Donna Sciacca

Parish Secretary: Rebecca Tirpok

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MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00pm

Sunday: 8:00am & 10:30am

Mon - Thurs: 8:35am / Fri: 9am

Holy Days: 9:00am & 7:30pm

CONFESSION: Saturdays 4:15pm - 4:45pm
or by appointment.

Register: Please contact the parish office to register when you move into our parish.

Only registered parishioners, in good standing, can receive a Certificate of Eligibility to act as a Godparent or sponsor.

BAPTISMS: The Sacrament of Baptism is administered on the fourth Sunday of every month. Parents are encouraged



to invite family members to the 10:30 Mass as the Sacrament of Baptism takes place immediately following the Mass. Parents and Godparents must attend an enrichment class approx. 1 month prior to the Baptism. You will need to call the Parish Office to register for this class. A Godparent must

be a committed, practicing Catholic, and if from another parish, must provide a certificate of eligibility from their pastor. A Christian of other denominations may serve as a Godparent along with a practicing Catholic.

MARRIAGE: A Saturday Mass for the Sacrament of



Matrimony may be celebrated no later than 1pm. Couples planning marriage are to contact the parish office & schedule a meeting with our wedding coordinator no later than 6 months in advance of the wedding. Shorter preparation

periods must be approved by our Pastor. Couples will meet several times with the Pastor throughout the preparation process. Couples are to attend a Pre-Cana program approved by our Pastor.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please call the rectory at any



time for the Sacrament of the Sick. Also the Holy Eucharist will be brought to the sick and shut-ins upon request to the Parish Office. We celebrate a Communal Anointing of the Sick in June, near the **Feast of St. John the Baptist.**

**Mass Intentions
for the Week of Dec. 16- 22, 2019
Daily Mass**

*Morning Prayer in St. Joseph Chapel, Mon. – Fri. at 8:15am
Mon – Thurs. 8:35am (Chapel); Friday at 9am (Church)*

Monday: Intentions of Bernadette Strzelecki (*Jim & Joan Black*)

Tuesday: Robert Bomer (*Jolene Stephens & Family*)

Wednesday: Maria Meier (*Ron Meier*)

Thursday: Pat Cain (*Kosmin Family*)

Friday: Mike Renzi (*Joe, Leanne, & Lydia Renzi*)

SATURDAY

5pm: John Reidler (*Loving Daughter & Family*)

SUNDAY

8am: Parishioners' Intentions

10:30am: Mike Renzi (*Joe & Linda Renzi*)

Meetings this Week

Mon. Dec. 16: K of C, 7:30pm – Parish hall

Tues. Dec. 17: CYO (boys), 7:45-9pm – School Gym

Wed. Dec. 18: CYO (girls), 7pm – School Gym

Thurs. Dec. 19: CYO (boys), 7-8:30pm – School Gym

Sat. Dec. 21: Men of Faith, 9am – Chapel & Marian Rm.

**Sun. Dec. 22: Advent Book Study, 9:15am – Marian Rm
Conquest & Challenge, 6:30pm - School**

2019 Weekly Mass Collection

Sunday, December 8

Envelopes \$

Electronic \$

Thank you for your generosity!



SEEKING JOY IN THE DESERT
REFLECTIONS FOR GAUDETE SUNDAY

Today, the Church calls us to joy. Marked by rose-colored candles and vestments, the Third Sunday of Advent is known as “*Gaudete* (Rejoice) Sunday.” The name comes from today’s liturgy’s entrance antiphon, taking up St. Paul’s encouragement to the Philippians (4:4-6): “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice!”

Our readings emphasize the realism of this joy by its unlikely setting: the desert. For exiles returning to the Promised Land, Isaiah proclaims that the desert “will exult, [...] bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song” (Isaiah 35:1-2). Jesus asks what John’s listeners expected to find when they went to see him in the desert (Matthew 11:7-9). Both Isaiah and Jesus draw contrasts with the common experience of deserts.

Deserts can be harsh and unforgiving, places where certain fundamental truths—about one’s limits, one’s resources, one’s identity—can be evaded only at the risk of death. But, as in much of the history of Israel, the desert is a site of truth in relation to God and ourselves. It is the place where our securities and comforts disappear so as to show who (or what) we truly rely upon, to enable us to grow in our reliance upon and love for God.

Encountering the truth of ourselves and the world makes joy more difficult, and the most difficult temptation of the desert is what the early desert monastics called *acedia*. Often called “the noonday demon,” *acedia* is that sickness of spirit which drains inherently joyful things of their joy. It makes the hours of the day interminable. It suggests our lives and struggles are meaningless. It urges us to give up. Ultimately, *acedia* seeks to convince us that God cannot act in and through us, in and through our situations, hopeless as they are.

We are asked to have joy in the desert in order to testify to *acedia*’s delusion. We rejoice in the midst of harsh and uncomfortable truths, the truth of the world’s and our own brokenness, because God is transforming our reality *here and now*. The love of God, which culminated in the Incarnation, leaves no corner of human existence separate from God: not pain, not death, not structural injustice, not sickness, not the twisted effects of sin. We see this in Jesus’s miracles: “the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them” (Matthew 11:5). We see this in Jesus’s Cross and resurrection, which open God’s love to the world in the Spirit who works through us. Even here,

even in us, the love of God can cause life to rise from the parched sands of our world.

On this Gaudete Sunday, God offers us the change to develop joy as a habit, an acquired way of being in the midst of our waiting for Christ. Joy may come less naturally to us as we grow, as we suffer, as we see the world’s ills. But God desires us to have joy, because God is acting in and through Christ and us to transform all things. In our participation in that love of God acting, our joy can enter all situations. Let us ask for that joy in whatever desert we find ourselves in, knowing that God shares all things with us. Let that deliberate cultivation of joy help us prepare to celebrate the ultimate cause for joy: God taking on all things human to share them with us and let us share them with all our brothers and sisters.





**ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE
MONDAY, DEC. 16th**

6:15pm in the Main church

*Obligatory attendance for all (Mon & Tues)
PREP Students in Gr. 2nd - 7th.*

Students in 1st Grade are excused this week.

*This service takes the place of classes this week.
Attendance will be taken by each teacher.*

Students should arrive by 6:15 latest, enter main church and take a seat in the pew with their class. Teachers will be on hand to receive their class.

➡ *Parents please do not drop off your child and leave. Students will be dismissed as soon as they complete their penance.*

† **Advent Virtues** †

Prayerfulness	Being still, listening, and being willing to talk to God as a friend
Humility	Awareness that all our gifts come from God and appreciation of the gifts of others
Obedience	Assenting to rightful authority without hesitation or resistance
Generosity	Giving of oneself in a willing and cheerful manner for the good of others
Gratitude	Thankful disposition of mind and heart
Patience	Bearing present difficulties calmly
Docility	Willingness to be taught



The Regina Academy at St. John the Baptist

Knowing - Loving - Serving - Leading

We're Hiring!

Kindergarten Teacher

Full-Time position - Incl. health benefits.

Candidates should have prior experience teaching at this level and be actively practicing their Catholic Faith. Experience in Montessori education is preferred but not required. Applicants must be able to pass necessary background clearances. Letters of reference will be required as well as a letter from their pastor verifying that the applicant is a Catholic in good standing.

Send a letter of interest and resume to:
Mrs. Tami Koerber, tkoerber@rasjb.org,
or call 307-699-1534.

SAVE THE DATE



**Christmas Tableau
Friday, Dec. 20, 2019 at 7pm**

Mrs. Tami Koerber, Head of School
tkoerber@rasjb.org
Mrs. Amy Mattle, Admissions Director
amattle@rasjb.org / 267-424-5762
www.rasjb.org



WE ARE SAVING A SEAT JUST FOR YOU!
Join our rehearsals at 7pm on TUESDAYS
THEN JOIN US FOR OUR
CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

FATIMA HOUSE RETREAT CENTER

Bedminster, PA

“A Quiet Country Retreat”

Offering Day & Overnight Retreats for Individuals
and Small Groups



Monday, 7pm

Adoration & Prayers

Wednesday, 9:30am

Adoration & Prayers

3rd Sunday, 12pm

Adoration & Prayer

for Vocations

1st Saturday, 10am

Rosary, Confession,

Mass & Lunch

For more information or directions, please call Joan Black
at 215-536-3508, visit fatimahousebedminster.webs.com

A few ways to prepare for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ:

1. Buy or make an **Advent Wreath**.
2. **Make a Holy Hour** - spend time before our Lord weekly in Adoration.
3. **Generosity** - Gifts for the Needy - How can you support those you know and in our community who are in need with food, clothing and shelter?
Have you taken a gift tag off of our Lord's Pantry Giving Tree?
4. **Make time for Jesus** - set aside time each day for prayer; read the Bible or Advent Devotional. Why not join our Advent Devotional Book Study that meets on Sundays at 9:15am, following the 8am Mass.
5. **Be A Disciple** – Evangelize! Experience the joy of being a disciple of the Lord and share that joy with everyone.

Pope asks all Catholics to set-up, and become enchanted by a Nativity scene



Chapel at Greccio, Italy – The stone under the Altar is on which St. Francis placed the first manger.

A Nativity scene is a simple reminder of something astonishing: God became human to reveal the greatness of his love “by smiling and opening his arms to all,” Pope Francis said in a letter on the meaning and importance of setting up Christmas cribs.

“Wherever it is, and whatever form it takes, the Christmas Creche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman and child, regardless of their condition.”

Greccio, Italy, is where St. Francis of Assisi set up the first Nativity scene in 1223. When St. Francis had a cave prepared with a hay-filled manger, an ox and a donkey — no statues or actors or baby, even — he “carried out a great work of evangelization,” and Catholics can and must continue that work today.

At the heart of even the simplest Nativity scene, he said, there is a reminder of “God’s tender love: the Creator of the universe lowered himself to take up our littleness.”

The whole scene, he said, reminds adult Catholics of their childhood and of learning the faith from their parents and grandparents. Each year, it should be a reminder that the faith needs to be passed on to one’s children and grandchildren.

Standing together before a Nativity scene, in wonder and awe, he said, is a simple way to start.



PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK:

Roger Bahnck Sr., Nancy Beans, John Becker, Loretta Bodisch, Ross Brinkert, Anne Colyer, Charlene Cornell, Matthew Crance, Jim Crawford, Chrissy Davis, MaryJane Deutsch, Dominic Diamond, Larry & Joanne Diehl, Terry Dunn, Arlene

Eichlin, Marvin Eichlin, George Farrelly, **Julia Ferguson**, Patricia Fite, Crystal Fleck, Sarah Fleck, Thomas Fleck, Herman Fleck, Claire Fratrick, Kathi Gallegher, Addie Gardner, Kathleen Gaughan, Marie & Rosalyn Giardullo, Anna Giebler, **Jack Glancey**, Mary Halwski, Maryann Hauber, Joyceann Heley, Michael Heuston, **Thomas High**, Sharon Horvath, Marilyn Hull, Martha Juchnowicz, Donald B. Knight, Valerie Korbar, Aleena Lang, Nate Leidtke, Ryan Leven, Kathy Lightkep, Jackie Litzenberger, Charles Lutcavage, Colleen Lynch, Loretta Malloy, Jill Martindell, Peg Masse, Adelaide McElderry, Carol McGlinchey, Bridget McHugh, Anne McNichol, Emma Michael, Maria Middleton, Nancy Moreno, Lorraine Mosolgo, Harvey Mueller, James O’Hanlon, Gary Palmer, Helen Pepkowski, Victoria Pepkowski, Nicholas Powell, Don Raman, Mike Ramos, Gregory Rickert,

Sandy Romaszewski, Sam Rothman, Frederick R. Rude, Dolly Rutherford, Bob Sheetz, Lana Schell, Ronald Schultz, Sr., Steve Salva, Shane Stroup, Riley Telesca, Sean Thatcher, Cynthia Tocci, Maddie Tomaszewski, Douglas Toner, Betty Ventresca, Helen Wall, MaryJane Whealton, Tamara Widmer, Ed Wismer, Liem Zbyszinski

Jamie Steven Ayuso, Fiona M. Boyle, Derek Brosius,



Christopher Brune,
Kyle Crossland,
Casey de Lauretis,
David Fisher,
Michael Froeder,
A.J. Giovino,
Aaron Given,

Matthew Gumprecht, Bob Hankinson, Victor Hormilla, Stephen Lindmeier, Jason Litschauer, Cory Litzenberger, Dan O’Connor, Jonathan Pucci, Dusty Rhodes, Craig Russell

**Ministry Schedule for
Dec. 21st & 22nd: Fourth Sunday of Advent**

	Extraordinary Minister	Lector	Altar Server	Music
Saturday 5pm	Jim Black Peg Glancey Dave Slifer Marion Wolf	Anne Slifer	Joel Roney Martin Elsner	Mary Pucci Karen Parash
Sunday 8am	Nancy Kaczinski Renee Moyer Donna Nice Bea Romaszewski	Marie Burke	NEED VOLUNTEERS	Kate Minster Karen Parash
Sunday 10:30am	Joan Beebe Dolly Kovacs Cathy Leidtke Donna Sciacca	Tony Luna	Joseph Gonzales-Fleck Elia Logaivau Olivia Luna	Liz Torgerson Fred Furmaniak

For the most up to date information on our parish visit our website at: www.stjohnsottsville.org



and don't forget to like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ottsville