

STAY AWAKE,
FOR YOU KNOW
NEITHER THE DAY
NOR THE HOUR.

MATTHEW 25:13



NOVEMBER

8

2020

THIRTY-SECOND
SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME

St. John the Evangelist Church
309 Lotz Avenue, Altoona, PA 814-942-5503
www.stjohnsaltoona.org

PASTORAL STAFF

Monsignor Michael Becker - mbecker253@aol.com; allinall214@gmail.com

Deacon Gene Neral - gene@lifeinfocus.net

Kristina Hoyne - Parish Council President - inaugh@aol.com

Jena Bowman - Business Manager - stjohnchurch@atlanticbb.net

Deborah Johnson - Director of Music/Pastoral Associate - dj219@msn.com

Diane Ryan - Administrative Assistant - stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net

Mark Krepich - Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults - mark.krepich@gmail.com

Ken Dunmire - Maintenance

NEXT WEEKEND'S APPOINTMENTS

LECTORS

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Mark Krepich, Tim Rea,

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Barbara Bundy, Patrick Schurr

ALTAR SERVERS

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - Keaton Swope, NOT FILLED

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Mai Linh Do, Nicholas Helsley

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Evie & Estella Koch

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - Connie Baker

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Donna Moyer, Bob Olson,
Susanna Tomlinson

MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - Betsy Lloyd, Billy Sweet,
NOT FILLED, NOT FILLED

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Ray Kennedy, Ed Stoltz,
Paula VanSickel, Larry VanSickel

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Lou Ann Clark, Peg Madden,
Patrick Podoletz, Mary Grace Horton

SACRISTAN

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - Jane Byrne

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Darlene Scarpaci

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Dolores Capriotti

SCRIP

Sat. Nov. 14 - 4:00 PM - Becky Merilli, Julie Beiswenger

Sun. Nov. 15 - 8:00 AM - Erika & Heather Yasolsky

Sun. Nov. 15 - 11:00 AM - Peg Madden, Marge Rudolph

MASS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY - 4:00 PM

SUNDAY - 8:00 AM & 11:00 AM

MONDAY - 6:00 PM

TUESDAY - 8:30 AM

WEDNESDAY - 6:00 PM

THURSDAY - 8:30 AM

FRIDAY - 8:30 AM

November Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

Artificial Intelligence
We pray that the progress of
robotics and artificial intelligence
may always serve humankind.

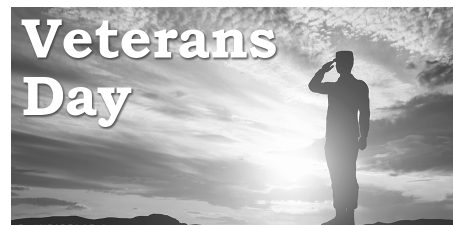


A Few Words from the Pastor:

A NEW ROOF FOR SCHOOL AND GYM: A new roof for the school building and for the gymnasium has been completed. Contributions to support this effort can still be made by dropping your gift in the collection in an envelope marked RRR (Restore, Repair, Rejoice!) Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY EVENING: Please note that our Tuesday evening Bible study has been re-scheduled for Wednesday evenings, at the same time, 7 PM. All are most welcome to join our evening zoom Bible study. Each week we take a careful look at the reading for the coming Sunday!

VETERANS DAY: Coincides with other holidays including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day which are celebrated in other countries that mark the anniversary of the end of World War I. Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. At the urging of major U.S. veteran organizations, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954. Veterans Day is distinct from Memorial Day, a U.S. public holiday in May. Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans, while Memorial Day honors those who had died while in military service. Another military holiday that also occurs in May, Armed Forces Day, honors those currently serving in the U.S. military. Additionally, Women Veterans Day is recognized by a growing number of U.S. states that specifically honors women who have served in the U.S. military. In a special way, we remember those veterans with wartime wounds, those who have lost limbs in combat, and those who suffer from emotional and psychological scars as a result of military service.



A PRAYER FOR OUR VETERANS

We ask for blessings on all those who have served their country in the armed forces.

We ask for healing for the veterans who have been wounded, in body and soul, in conflicts around the globe.

We pray especially for the young men and women, in the thousands, who are coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan with injured bodies and traumatized spirits.

Bring solace to them, O Lord. May we pray for them when they cannot pray.

Have mercy on all our veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Bring peace to their hearts and peace to the regions they fought in.

Bless all the soldiers who served in non-combative posts.

May their calling to serve continue in their lives in many positive ways.

Give us all here present today creative vision to see a world that, growing weary with fighting, moves to affirming the life of every human being and so moves beyond war.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

NEW SCRIP FEATURE! Now, you have the option to get your physical gift cards sent to you. No more order schedules. No more pickup. Shopping physical gift cards just got way more convenient with the new ship to home feature—*available only in the mobile app,*

RaiseRight™. Choose from hundreds of top-selling brands that are labeled “Ship to Home Eligible.” A small shipping fee applies. You must pay with a bank account or credit card. Don't have the app yet? Download it today to get your gift cards from the comfort of home.



Download our RaiseRight
mobile app



FAITH FORMATION NEWS

We hope that everyone is checking their emails at the beginning of each week for that week's assignments. If you have any questions, please call the office at 942-5503 or email stjohnsecretary@atlanticbb.net.

HONORING OUR VETERANS: We would like to recognize all the veterans of our parish next weekend, November 14th & 15th by offering a special blessing at the end of mass. A list of our veterans will also be included in next week's bulletin. If you did not fill out and return a form, please contact the parish office (942-5503) by Monday, November 9th to add a name to our list.

TOASTY TODDLERS: We will continue to collect new coats, hats, and gloves for children from birth up to age 4. All parishioners are invited to join us in donating to this worthwhile cause.



STEWARDSHIP CORNER: Good stewards, like the sensible bridesmaids in today's parable, are ready to share their gifts when the Master calls. The good steward is awake, alert to opportunities and actively looks for chances to make that difference. It is the prudent use of our time, abilities, and finances that will always keep us mindful of the presence of the Risen Christ. But note: The good steward is a *conscious* steward, not a *guilty* steward. "Successful Catholic stewards are not hand-wringing worrywarts: 'Am I doing enough? Did I spend enough time there? Did I use my talents to the fullest? Am I as generous as I *should* be?'" (Catholic Update, *Seven Secrets of Successful Stewards*, See not obligation, but opportunity. St. Anthony Messenger Press, August 2002)

How are you doing with your transformation into becoming a sensible successful steward?

Stewardship at St. John's October 25, 2020

Envelopes	\$ 4,108.00
Loose	\$ 458.00
Children's Offerings	\$ 5.00
Catholic Charities	\$ 35.00
Catholic Education	\$ 25.00
All Souls' Day	\$ 125.00
All Saint's Day	\$ 85.00
World Mission Sunday	\$ 555.00
Food Bank Collection	\$ 105.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 5,501.00</i>
Online Giving	\$ 1,463.00
Total Offertory	\$ 6,964.25

Restore*Repair*Rejoice

Payments/Donations	\$164,038
Pledge Payment Committed	18,031
Total Pledges/Donations	\$181,819

ST JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

Please call Ginny Reeder (695-7671) or email her at ginny.reeder@gmail.com to add or remove someone from 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:*

Adam • Aiden • Cari Ann • Lucy A. • Amy B.
 Julie Beiswenger • Scott Brenneman • Dan Burley
 Robert Cole • Betty Dennis • Michael DeStefano
 Bernadine Farrell • Kathy Felty • Mary Ann Flinn
 Helen Fornwalt • Leann Frazier • Molly Grenfell
 Jackie Hall • Ken Hartman • Denny Horton
 Randy Horton • Alexandra Hudson • Mary Jo Ivory
 Brian Kopp • Amy Langenbacher • Lisa
 Sherri Maffettone • Louis Jack Mathias
 Camden Michael • Bryson Miller • Susie Miller
 Barbara Moore • Ailani Myers • Stan Neal
 Patricia Olson • Mary Oricko • Linda Pletcher
 Karen Price • Ron Peschock • Connie R. • Mary Rajnish
 Allison Recker • Vicki Riley • Allison Ritchey
 Olga Romerowicz • Mike Rudolph • Bruce Shank
 Anne Showalter • Dick Showalter • Steve Stefanon
 Tim Temofonte • Patty Teufel • Kathy Wagner
 Lois Werfel • Carol White • Len Whitten
 William Wieland • Noah Wills • Milan & Family
 Dorothy Yingling

Reminder: If you are sending cards to those on our prayer list, try to send one each month, preferably around the Second Sunday weekend.

LECTOR WORKBOOKS: The 2021 Workbook for Lectors is now available in the Gathering Space. Lectors, be sure to pick one up before the start of the new liturgical year on Sunday, November 29!

ST. JOHN'S ANGEL TREE 2020: St. John's Parish will assist Catholic Charities to work with those in need this Christmas Season. *If you know of someone who needs help, please have them call Catholic Charities at (814) 944-9388.* Families should tell Catholic Charities that they were referred by St. John's. The family will fill out a form of needs and return it to the Catholic Charity Office in person with photo ID. We will prepare the need cards that will hang from our Parish Christmas Tree in the Gathering Space before Thanksgiving. **Catholic Charities imposes the rule that you may not spend more than \$25 for a gift. You can wrap that gift and return the gift with the attached card to the Gathering Space (or just buy wrapping paper to add with the gift if you not a wrapper) by December 7** and we will take them to Catholic Charities on December 10 and they will deliver to the families. On the tree you will find a request for food cards that you can purchase with scrip and put in the special Angel Tree box provided. We will give those food cards to Catholic Charities and they will disburse them to the families. Looking forward to a blessed holiday as we build a loving community! Susanna Tomlinson (814) 414-1151

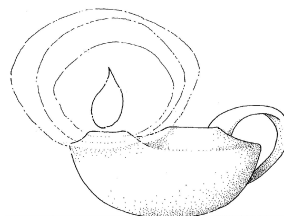
THE FRIAR'S NOOK: Kick off your Christmas shopping by stopping at The Friar's Nook Gift Shop! Normal business hours are Monday through Saturday from 10:00 AM-4:00 PM (always closed on Sundays). The address is 793 Monastery Road, Hollidaysburg and the phone number is 814-695-3802 in case you have any questions. Please follow The Friar's Nook on Facebook for updates!

RELIGIOUS ITEMS MADE IN THE HOLY LAND: Our brothers and sisters representing the Land of Peace mission, a nonprofit organization, will be with us November 21/22 speaking about the Christian situation in the Holy Land and selling Crucifixes, religious art work, and rosaries- all made of olive wood which is native to Israel and Bethlehem. Since tourism has greatly depleted, Christian families in the holy land, who depend on tourists, have been greatly affected. The goal of this mission is to build a Charitable Hospital in Bethlehem and help the poor and needy families in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Sale of these goods will help them and also give you the opportunity to have "something" authentic from the holy land. Please browse and buy some articles. It is for a good cause and also a help to your personal devotion. www.landofpeace.org

COLLEGE AND YOUNG ADULT MEN: An opportunity to discern your vocation is being made available via the convenience of Zoom. Every Friday evening at 8:30 PM join others in an organized discussion about different aspects of prayer and vocational discernment. We will use the book "To Save a Thousand Souls" which can be ordered for FREE by going to GoPriest.com and selecting "free resources." If you are interested, please contact Fr. Peter Crowe at vocations@dioceseaj.org to receive the zoom link. There is no commitment or pressure, just an opportunity to be with others, at least digitally, to gather in prayer, and have a good discussion that could be very helpful. If we don't know about a vocation, it is not possible to properly discern it. We need good men to say yes to our Lord. Could that man be you? Come and see!

TEEN SHELTER: We continue to collect gift cards for Domino's Pizza, MacDonald's or any grocery store as well as food donations such as canned goods and packaged or microwavable items. Toiletries are also needed. You can place the gift cards in an envelope marked for the teen shelter and drop it in the collection. *Food & toiletries for the teen shelter should be left in the box behind the scripture table in the Gathering Space.* Thank you!

PERSONAL ASSISTANT FOR FEMALE PARISHIONER NEEDED: Very light household chores and light food prep along with food shopping and driving to doctor appointments. Must be 18 years or older and have own car. Hours are flexible - \$11.34 per hour. Call after 11:00 AM - 941-8279.



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Thirty-second Sunday
in Ordinary Time
November 8, 2020

Stay awake, for you know
neither the day nor the hour.

— Matthew 25:13

Schedule for the Week

Sunday, November 8 – 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 AM - Mass for *Ida Prosperi* requested by John Prosperi
11:00 AM - Mass for *Joseph & Marian Langguth* requested by David & Coleen Langguth
12:30 PM - Communion in the Front Circle

Monday, November 9 - Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

6:00 PM - Mass for *Joe Robeson*

Tuesday, November 10 – St. Leo the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church

8:30 AM - Mass for *David Petrak* requested by Dan & Sue Speck

Wednesday, November 11 – St. Martin of Tours, Bishop

5:30 PM - Confessions
6:00 PM - Mass for *Lynn Kaplan* requested by Marian Monios, Meg & Michelle

Thursday, November 12 – St. Josaphat, Bishop & Martyr

8:30 AM - Mass for *Edward Eaton* requested by Richard & Joyce Lowe

Friday, November 13 – St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, Virgin

8:30 AM - Morning Prayer & Communion Service

Saturday, November 14 - Vigil of 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

3:00 PM - Confessions
4:00 PM - Mass for *Helen Cordek* requested by Larry Cordek

Sunday, November 15 – 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 AM - Mass for *John Lloyd* requested by Elizabeth Lloyd
11:00 AM - Mass for *People of the Parish*
12:30 PM - Communion in the Front Circle

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9;
1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17; Jn 2:13-22
Tuesday: Ti 2:1-8, 11-14; Ps 37:3-4, 18, 23, 27, 29;
Lk 17:7-10
Wednesday: Ti 3:1-7; Ps 23:1b-6; Lk 17:11-19
Thursday: Phlm 7-20; Ps 146:7-10; Lk 17:20-25
Friday: 2 Jn 4-9; Ps 119:1-2, 10-11, 17-18; Lk 17:26-37
Saturday: 3 Jn 5-8; Ps 112:1-6; Lk 18:1-8
Sunday: Prv 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31; Ps 128:1-5;
1 Thes 5:1-6; Mt 25:14-30 [14-15, 19-21]

STAY AWAKE,
FOR YOU KNOW
NEITHER THE DAY
NOR THE HOUR.

MATTHEW 25:13



Sunday Readings

November 8, 2020

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1

Wis 6:12–16

Resplendent and unfading is wisdom,
and she is readily perceived by those who love her,
and found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known in anticipation of their desire;
whoever watches for her at dawn shall not be disappointed,
for he shall find her sitting by his gate.
For taking thought of wisdom is the perfection of prudence,
and whoever for her sake keeps vigil
shall quickly be free from care;
because she makes her own rounds, seeking those worthy of her,
and graciously appears to them in the ways,
and meets them with all solicitude.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 63:2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8

R. (2b) My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary
to see your power and your glory,
For your kindness is a greater good than life;
my lips shall glorify you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus will I bless you while I live;
lifting up my hands, I will call upon your name.
As with the riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

I will remember you upon my couch,
and through the night-watches I will meditate on you:
You are my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Reading 2

1 Thes 4:13–18 or 4:13–14

In the shorter form of the reading, the passage in brackets is omitted.

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. [Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.]

Gospel

Mt 25:1–13

Jesus told his disciples this parable: “The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise ones replied, ‘No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.’ While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, ‘Lord, Lord, open the door for us!’ But he said in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

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O God, you are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.

PSALM 63:2

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THIRTY
SECOND
SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
NOVEMBER 8, 2020

CONSEQUENCES

Actions have consequences. As children, we were often told that if we would do something, then we would receive a present or a reward. If we didn't, it might result in a punishment. Geometry also uses the "If-Then Statement." That is what our scriptures are like this Sunday. In each reading, there is a suggested action on our part, which will result in a desired outcome. There is a feminine personification of God as Wisdom, Psalm 63 and the intimate thirsting for God, the letter to the Thessalonians on believing in Christ, and Matthew's parable of the wise and foolish virgins. In the world of instant everything, we are not good about being patient, and our follow-through can be terrible. But each reading in its own way promises us that if we diligently seek God, we will be blessed and rewarded, and that it is worth the work and the wait!

KEEP YOUR LAMPS

In the old spiritual, "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning" we hear the imperative to wait and be ready, and while there are many variations, it usually ends "The world is nearly done." "The time is drawing near." or "The day is dawning nigh." The liturgical year is near its end, and we begin to feel that tension of "already but not yet" as the readings become more eschatological (about the end-times) in nature. We are called to wait patiently. Yet, like the wise and foolish virgins, we run the risk of falling asleep, and or running out of oil. Waiting for God, preparing for God, requires much hope, much preparation and discipline, and at times it is counter-intuitive. We must put aside impatience or the desire for immediate gratification and keep the end in sight. In running terms, it is not a sprint, but a marathon.

TRIMMED AND BURNING









So how do we do this? Whether we are sitting in the pew or one of those involved more intimately in liturgical ministry, this is a call for spiritual self-maintenance. None of our scriptures today is passive. Seeking and waiting for God requires work. Presence and participation in the liturgy are among the easiest and most natural ways to provide fuel for our spiritual lamps. But like a car, we need to do more than just put in gasoline. There are other needs to attend to for upkeep. Just read the opportunities in this bulletin! Perhaps you may want to attend a parish scripture class or find a spiritual book to read. Sign up online to receive the daily readings or some sort of daily reflection. Find a spiritual podcast to listen to on your commute home from work or turn off the news and music and drive in morning silence. Share simple, regular prayer times as a family such as at meals and bedtime. Experience the sacrament of Reconciliation. Or maybe you do too much, and the call is to let go of something. Do not become burned out or lose heart. Take courage and remember, "The day is drawing nigh!" Amen.

TODAY'S READINGS

Wisdom 6:12-16
Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 [13-14]
Matthew 25:1-13

God's Word for Children

In today's Gospel we hear a parable about five wise bridesmaids. They were able to meet the bridegroom because they had brought extra oil for their lamps. Five foolish bridesmaids had not brought any and missed the groom's arrival. We too must be ready to meet Jesus when he returns. Follow the directions below.

  Circle 5 women.	   Color 5 lamps orange.
  Color 5 bottles of oil red.	 Circle 5 signs.

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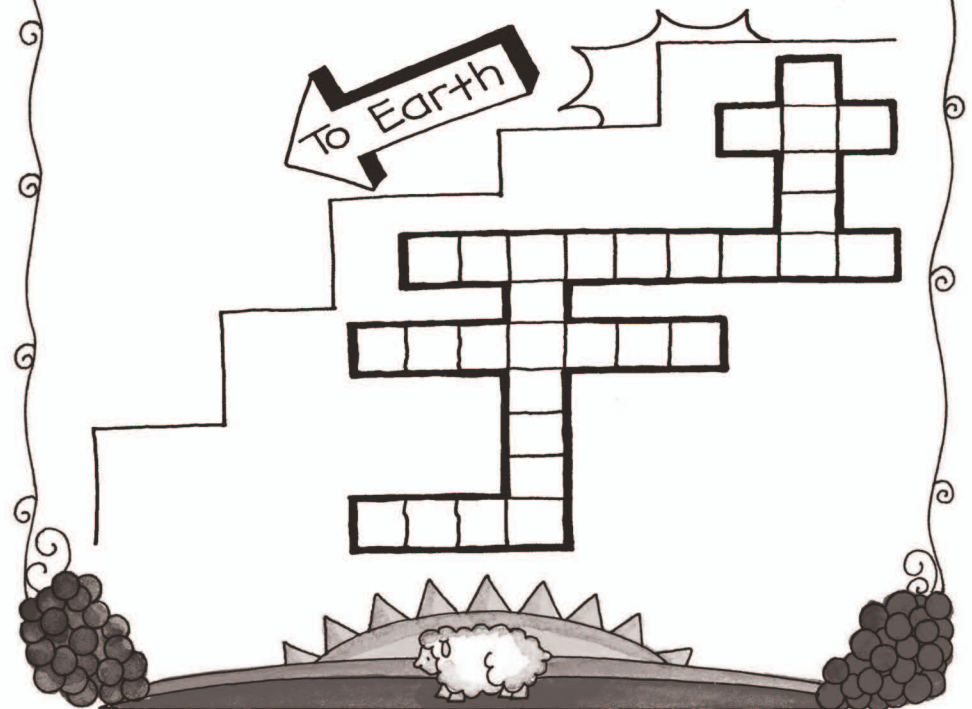
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Paul uses the phrases below to describe the way the Lord "will come down from heaven" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Fit the underlined words into the crossword under the stairs.

Jesus' return will be more glorious than we can imagine!

"With a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God..."





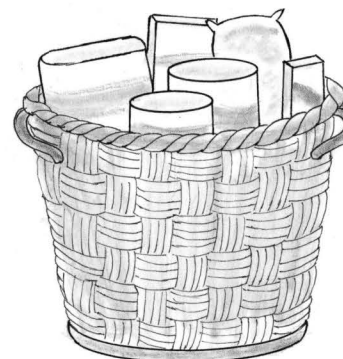
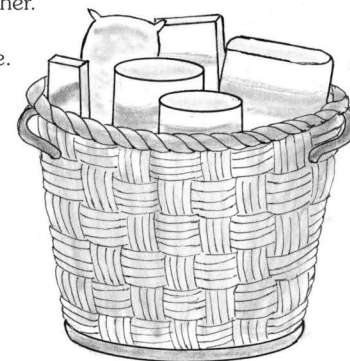
Therefore, stay awake,
for you know neither
the day nor the hour.
Matthew 25 : 13



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Catholic Charities in the United States (CCUSA) is a network of charities with headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. It is one of the largest charities in the United States. Its agencies across the country serve the nation's poorest and most vulnerable, regardless of their faith. Catholic Charities helps people in need by providing them with things that can make a difference in their lives.

The patron of Catholic Charities is St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Elizabeth was born in 1207 and married a German prince named Louis. Although she had an important position and was very rich, she always thought about the poor she saw around her. She would often give away her clothes and jewelry. She even gave away her own food to feed hungry people. Some people in the kingdom objected to her generosity, but her husband supported her because he believed she was doing the right thing. When Louis died, Elizabeth was left to raise her young children but she continued her work for the poor. With followers of St. Francis, she built hospitals for the poor and elderly. She died in 1231 at the age of 24. Her feast day is November 17. Catholic Charities chose Elizabeth as its patron saint in 2000.



Does Catholic Charities have a local office in your area?

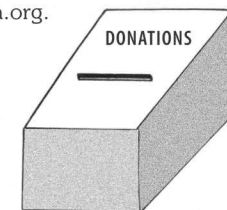
Every year a special collection for Catholic Charities is taken up in the United States.

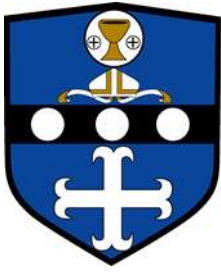
Check to see when this occurs in your diocese.

You can also donate money to the charity at any time.

See the website for details:

catholiccharitiesusa.org.





Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown

Office of Child and Youth Protection

Mary, Mother of the Church, Pastoral Center
2713 West Chestnut Avenue; Altoona, PA 16601-1720

Telephone: (814) 695-5579/ Fax: (814) 949-8234

Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown website: www.dioceseaj.org

Safe Environment website: <https://youthprotection.dioceseaj.org/>

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is firmly committed to creating safe environments and protecting children/youth and the vulnerable. Please keep this information available as a resource.

How to Report Child Abuse

If you have a reasonable cause of suspected child abuse, general child well-being concerns or know of other abuse of minors (children under the age of 18) please report your concerns as soon as possible.

Call **911** immediately if there is an indication of imminent danger

PA ChildLine **1-800-932-0313** (intake is available 24/7)



Reports of clergy abuse within the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown please call any of the following:

- Pennsylvania Attorney General Hotline: (888) 538-8541
- Pennsylvania State Police Headquarters: (717) 783-5599
- Local PA State Police Station/ local police department
- Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Independent Reporting Hotline hosted by Nulton Diagnostic and Treatment Center*: (833) 685-8661.

**Nulton Diagnostic and Treatment Center is independently owned and operated and not associated with the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.*

Victim/Survivor Assistance and Resources: For Victim/Survivor information and resources, please call the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator: Jean Johnstone at (814) 944-9388 or email: jjohnstone@dioceseaj.org.

For resources or to report abuse of a vulnerable adult:

Call **911** immediately if there is an indication of imminent danger

- Abuse reports on behalf of an older adult to a 24 Hour Hotline: **1-800-490-8505**
- For adults with disabilities, call the Protective Services Hotline: **1-800-490-8505**
- National Domestic Violence **1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)**
- PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence: **1-800-932-4632 (PA)** or **1-800-537-2238 (Nat'l)**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- CRISIS PA Support & Referral Helpline: **1-855-284-2494**



The Intersection of Caring Adults and Reporting Abuse

By Crispin Ketelhut Montelione

Every person involved in the life of a child, even when on the “periphery,” has the opportunity to make a significant difference in that child’s life—regardless of their role. This article addresses the intersection of caring adults and reporting, what is required by law for situations of child maltreatment, and tips for caring adults who all share the commonality of ethical reporting.

What is child maltreatment?

Child maltreatment refers to all types of abuse and neglect of anyone under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or other person with the responsibility of safeguarding the child. The vast majority of children are abused by someone they know and trust. This includes coaches, teachers, clergy, volunteers, family and others.

The four most common forms of [child maltreatment](#) include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.¹ Consistent with prior data, in the past year alone, research estimates one in seven children have experienced maltreatment.^{2,3} When children are exposed to one type of abuse, they may also be experiencing other forms, too, known as polyvictimization.^{4,5} Every type of abuse causes harm to children, even if a child appears to be coping well. Maltreatment is associated with an abundance of adverse outcomes for children, including negative effects on neurobiological, social, emotional and cognitive development within the brain.^{6,7} The effects of abuse can be immediate, or may be long reaching.^{8,9}

¹ World Health Organization. “Child maltreatment.” 2020. Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment#:~:text=Child%20maltreatment%20is%20the%20abuse,under%2018%20years%20of%20age>.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Child Abuse & Neglect: Fast Facts.” Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>

³ Wildeman C, Emanuel N, Leventhal JM, Putnam-Hornstein E, Waldfogel J, Lee H. “The Prevalence of Confirmed Maltreatment Among US Children, 2004 to 2011.” *Journal JAMA Pediatr.* 2014;168(8):706–713. Accessed online, October 2020: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/1876686>

⁴ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau. “Child Maltreatment 2018.” Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>

⁵ Finkelhor, et al. “Polyvictimization: Children’s Exposure to Multiple Types of Violence, Crime, and Abuse.” [National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. 2011.](#) Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/235504.pdf>

⁶ Child Welfare Information Gateway. “Understanding the Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development.” Accessed online, October 2020: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/brain_development.pdf

⁷ Quarti Irigaray, Tatiana, et al. “Child Maltreatment and later cognitive functioning: a systematic review.” *Journal of Psicol. Reflex. Crit.* vol.26 no.2 Porto Alegre . 2013. Accessed online, October 2020: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-79722013000200018>

⁸ Cameranesi, Margherita et al. “Linking a History of Childhood Abuse to Adult Health Among Canadians: A Structural Equation Modelling Analysis” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.* 2019. Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6603908/>.

⁹ Springer, Kristen et al. “The Long-term Health Outcomes of Childhood Abuse.” *Journal of General Internal Medicine.* 2003. Accessed online, October 2020: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1494926/>.



What is a mandated reporter?

Anyone can report suspected or known child abuse, *anytime*, day or night.

Mandated Reporters are persons who are legally required to report suspected cases of abuse or maltreatment to child protective service agencies when they are suspected or disclosed. In some states, every adult is considered to be a mandated reporter. In other states, you are more likely to be a mandated reporter based on your profession or interaction with children.

However, regardless of the law, everyone has an ethical obligation to report known or suspected child abuse. Additionally, even if the law in your state does not specifically denote you as a mandated reporter, it is possible that your organization might have a policy that obligates you to make reports per your role. within

What are “Child Protective Services” agencies?

Every state has statutes regarding mandatory reporting laws,¹⁰ along with a child protective services agency that is typically referred to as Child Protective Services (CPS) or something similar. Most of the agencies maintain a 24/7, toll-free help and reporting hotline and maintain a database of cases.

Child Protective Services agencies are charged first with protecting children, and when possible, with keeping families together. CPS is responsible for screening incoming calls, evaluating the content and then classifying the risk level of imminent danger. In many cases, the elements of the call must meet specific criteria before CPS can officially “register a report” within their system. If the report contains enough information to conduct an investigation, the investigation is coordinated between a multi-disciplinary team involving CPS and local law enforcement.

The dilemma: what if I do not have proof?

As an employee or volunteer, it is not your responsibility to provide proof of harm, and it *is not your role to investigate cases of suspected or disclosed child abuse*. But, it *is* your role to communicate reasonable suspicions to the right entity—which, in most cases, is CPS or a local law enforcement agency. And, keep in mind that “good faith” reports of a reasonable suspicion of abuse are protected by law, even those that end up being deemed unsubstantiated or cleared of any wrongdoing.

How do I know whether I have a suspicion of abuse?

At the most basic level, having a “suspicion of abuse” means the thought has entered your mind that abuse may be happening. Either you saw something, heard something,

¹⁰ A note from the Author: for more information about the details within your particular state about reporting and to whom, review the: Child Welfare Information Gateway. “State Laws on Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect.” Available online: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/can/reporting/>



heard someone else say something, a child told you something, or your intuition is sounding alarms that something is wrong.

While not an exhaustive list, here are some common scenarios that would cause the average person to suspect that a child is being, or has been, abused or maltreated:¹¹

- A child discloses directly to you, or someone else
- A child discloses that someone else is being abused
- A child creates a story about a victim of abuse, and then “retracts” the story if you show concern
- Another adult communicates that they have concerns that abuse is happening (or has happened)
- Knowing specific family dynamics that cause you to be concerned about youth welfare
- Finding disturbing images of children via an adult’s technology device
- Finding disturbing messaging or images sent to a child on a child’s technology device
- You, or someone else, observes a child acting out sexual behaviors that are unusual for his/her age
- A child is dressed inappropriately for the weather (such as no jacket in the cold, or long sleeves and pants in the heat), appears overly hungry or tired, and may have excessively worn or dirty clothing
- Seeing multiple injuries in various stages of healing on a child, in places that are surprising, with explanations that do not make sense, and,
- Observing [other red flag indicators](#)¹² children exhibit that are frequently associated with child abuse.

What if I am wrong?

Always err on the side of safeguarding the child. It is common for many adults to feel apprehensive or reluctant about communicating child abuse concerns. In these cases, please rest assured that both law enforcement and CPS (and, children themselves) would much rather that you err on the side of caution to protect the most vulnerable person—the child. Reporting a concern or suspicion is being a protector of a children (even if it ends up finding no harm to the child).

The child, anyone under the age of 18, should always be at the center of the equation when it comes to safety. Any fears or concerns that we have about whether we are doing the right thing about reporting should always circle back to what is best for the child. Children have a right to be safe. Communicating your concerns to the appropriate entity is a significant step you can take to help keep youth safe.

¹¹ Farley, Robert Hugh. “Non-Mandated Reporters and Reporting Suspicions of Child Maltreatment.” VIRTUS Online. 2013.

¹² Mayo Clinic. “Child Abuse.” Accessed Online, October 2020: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>



What else do you need to know?

You do not need to tell the parents or the person you suspect when you make a report (doing so could compromise a potential investigation). Law enforcement or CPS will reach out if needed; let the multi-disciplinary team conduct their investigation.

You still need to report even if you heard about the suspicion from someone else. The source of the information is irrelevant, it is not hearsay to relay material from another person. Anyone who becomes aware of child abuse or has a suspicion of it, should report it per the mandated reporting laws or ethical responsibilities—the duty of reporting is on the person who becomes aware that abuse could be happening. If information comes “through the grapevine,” it should still be communicated to CPS.

*There are [specific questions](#)¹³ that CPS will ask you during the call. But, even if you do not have all of the facts, you can still report the information you *do* have.*

*Children do not often disclose about abuse to people in positions of authority, and when they do, it is rarely a lie. Fewer than half of child victims disclose about the abuse that has happened to them, and it usually is not to their parents or an adult. Of the children who tell *someone*, it is more likely to be to their friends (referred to as “peer-to-peer” or “friend-to-friend”), and that information does not typically make it to an official report to child protective services.^{14,15} When children do disclose about child sexual abuse, fewer than 5% of their initial disclosures are intentionally false. This means that there is a 95% chance that they are telling the truth! A report of child abuse should always be treated as if it is true.*

How should I react if a child discloses abuse to me?

It is paramount to reflect upon the vast power we each have when communicating with others about the subject of child sexual abuse. You may one day have the privilege of hearing a youth's disclosure of abuse that occurred to them. How you respond, in your words and actions, have a significant impact. Let them talk and listen carefully. Address their feelings, letting them know that you trust them and believe them. Be careful to limit your questioning. Do offer discretion, but do not offer confidentiality—depending on the situation, you may need to report the information. You will want to be honest with the youth about next steps.

¹³ Child Welfare Information Gateway. “How to Report Child Abuse and Neglect.” Accessed online, October 2020:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/how/>

¹⁴ London, K., Bruck, M., Ceci, S., & Shuman, D. “Disclosure of child sexual abuse: What does the research tell us about the ways that children tell?” *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 11(1), 194-226. 2005. Accessed online, October 2020:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232602908_Disclosure_of_Child_Sexual_Abuse_What_Does_the_Research_Tell_Us_About_the_Ways_That_Children_Tell

¹⁵ Ullman, S. E. “Relationship to perpetrator, disclosure, social reactions, and PTSD symptoms in child sexual abuse survivors.”

Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 16(1), 19-36. 2017. Accessed online, October 2020:

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/abstract.aspx?ID=238985>



How do I actually report or communicate my concerns?

- **If you are aware of an adult exhibiting behavior that is against the code of conduct or organization's policy:** speak to a supervisor. Keep communicating "up the chain" of command until your concerns are addressed.
- **If you are aware that a child is, or could be, in immediate danger:** call 911.
- **For a suspicion or knowledge of abuse, including if a child discloses directly or indirectly:** call the child abuse hotline (for Child Protective Services) for the county or the state, or local law enforcement.
- **For possible exploitation via technology:** If you suspect that a child is being groomed or exploited via technology (online, gaming, cell phones, social media, etc.), communicate your concerns via the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's tipline, at www.cybertipline.com.
- **For possible abuse within your employee or volunteer organization:** If you suspect or know a child is being, or has been abused, by a diocesan employee or volunteer, *first* call the child abuse hotline for your state, and *then* notify the diocese immediately (typically through the safe environment or child protection office).

Safe adults prioritize the safety of children. Are you a safe adult? Ultimately, it does not matter whether your role directly involves children or not. What is critical, however, is your awareness and courage to speak up on behalf of a child or youth to the right person or entity. You have great power to positively impact a child or youth's life and healing journey—the way you respond, and the actions you take, could drastically affect the child's future. You matter; you are needed. Thank you for your willingness to be a protector of children.



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