

APPOINTMENTS

ACOLYTES:

Sat. Dec. 31 - 4:00 PM - Claire Resick, Julie Resick
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 8:00 AM - Danielle Miller, Ethan Miller
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 11:00 AM - Nathan Ringkamp, not filled

LECTORS:

Sat. Dec. 31 - 4:00 PM - Joyce Cunningham, Maria Spayd
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 8:00 AM - Tim Rea, Fran Semelsberger
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 11:00 AM - Bill Foose, Norma Foose

EUCARISTIC MINISTERS:

Sat. Dec. 31 - 4:00 PM - John Lloyd, Connie Baker
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 8:00 AM - Mary Truesdale, Melissa McHugh
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 11:00 AM - David Petrak, Mary Petrak, Pam Klobuka,
 Bob Olson, Paul Dennis, Mary Dennis

MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY:

Sat. Dec. 31 - 4:00 PM - Christine Stachmus, Denny Stachmus,
 Judy Sneath, Dorothy Yingling
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 8:00 AM - Helen Miller, Ed Stoltz, Larry VanSickel,
 Paula VanSickel,
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 11:00 AM - Peg Madden, Walter Bloom, Dolores
 Capriotti, Marilyn Bevan

SACRISTAN:

Sat. Dec. 31 - 4:00 PM - Ron & Joyce Cunningham
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 8:00 AM - Michele DeFrancisco
 Sun. Jan. 1 - 11:00 AM - Barbara Bundy

PASTORAL STAFF:

- Msgr. Michael Becker mbecker253@aol.com
- Deacon Gene Neral gene@lifeinfocus.net
- Mr. Mark Krepich RCIA & Parish Council President
mark.krepich@gmail.com
- Mrs. Deborah Johnson Director of Music /Pastoral Associate
dj219@msn.com
- Mr. & Mrs. Bill & Norma Foose Stephen Ministry
norma.foose@yahoo.com
- Mrs. Mary Ann Mirobelli Business Manager
stjohnchurch@atlanticbb.net
- Mrs. Mary Haenig Religious Education Director
mshaenig@gmail.com
- Mr. Ken Dunmire Maintenance

**TODAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID,
 A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN FOR YOU!**



**DECEMBER 25, 2016
 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
 ST. JOHN THE
 EVANGELIST CHURCH
 309 LOTZ AVENUE
 814-942-5503
www.stjohnsaltoona.org**

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- December 26 - Parish Office closed.
- December 27 St. John the Evangelist Feast Day - 8:30AM Mass followed by breakfast at a local restaurant
- January 2 - Parish Office closed.
- March 11 - Love Feast

A Few Words from the Pastor:

The Twelve Days of Christmas Begin! These are not the 12 days leading up to Christmas, but the twelve days which begin with Christmas and lead up to the Feast of Epiphany! These 12 days are important because they give us a way of reflecting on what the Incarnation means in our lives. The three traditional feasts (dating back to the late fifth century) that follow Christmas reflect different ways in which the mystery of the Incarnation works itself out in the body of Christ.

♥ December 26 is the feast of St. Stephen—a traditional day for giving leftovers to the poor (as described in the carol "Good King Wenceslas"). As one of the first deacons, Stephen was the forerunner of all those who show forth the love of Christ by their generosity to the needy. But more than this, he was the first martyr of the New Covenant, witnessing to Christ by the ultimate gift of his own life.

♥ St. John the Evangelist, commemorated on December 27, is traditionally the only one of the twelve disciples who did *not* die a martyr. Rather, John witnessed to the Incarnation through his words, proclaiming in the first chapter of his gospel that "in the beginning was the Word...and through Him all things were made...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

♥ On December 28, we celebrate the feast of the Holy Innocents, the children murdered by Herod. These were not martyrs like Stephen, who died heroically in a vision of the glorified Christ. They were not inspired like John to speak the Word of life and understand the mysteries of God. They died unjustly before they had a chance to know or to will—but they died for Christ nonetheless. In them we see the long agony of those who suffer and die through human injustice, never knowing that they have been redeemed. If Christ did not come for them too, then surely Christ came in vain. In celebrating the Holy Innocents, we remember the victims of abortion, of war, of abuse. We renew our faith that the coming of Christ brings hope to the most hopeless. And, in the most radical way possible, we confess that like the murdered children we are saved by the sheer mercy of Christ, not by our own doing or knowing.

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE:
MONDAY•TUESDAY•THURSDAY•FRIDAY: 8:30AM
WEDNESDAY: 6:00PM
SATURDAY: 4:00PM
SUNDAY: 8:00AM•11:00AM

♥ **The Feast of the Holy Family** – This feast, usually celebrated on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year's, is observed this year on Friday, December 30. This feast is a liturgical celebration in honor of Jesus of Nazareth, his mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and his foster father, Saint Joseph, as a family. The primary purpose of this feast is to present the Holy Family as a model for Christian families. A pious practice among Catholics is to write "J.M.J." at the top of letters and personal notes as a reference to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as the Holy Family. Remember writing that on your homework?

Our Patronal Feast – Tuesday, December 27th, is the Feast Day of St. John the Evangelist! We will celebrate with Mass in the Church at 8:30, followed by a Feast Day Breakfast. If you plan to join us for breakfast out, please sign up on the kiosk.

Wedding Bells on New Year's Eve – Our sincerest congratulations to Marissa Kennedy of this parish, daughter of Ray and Beverly Kennedy, who will be married on Saturday evening to Alex Robertson, originally of St. Mary's parish in Altoona. We celebrate their marriage as we celebrate the beginning of the New Year!

Family Life Calendars for 2017 – We are blessed to have such an active Family Life Office in our diocese, which has for many years made available a beautiful calendar. These are available now in the Gathering Space.

January Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

CHRISTIAN UNITY

That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:5 -- 2:2; Mt 2:13-18
Thursday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:36-40
Friday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 [12-17]; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Religious Education Schedule

December 25 NO CLASS...Merry Christmas
 January 1 NO CLASS...New Year Blessings
 January 8 Classes resume 9:15-10:45

9th Grade Confirmation Retreat

Saturday January 7th 9am-1pm in school gym.
 The retreat is for students and parent

11th Grade Confirmation Retreat

Saturday January 14th at St Francis University

PARISH FEAST DAY MASS AND BREAKFAST: Please join in our Parish Feast Day celebration on Tuesday, December 27, with mass at 8:30 am. After the morning mass, we will go to breakfast at a local restaurant. You can sign up on the kiosk if you plan on attending the breakfast.



BOOK CLUB If you are interested in becoming better informed about Islam & the Muslim world, plan to join us on FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2017, AT D'LITES CAFE AT 11 AM. We plan to use Richard Engel's book, "And Then All Hell Broke Loose" as our main resource. The book is available at the library or online. If you have any questions, call Joyce Cunningham at 695-5346.

DIRECTORY PHOTOS If you did not receive your free 8X10 in the mail, it was shipped to the church and can be picked up in the gathering space. The directory has been submitted for publication and we will let you know when it is printed.

HAITI NEWS We are looking for new members for the Haiti Committee. Members assist in fundraising, ideas for fundraising, and directing our financial contributions. Meetings are held as needed. A trip this January is being planned. *Special Note: It is my ambitious desire to take a medical team of dentists and eye doctors within the next year. Please share this mission with any candidate who may be interested.* Contact Mary Lee Madigan-Davis, mlmdcreek@aol.com, or 814 931-2651.

OUR PARISH FAMILY ... is taking a break and will return in January. Thank you for your comments and cooperation. If you've already agreed to be a part of this feature and maybe had your picture taken for it, we'll be in touch soon to get your information. Or, if you're willing to appear in this feature but haven't yet been asked, please contact: Cecelia Bloom, by phone at 695-2806, or by email at ceceb13@verizon.net.

St. John's Prayer List

It is a Spiritual Work of Mercy to pray for the sick. If you know of someone in the parish who is ill or has passed away and in need of prayers, please call Ginny Reeder (695-7671) or email her at ginny.reeder@gmail.com to add their name to the prayer list.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING and their caregivers and give thanks for those who have recovered. *Lord we ask for your blessings and care for these and all people in need:*

Judy Baird • Millie Bilski • Carol Field

JoAnne Gerardine • Judy Hurm • Brian Kopp

Ron Peschock • Bob & Mary Rajnish • Olga Romerowicz

Madison Shura • Patty Teufel • Noah Wills

For an end to violence and unrest in our country

HOME WITH THE LORD: Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of:

Terri Schneider

Francis Bean (father of Mary Petrak)

May they rest in the peace and joy of the Lord.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Jesus is God's gift of love to us. The countless other blessings that God rains down on us are nothing compared to the gift of His only Son. The only appropriate way for us to respond to God's generous love is with our own generous love. When sharing all the gifts God has placed in our hands, the peace of Christ truly will control our hearts and we will know Christmas joy every day!

OFFERTORY for December 18, 2016

Envelopes:	\$ 4,526.00
Loose:	\$ 773.00
Children's:	\$ 20.00
Parish Development	\$ 95.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 40.00
Religious Retirement	\$ 75.00
Christmas Offering	\$ 260.00
Total:	\$ 5,789.00
Online Giving:	\$ 1,349.00
TOTAL:	\$ 7,138.00

ACA update: \$58,484 in Receipts

The parish has exceeded the goal of \$49,405.

Any donations beyond this point will be returned to the parish.

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION An old joke asks, "What time is Midnight Mass?" The answer is not really obvious, since Christmas is unique in having several distinct celebrations. The readings and prayers vary greatly from hour to hour. The Vigil Mass hinges on the family heritage of Jesus and his origins. The concept of "midnight" predates clock time, and really has to do with a celebration in the hours of darkness. Years ago, it was not possible to receive Communion without fasting for a full day, so the late hour of this Mass made it possible for the people to receive. The first Mass after sunrise, the Mass at Dawn, was once known as "The Shepherds' Mass," and later Masses set aside stories of Jesus' birth to focus on the key to the day's celebration: John the Evangelist's majestic theology of Christ's identity as the Word made flesh, dwelling among us. One feast, four separate Masses. Only monasteries manage the whole round. Parishioners typically take just one entry point into the mystery. Yet there is much to savor and celebrate in the coming of Christ into the world. Christmas is not a day, but a season. You still have two weeks to send those Christmas cards before you're officially late!

--James Field, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co

SACRAMENTS CLASS This 8 week course will focus on an understanding of the Sacraments today. Participants will study the post Vatican II theologies of Baptism, Reconciliation, Confirmation, Sacrament of Healing, Marriage, Holy Orders and the central mystery of our faith, the Mass. The course is being offered at 2 locations this January, Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament – Seton Suite, Altoona; Msgr. Robert Mazur, instructor and St. Michael Church Hall, St. Michael; Father D. Timothy Grimme, instructor. The cost of registration and material, which includes a book on each sacrament, is \$65. Registration forms are available online at www.dioceseaj.org/lay-ecclesialministry or by contacting Marybeth at 814-361-2000 or by email at mheinze@dioceseaj.org. All are welcome!

EPIPHANY CONCERT AND DINNER: Christ the King Church in Houtzdale will be hosting an Epiphany Concert performed by the elementary religious education students at 12:45pm on Sunday, January 8, 2017 in their parish center. A dinner of Father Marc Solomon's signature chili and Mark Groeger's specialty cheesecakes will be served from 11:00am to 2:00pm during the concert. Tickets for the concert and dinner are just \$8 each; dinners are eat-in or take-out. Call Christ the King at 814-378-7653 for more information. Tickets may be purchased at the door or by calling the rectory.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK

Sunday December 25th - The Nativity of the Lord

10:00AM-Mass for *People of the Parish*

Monday December 26th – St. Stephen, the First Martyr

7:30AM-Eucharistic Adoration

8:10AM-Morning Prayer

8:30AM- Mass for *Donald Watkins*

Tuesday December 27th - St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

7:30AM-Eucharistic Adoration

8:10AM-Morning Prayer

8:30AM-Mass for *New Evangelization of St. John's Parish*

Wednesday December 28th - The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

5:00PM-Confessions

6:00PM-Mass for *Danny Roberto* requested by niece, Crystal Berardi, her husband, Tony, & children Anthony, Alyssa & Addison

Thursday December 29th - Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

7:30AM-Eucharistic Adoration

8:10AM-Morning Prayer

8:30AM-Mass for *Lena Colyer* requested by Amelia Fedorico

Friday December 30th - The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

7:30AM-Eucharistic Adoration

8:10AM-Morning Prayer

8:30AM-Mass for *Michael Maher* requested by Thomas Villani

Saturday December 31st– Vigil of The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

4:00PM-Mass for *People of the Parish*

Sunday January 1 - Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

8:00AM-Mass for *Thomas Rentz* requested by Ron & Betty Peschock

11:00AM-Mass for *Joan & Leonard Farrell* requested by Rich & Joyce Lowe

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