



The Parish Community of  
**St. John the Evangelist**

December 13, 2020

Third Sunday of Advent

**Weekend Masses**

Saturday: 4:30pm

Sunday: 9:00am

Sunday: 11:30am

*Reservations Needed*

**Weekday Masses**

Mon. - Fri. : 7:30am

*All Masses in  
St. John's Chapel*

**Miraculous Medal**

Suspended until  
further notice

**Reconciliation**

3:45pm-4:15pm

In Church

**Holy Day Masses**

Vigil Mass: 5:30pm

*St. Joseph Marella*

Holy Day Mass:

7:30am

*St. John the Evangelist*

11:30am

*St. Joseph Marella*

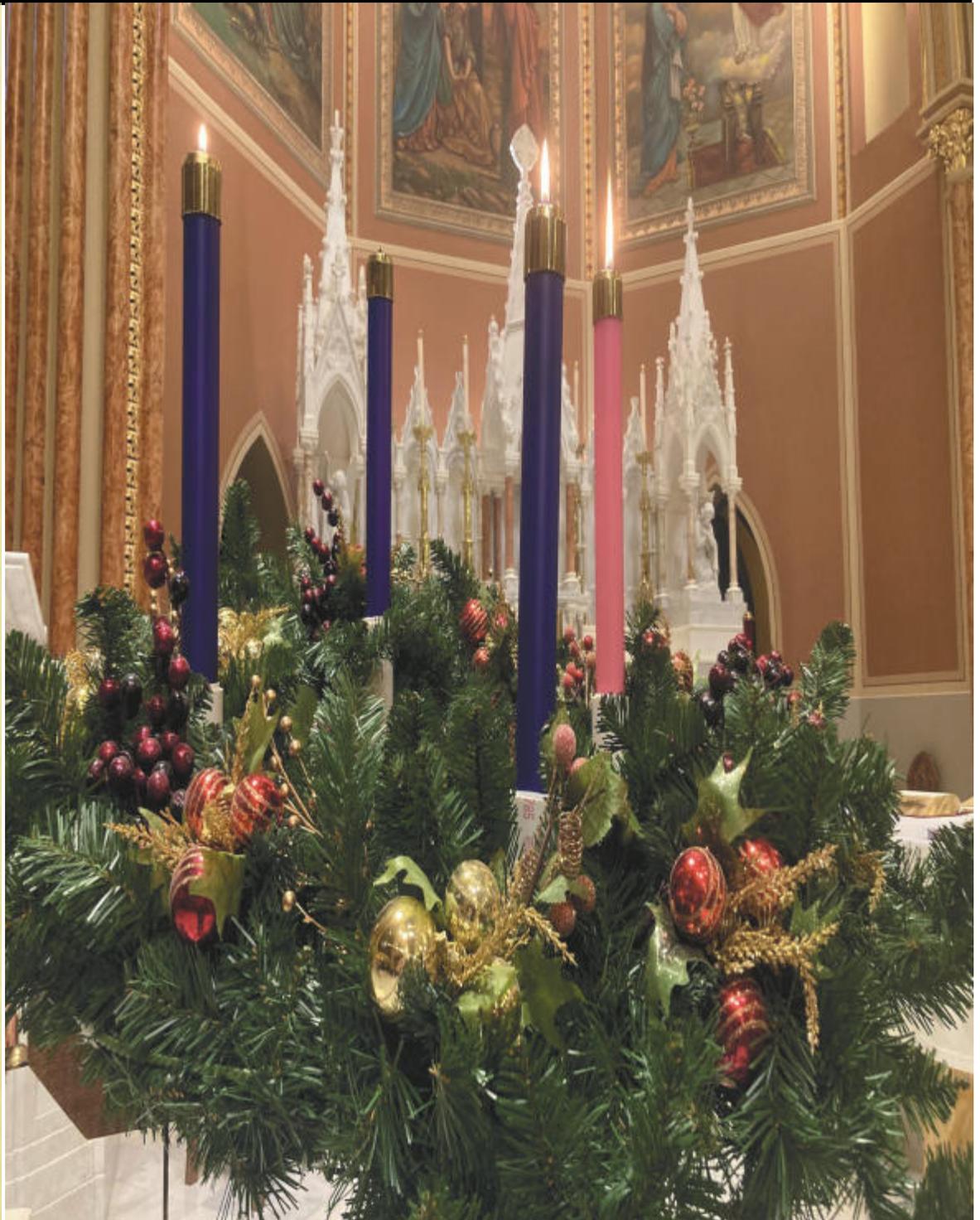
7:00pm

*St. John the Evangelist*

**Office Hours**

Monday-Friday

9:00am -4:00pm



35 William St, Pittston PA 18640

Phone: 570.654.0053

Fax: 570.654.3751

Web: [stjohnspittston.com](http://stjohnspittston.com)

# Advent & Christmas



2020

*We look forward to sharing these opportunities for you to stay connected with our parishes!  
All of these videos will be available on our parish website, [www.stjohnspittston.com](http://www.stjohnspittston.com),  
as well as Facebook, [www.facebook.com/stjohnspittston](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnspittston), and YouTube. They will continue to be available  
after the posting times listed.*



## Festival of Lessons and Carols

**Sunday, December 20 at 4:00 p.m. (online)**

This Christmas tradition began at Saint John the Evangelist several years ago. This year, adult and youth lectors and music ministers from both of our parishes will share Christmas readings and carols from their homes to yours.

## Christmas Piano Recital

**Sunday, December 13 - 5:00 p.m. (online)**

Join Dr. Charles Stevens, Director of Music— live on Facebook the evening of December 13 for some instrumental Christmas Carols on the baby grand from St. John the Evangelist Parish.



## Christmas Organ Recital

**Tuesday, December 22 at 7:00 p.m. (online)**

Mike Sowa, one of our parish organists, will bring the sounds of the newly refurbished pipe organ at Saint John the Evangelist into your homes through a video of festive and peaceful Christmas organ music.

# Christmas Schedule

**Confessions - Monday, December 21  
from 5pm to 6pm**

*Reservations are not required*

**Christmas Eve Masses**

**2pm | 4:30pm | 8:00pm | 10:00pm**

*Reservations Required*

**Christmas Day Masses**

**9am | 11:30am**

*Reservations Required*

**Christmas Mass from St. John's will be available for viewing on YouTube beginning at 4:30pm on Christmas Eve. Links will be made available on our website and Facebook page.**

### **Other Important Dates**

**Mass for Holy Family Sunday**

Sat. Dec 26 - 4:30pm | Sun. Dec 27 - 9am & 11:30am

**Mass for Solemnity of Mary**

Thurs. Dec 31 - 5:30pm - SJM

Fri. Jan 1 - 9am - SJE

# From the Pastor



## Dear Parishioners,

Again, this Sunday, the Third Sunday in Advent, John the Baptist has a central part in how things are unfolding. He is a major part of the story, although he certainly never wavers in his prophetic task of pointing the way towards the one he was sent to prepare us for. Those questioning John don't really listen to him. They also do not refer to the Jewish prophecies that support what John is saying. John is the very essence of what a prophet was supposed to be. One who is anointed, sent to proclaim to others and himself the "good news". That good news implies the actions that accompany those who believe. Those actions indicate a sense of thanks for the gift that the prophet announces. Care of the poor, the hungry, the people on the fringe, love for all. These are just some of the aspects of a person's life that can bring true, deep, lasting peace and joy. The task of bringing this joy and peace to those who life has beaten down, or for whatever reason have beaten themselves down falls to us who have also been anointed at our baptism as "priest, prophet, and king". God's love sheds light in the darkness. It provides direction to those seeking direction, or those who have lost their way. There are many who have. We see it every day. I find it hard to believe that the anger, hatred, division, and absolute certainty that **our own point of view**, informed by any number of sources, is right, comes from anything but separation from the very source of right and goodness. Like the questioners in the gospel this weekend, those questioning are not hearing the answers they would like. The answers John provides points to the one they are trying to convict. John offers a vindication by pointing to the one anointed by God to bring the sense of peace and harmony to life that the questioners are seeking, but have decided it is not to be found in Jesus. John too, might be surprised that this is the course of events that led to the coming of the one who was promised. God surprises us at times. He acts in ways we do not expect, and might not suspect. That is why it is important to pay attention to some of the summoning calls of this season; be alert, be ready, watch! On this Gaudete Sunday (Rejoice!), we find reason to find hope, an eternal hope that never leaves us in the person Jesus Christ. We rejoice, even in the face of challenge, difficulty, great loss and pain. The rose candle on our wreath this week, a little brighter, a little cheerier than the purple, reminds us that this week is different. In fact, God can make **every day different!** Let God's inspiration, especially now in this season of Advent surprise us with a sense of joy, peace, and rejoicing as Christmas draws near.

*Fr. Elston*

## THE CHRISTMAS STAR

The orbits of Saturn and Jupiter are aligning. This happens every 20 year or so. It is not visible from earth that often. This is the closest these planets will be to each other since 1623 and the closest visibly since 1226. Yes, that was not a typo..... it has been that long since this astronomical occurrence has happened. They will be visible in the southwest portion of the sky here in the United States on December 21 just after sunset. This occurrence is often called the "Christmas Star". It will not be visible again until 2080. Unless you are very young, you might not get to see that one (from Earth, at least!) In this year when we could all use all the good and hopeful things we can get, it would be a particularly good year to make sure you seek out this star on December 21, the winter solstice. If you see it, make a special wish for health, happiness, and peace for all in the coming new year!

## A PRAYER FOR OUR TIME - *Written by Brandon Jopling*

Loving God and Father, in our need, You never fail to answer our call. When pain fills our heart we lay our burdens in Your care - knowing that Your light and love will fill us with peace and calm.

In these times, we find ourselves in the midst of chaos and stress, unsettled by the doubts of a nation in unrest: Heal the wounds that grow with injustice. Mend the bridges that keep us apart. Send to us Your Holy Spirit that we may be granted humility, wisdom, and grace. Change our hearts so as to reflect Your love toward all people, regardless of race, color, and creed. Allow us not to live in fear but live in Your service, secure in the knowledge that by striving to love and respect our neighbor, we will know Your favor.

Reach out Your hands that we may know safety and health in the face of virus and disease. Bring an end to this pandemic and the pain of those who have suffered; especially those we have lost because of COVID-19. Prepare a place in Your kingdom for those who died alone in body and mind, yet joined in spirit to their Creator. May God in His love and grace, hold close to Him all who give of themselves to care for those in need – to doctors, physicians, nurses, caregivers, first responders and all who deny themselves in order to bear Your cross and live in service. Inspire us to do all that we can to be the instruments of change, as told to us by the Word of Christ. May we find the courage to dissolve our differences and unite our hearts in the hope that this too shall pass, and will do so once we become one body in One Christ.

Lord, may not our will be done but Yours as we ask this and all things through Christ, our Lord.

**Amen!**



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## Pastoral Team

Pastor

**Rev. Joseph Elston**

Assistant Pastor

**Rev. Jackson Pinhero**

Pastor Emeritus

**Msgr. John J. Bendik**

Deacon

**Deacon David Marx**  
**Deacon James Cortegerone**

Director of Religious Formation

**JoAnne McHale**

*joannemchale@stjohnspittston.com*

Director of Music Ministry

**Dr. Charles Stevens**

Associate Director of Music/  
Youth and Young Adult Ministry

**Michael Sowa**

Office Staff

**Marian Fearick**  
**Cathy Rusnok**  
**Theresa Schubel**

Sacristan

**Joseph Jones**  
**Michael Gorski**

Grounds and Maintenance

**Bob Ayre**  
**Rick Rinish**  
**Jason Roche**  
**Don Werkheiser**

Rectory & Household Staff

**Jane Roche**  
**Midge Butsavage**

### Mission Statement

We are a Eucharistic Community, a people diverse in background united together as Catholic Christians around the altar of the Lord. We are nurtured by the Sacraments and sustained by prayer. Our mission is to fulfill our Baptismal promises by proclaiming the message of the Gospel in our lives by our commitment to faithfully love and serve the Lord and one another.

## Mass Intentions for the Week

	Time	Intention	Requested By
<b>Monday</b> <b>12/14</b>	7:30 AM	Charles Landis	Parish Community
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>12/15</b>	7:30 AM	Marie Theresa Walsh	Family
<b>Wednesday</b> <b>12/16</b>	7:30 AM	Mary Rowley	Jo Ann McHale
<b>Thursday</b> <b>12/17</b>	7:30 AM	Anthony Remus	Parish Community
<b>Friday</b> <b>12/18</b>	7:30 AM	Rita Malloy	Elaine Rakaczewski
<b>Saturday</b> <b>12/19</b>	4:30 PM	Edmund (Jay) and Michael Goham	Loving Wife and Mother
<b>Sunday</b> <b>12/20</b>	9:00 AM	Pat Cawley	Sisters
	11:30 AM	Edward Ward	Family

### Memorial Honor Candles

**MONTH OF DECEMBER**  
**In memory of Peter and Martha Gechunis;** by Daughter Cathy.  
**Chapel**  
**In memory of Leonard Mudlock;** by Family

### May They Rest in Peace

***Eternal Rest Grant unto Them, O Lord***  
Please remember in your prayers our parishioners and friends of the parish who have recently died, especially: Shirley Shannon, Leonard Zigmund, Sister M. Electa Schmidt IHM, Marjorie Zielinski, Joseph Newcomb.

**Stewardship: Your Gift of Time, Talent & Treasure**

Sunday Collection for the  
Weekend \$ 7,409.39

**This includes:**

**Offertory:** \$ 6,578.00  
**Children:** \$ 35.00  
**Loose** \$ 16.39  
**Dues:** \$ 780.00

**Total Envelopes Used:(260)**

Thank you once again for your generosity in these very difficult times. Our prayers are with you all!

### ONLINE GIVING

**Offertory:** \$490.00  
**Dues:** \$160.00  
**Parish Env.:** \$000.00  
**Total:** \$650.00

**ONLINE** giving

**Online Giving** is now available for all of our parish collections, including dues, Sunday Offertory, special collections, and Holy Days. The ability to make memorial donations, contributions for holiday flowers, and capital campaign is also available. With Christmas approaching, the option to donate online to this collection will be made in the very near future. Thank you so much for all your support and generosity as we navigate these challenges together!

## We pray...

### *For an end to Coronavirus ~*

Come Holy Spirit destroy the power of Coronavirus with Your Divine Fire. Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on us and cover us and our families with your Most precious Blood. Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, protect us Your children, under Your mantle of mercy and intercede to your beloved Son Jesus Christ for US. St. Michael the Archangel defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all evil spirits and disease wandering throughout the world. Amen.

### *For essential workers ~*

Pray for First Responders, Essential Workers, Healthcare Workers, and Nurses.

### *For pastoral ministers ~*

We ask you to pray for your priests, deacons, and religious. We pray also for our Seminarians: William Asinari, Michael Boris, Thomas Dzwonczy, Andrew McCarroll, Jan Carlo Perez, Mark Phillips, David Pirolli also Rev. Mr. Mark DeCelles. We also pray for Newly Professed Sister Elizabeth De Merchant, IHM, Novices Sister Giovana Fuentes IHM, Sister Elizabeth McGill.

## From the Parish Office

### **SCHEDULING MASS INTENTIONS**

Mass intentions are currently being accepted for January, February and March, 2021. Mass intentions are scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. In order to ensure that Masses are available to all parishioners, a Mass intention for a particular person/family can only be scheduled twice per year. Also, Mass Intentions may be changed based on the availability of a priest or if there are any unforeseen changes in the daily Mass.

### **CHRISTMAS WAFERS - OPLATEK**

Packets of Christmas Wafers (Oplatek) are now available at the Parish Office. The donation for each packet is \$2.00. The tradition of the Oplatek is that on Christmas Eve, as a family gathers to share their meal, they first break bread and share the Christmas wafer uniting family members and reminding us of the unity we share in the celebration of the Eucharist.

### **LECTOR WORKBOOKS AVAILABLE**

Lector workbooks for 2020-21 are now available. Lectors are asked to stop in the Parish Office (between 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.) and pick up their workbook. Thank you again for your willingness to serve around the Table of the Lord in this important ministry.

## Parish News and Updates

### **OFFICE HOURS DURING CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR**

The offices in both St John the Evangelist and St Joseph Mareello will be as follows during the upcoming Christmas/New Year holidays.

Offices will **CLOSE AT NOON** on **WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23** and re-open on **MONDAY DECEMBER 28** at **12 NOON**.

Offices will **CLOSE AT NOON** on **WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 30** and re-open on **MONDAY JANUARY 4** at **12NOON**.

\* St. Joseph Mareello Office will be **CLOSED ALL DAY** ON **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22**.

### **HOLY NAME SOCIETY LOTTERY TICKETS**

Tickets are now available at the Parish Center for February 2021, Monday through Friday 10:00 a. m.-3:00 p. m. lottery tickets are \$10 each.

Proceeds benefit the Holy Name Society projects and our Parish. Returns must be in before January 29, 2021 in order to register all tickets. Thank you for your support.

### **THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE PLEDGED**

With grateful hearts, we thank the **families** from our parish who have already made a gift or pledge to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. As of Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> a total of \$25,850.00 has been pledged from our parish community. Thank you for your generosity! Our goal is \$56,000.00.

### **RESERVATIONS FOR MASS**

It will not be necessary to make reservations for the weekend Masses of December 26/27 or the Solemnity of Mary masses on December 31/January 1 or the weekend of January 2/3, 2021. This is largely due to the variation in office hours during the Christmas season. We will update the need for reservations going forward soon.

### **NOTICE REGARDING REPORTING OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR**

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee, or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement. In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Laws, reports of suspected child abuse should also be made immediately by phone to the 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline (ChildLine) at 1-800-932-0313, or electronically at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis). It is also the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the Code of Canon Law and to upholding the tenets of the USSCB Charter for the Protection Children and Young People, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator at (570) 862-7551 or any Diocesan official.



# ADVENT



## HOPE. LOVE. JOY. PEACE.

# Care and Concern Ministries

## Important Updates for our Ministries

### FOOD PANTRY—NOW OPEN!

Free food is given, **by appointment**, to qualifying households in the Pittston Area and Wyoming Area School Districts (excluding citizens of Avoca and Duryea, as they have their own Community Food Pantries). Households may receive food once per month from September through May.

**Pre-qualification** is done by phone at **570-654-9923**. Proof of address (recent utility bill) is required at your first appointment **each year**. Food Pantry appointments are made for the **First and Second Wednesdays** of each month. This ministry is closed from June through August.

### KID'S CLOSET—NOW OPEN

The Kid's Closet offers new and gently used clothing for free to children (sizes newborn through 16) to families in the Pittston Area and Wyoming Area School Districts.

**Photo ID** is required to participate in this ministry. Families are able to visit the Kid's Closet every **6 weeks**.

This ministry is open the **First and Second Wednesdays** of each month from **9am to 11:30am** with **no evening hours**.

### TOY AND BOOK CORNER—NOW OPEN

The "Corner" offers new and gently used toys and books for free to children and families in the Pittston Area and Wyoming Area School Districts. **Photo ID** is required to participate in this ministry. Families are able to visit the Toy and Book Corner every **6 weeks**.

This ministry is open the **First and Second Wednesdays** of each month from **9am to 11:30am** with **no evening hours**.

### PEDIATRIC HEALTH CLINIC

The Pediatric Clinic offers basic health care for children ages newborn through 11. Children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Call **570-855-6035** for more information.

**Information about the Free Health Clinic is forthcoming.**

## Memorial Donations

We are most grateful for the following donations made to the many ministries of the Church and deeply appreciate the thoughtfulness.

### CLINIC

John and Amy Renfer; (**In memory of Nancy Dessoie**) by Jack and Marion Tetlak, Edward and Connie Myefski; (**In memory of Nancy Dessoie**) by Charles and Mary Z. Anslett, Peter and Lisa Butera; (**In memory of Frank and Anna Duzen**) by Daughters Paula and Donna.

### FOOR PANTRY

Mark Carmon, Tom and Dorothy Sheridan, Arlene Keegan, Carmen and Eva Mae Falcone, Joe and Jean Sperrazza; (**In memory of Henry Nalewajko**) by Anonymous; (**In honor of Rosanne Ricotta**) by Cathy Turonis; (**In honor of Roseanne Ragnacci**) by Cathy Turonis; (**In memory of Ralph Scafuro**) by Bob and Mary Reynolds; (**In memory of Mary Doran**) by Bob and Mary Reynolds; (**In memory of Gertrude Musto**) by Joe and Jean Sperrazza

### CARE AND CONCERN MINISTRIES

(**In memory of Ann Mary Dessoie**) by Mary Kenny, Joseph and Mary Virginia Augello, Paul and Sheila Kern; by Michael and Ann Hopkins, Joyce Anzalone, Pat and Diane Collins; (**In memory of Carmen Tomashunas**) by Laura Potorski; (**In memory of Michael Talipan**) by Gary and Diane Beck, Margie Vetack; (**In memory of Mary Ward Doran**) by Ward, Healey and Walsh Families, Paul and Sheila Kern; (**In honor of Sandy and Michael Policare**) by Mary McFarland.

### ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

(**In memory of Mary Doran**) by Stephen and Mary Vitek, Rich and Cathy Rusnok

### PEDIATRIC CLINIC

(**In memory of Nancy Dessoie**) by Shelia Walsh and Family; (**In memory of Mary Doran**) by Shelia Walsh and Family

# Thank You

## Fourth Sunday in Advent

### DECEMBER 20, 2020

First Reading:  
2 Samuel (7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a,16)  
Second Reading:  
Romans (16:-25-27)  
Gospel:  
Luke (1:26-38)





# Santa's North Pole Toy for Tots Giveaway



**Volunteers needed and appreciated!**

**On Wednesday, December 16, our parish will be a distribution site for Toys for Tots.**

**We are in need of volunteers to gather and hand out the toys. There will be two shifts: 9:00 am-12 noon and 1:30-4:30 pm.**

**Please call the parish office at 570-654-0053 or email [office@stjohnspittston.com](mailto:office@stjohnspittston.com) if you are interested in helping at either the AM or PM shift. Please know that all precautions will be taken to keep you safe and healthy! Masks will be required.**

**This will be a great opportunity for members of our Confirmation class to earn service hours. All volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of their parents to volunteer.**

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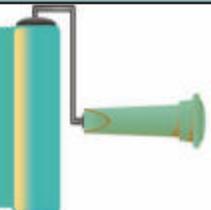
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