



*Welcome to  
the Catholic Communities of  
St. Mary's, Clayton  
St. John's, LaFargeville*



**December 6, 2020**

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**Rev. Arthur J. LaBaff, Pastor**

Phone: 315-686-3398

**Pastoral Associate**

Deacon Neil Fuller

**email:** [pastoralassociate@stmarysclayton.org](mailto:pastoralassociate@stmarysclayton.org)

**Deacon Assistants**

Gary A. Frank

Bruce Daugherty

**Parish Office**

Maribeth McFadden, Secretary

**email:** [reception@stmarysclayton.org](mailto:reception@stmarysclayton.org)

**Office Hours:** Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm

**Religious Education Office**

(Located in St. Mary's Parish Center)

Jennifer Barton 315-686-2638

**email:** [religioused@stmarysclayton.org](mailto:religioused@stmarysclayton.org)

**Buildings & Grounds  
& Cemeteries**

Call the Parish Office 315-686-3398

**St. Mary's Weekend Masses**

Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

**St. John's Weekend Masses**

Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

**Weekday & Holy Day Masses**

See page 2 or call the Parish Office

**Reconciliation**

3:00-3:30pm Saturday

in St. Mary's parish center

and by appointment

**First Friday Holy Hour**

after 9:00 a.m. Mass on the first  
Friday of the month at St. Mary's

**Prayer Line**

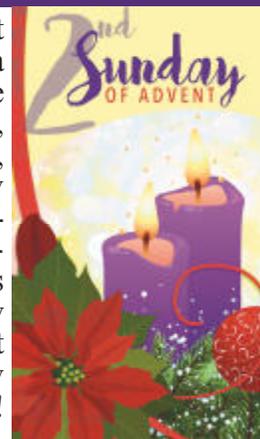
315-285-5541

[smsjprayerline@gmail.com](mailto:smsjprayerline@gmail.com)

People knew over a year in advance that the Pope was coming for a visit to America and the preparations began. Security, space limitations and requirements, protocols, crowd management, itineraries, invitations, regulations, and so much more was necessary to pull this event off effectively. It's not every day that we get a visit from such a prominent dignitary. Thought, effort, meticulous attention to detail and vision all are necessary to make this thing work. After all, he can't just show up in the ordinary and normal daily routines of life and catch people unprepared! Tickets have to be purchased, buses rented, hotel rooms reserved, and travel arrangements made early because it will be impossible to see him if we wait too long!

We do this kind of preparing not only for prominent religious figures but for political dignitaries, notable sports figures, people of fame, and even actors. If an individual intrigues us, we are going to want to do all we have to do to get a "good seat" in the house. Does Jesus Christ captivate this much of our attention? We are asked to prepare the way of the Lord and to do so not with frantic frenzy but patient enthusiasm. We do not have to stand on a street corner making profound announcements about God's coming or become overly zealous in our embrace of the Good News. Our task is quieter, more interior, captivating, and consuming. We are asked to change. We have to conduct our lives with holy devotion.

Is the cost of that ticket too much for you? Don't you want the "best seat" in the house? You don't want to miss Our Lord's arrival when he comes, do you? After all, if he comes while you are going about your daily routines without you even knowing, he may catch you off guard. Or, he may come in disguise looking like a beggar, a prisoner, migrant, refugee, or someone who is lost. Would you be ready to recognize him then? Preparing for the coming of Christ requires a change of mind, heart, and behavior. It is not adequate to simply do the things we always do. We want our lives to speak of the exciting news of Christ's coming and the joy that the Gospel brings. It has to do with our demeanor, values, priorities, choices, and how we structure daily routines. Of course, it involves sacrifice. All anticipations do! Are you excited, captivated, enthusiastic, and sitting on the edge of your seat eager to celebrate his coming among us at Christmas, and waiting for him to come again? If not, why not?



**Website:** [www.stmarysclayton.org](http://www.stmarysclayton.org)

**Rectory & Parish Offices:** 521 James Street, Clayton, NY 13624

**Phone:** 315-686-3398

**December 6, 2020, 2nd Sunday of Advent**

**The Lord Calls:** John the Baptizer made ready the way of the Lord. Who will make ready the way today? If God is calling you, talk to Fr. Art LaBaff, or Fr. Chris Carrara at ccarra-ra@rcdony.org / 315-393-2920, or Cathy Russell at crussell@rcdony.org / 315-393-2920.

**MASS SCHEDULE:****SATURDAY, December 5, Anticipated Vigil**

4:00 (SM) Lucy Reff by Tim & Donna Orvis

**SUNDAY, December 6, 2nd Sunday of Advent**

9:00 (SM) Bette Prouty by Betty & Jim Hofmann

11:00 (SJ) People of the Parishes

**MONDAY, December 7**

9:00 (SM) Lucy Reff by Mary Agatha Guzior & family

**TUESDAY, December 8, Immaculate Conception**

9:00 (SM) People of the Parishes

**WEDNESDAY, December 9**

9:00 (SM) Bernie Duffy by Kim & Jay Brown

**THURSDAY, December 10**

9:00 (SM) COMMUNION SERVICE

**FRIDAY, December 11**

9:00 (SM) Eleanor Kittle by John & Catherine Heaslip

**SATURDAY, December 12, Anticipated Vigil**

4:00 (SM) People of the Parishes

**SUNDAY, December 13, 3rd Sunday of Advent**

9:00 (SM) Elmer Greey by Tom & Cathy Harruff

11:00 (SJ) Intentions of Lisa Willard by David & Lynette Robinson

“I do not believe the promises of the Declaration of Independence are just for the strong, the independent, the healthy. They are for everyone—including unborn children.”

*George W. Bush*

**2020 Donations:** Tax rules require that donations to your parish for 2020 be received by December 31. Donations received January 1 or after will be applied to the 2021 tax year. Letters acknowledging your 2020 donations will be mailed by January 31 by bulk mail. *Bulk mail is not forwarded to your winter address.*

Today if we have no peace it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other—that man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister.—St. Teresa of Calcutta from *Love: A Fruit Always in Season.*

**St. Mary's Booster Club:** Winners of the third weekly drawing on November 27 are Penny Clark, Walter Kittle, and Joan Terrillion. The dinner is Saturday, January 16, 2021. Don't miss out—get your ticket today! To join, volunteer, or for questions, contact Donna (315-778-8672), Tim (315-778-2484), or the parish office (315-686-3398).

**National Night of Prayer for Life:** 9pm Tuesday, December 8 to 1am Wednesday, December 9, uniting the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with the Feast of St. Juan Diego. It was on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1531 that Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and the Unborn, first appeared to St. Juan Diego. Therefore, people around the world are asked to seek Our Blessed Mother's intercessions and to pray for the protection of life and the family, to renew the Church, to establish peace, to pray to end abortion, and restore God's blessings. Mark your calendars or set the alarm on your phone to pray during this Night of Prayer for Life.

BEST *Advent* EVER

**Best Advent Ever!** Make 2021 the best year of your life and start with Advent. Visit [www.dynamiccatholic.com](http://www.dynamiccatholic.com) and sign up for *Best Advent Ever*. Provide your name and email to receive a daily email with a short, inspirational video and reflection to help you slow down, think, and pray. Advent is here... sign up today.

**From Fr. LaBaff:**

On the First Sunday of Advent in my homily I said "This Advent Season will be different from any that we have every experienced. Our individual celebration of Christmas will only be as rich as our preparation for the Birth of the Savior of the World. ...This Advent is intended to enrich us spiritually. If all we do is to wear ourselves out and empty our wallets, then we have missed the point."

Pope Francis at the beginning of Advent said: Be Watchful. Praying and loving, that is what it means to be watchful. We pray today: Come Lord Jesus, take our distracted hearts and make them watchful.

Our Christmas preparations will be different this year, I suspect because of the Pandemic. Families and friends may not be able to gather and celebrate as we have in the past. The Church has long given us this time of Advent (preparation) for Christmas.

I call you attention to the list of fellow parishioners found in the bulletin who may not be able to be active as in past Christmases. Some prefer not to leave their homes; others are in Care Facilities, but we can hopefully brighten the Christmas Season by sending them a card or calling them. It can be a very bright star in this time of pandemic. You may have other friends or family that it would brighten their day if you called or sent a Christmas greeting.

**From the Bishop:**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

On the weekend of December 12-13, the parishes in our Diocese will conduct the annual appeal for the *Retirement Fund for Religious*, a collection that benefits some 30,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

As Christians, we are called to "serve the Lord with gladness" (Ps 100:2). Our elderly religious offer a shining example of what it means to answer this call. During their days of active ministry, they worked tirelessly to build Catholic schools and hospitals, promote social justice, and embrace the neediest among us. In retirement, many continue in volunteer ministry, and all pray for the needs of our Church and world. Inspired by love, their service—past and present—is marked by joy and a deep desire to do the will of God.

We are so indebted to these consecrated religious. I hope you will be able to show your appreciation by supporting the annual collection for the *Retirement Fund for Religious*. The fact that these religious worked for little or no compensation in years past, means that they are now struggling to meet the costs of caring for retired and infirmed members. The additional challenges brought about by COVID-19 have compounded an already difficult situation. The proceeds from this collection offers some financial support for communities in caring for older members. In addition, it helps to ensure that younger members can continue to perform the good works of their elders.

Many fine religious women and men have served and continue to serve the people of God here in the North Country as teachers, health care providers, pastoral associates, administrators, pastors, and assistant priests. We are richly blessed to have a community of contemplatives, supporting us through their ministry of prayer. We are also grateful to those missionaries (who have left their home countries to minister here in our North Country.

I encourage you to do what you can to support this collection. Most importantly, please pray for them and for an increase in their number. Know that they are praying for you!

Gratefully yours in Christ,  
Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

**Weekly Giving**

*Thank you for your continued support.*

St. Mary's	This Year	Last Year
Envelopes	\$ 3,843.00	\$ 1,618.23
Plate	\$ 217.82	\$ 417.95
<i>November Electronic Giving: \$ 3,055.00</i>		

St. John's	This Year	Last Year
Envelopes	\$ 652.00	\$ 534.00
Plate	\$ 6.00	\$ 25.00
<i>November Electronic Giving: \$ 508.00</i>		

## Deacon's Corner by Dc. Bruce Daugherty

Years ago, when I was a little boy, my grandmother would take us shopping just before Christmas. Gramma Annie as we called her, did not have a lot of money but she was a saint among sinners. She would walk through the store and show us some slippers and ask if we liked them. She would then in turn get them for us for Christmas and we would have to act surprised that they were our gift.

I loved her so much! Gramma was always at church, praying the rosary or talking about church, God, and the saints.

We would go there and laugh when her neighbor came to the house and she would offer him some Manichevitz wine. She was a great little hostess and she would cook us meals on Sunday afternoons.

When she got older, she slowed down some but the routine stayed the same. She would fix meals and pray and just love us. Nothing was too big for her to take on. Even though she was a tiny bit of a thing.

I recall one time, when she was working at the Salvation Army, she was looking at a \$50.00 television as hers went out. Well she talked and talked and by the time she finished she got the tv for free and they actually took her old one away for free. Memories of her make me mellow this time of year.

Holiday time is sometimes hard for people – not getting enough money to get gifts, not having family near, or maybe a recent divorce or death in the family. We can change that though and turn it over to God. Tell him what you need and ask how he can help make it better. How can I do something with little money. How can I make someone's holiday better? How can I make my family see how much they mean to me without going into debt or needing things that I do not have? How can I get along with family that drink or just talk politics? What about that brother-in-law that only wants to talk about football and sports? Is there a way for me to celebrate and not feel rotten after Christmas?

Keep asking – GOD will tell you if you will listen to him. In the still of the winter, ok late fall, you can look at the stars of night and talk with God and see his beauty. Seeing HIS beauty, ask for answers, and they will come. Answers you never thought possible. Just be OPEN to it and be OPEN to what he tells you. And if all else fails remember you can always have a bit of Manichevitz wine.....

Merry Christmas to you all.

**Feast of the Immaculate Conception  
of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Tuesday, December 8, 9am Mass  
at St. Mary's Church, Clayton

Join us on this holy day of obligation as we honor Mary, the Mother of God, conceived without sin.



**Home Communion Visits:** In light of the increasing number cases of coronavirus, it has been deemed necessary to stop home Communion visits for St. Mary's and St. John's parishioners for the time being. This limitation is for the benefit of the minister and the shut-ins. Hopefully, we will resume these visits in the near future. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact Dc. Neil Fuller or Fr. Art LaBaff.

**The Light Is On For You**

*Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance*

**Sunday, December 20**

after 11am Mass at St. John's,

1pm at St. Mary's, Clayton,

3pm at St. Cyril's, Alexandria Bay

**Regular Confession Times:**

3-3:30pm every Saturday at St. Mary's,

or phone the Rectory at 315-686-3398

**2021 Vocation Calendars** are available at the entrances of the churches and the parish office. These calendars are thoughtfully provided to you by Cummings Funeral Services. Be sure to take one for your use or for a friend or relative. A special thank you to the Cummings family for providing these calendars.

**Follow Me: A time to pray and discern vocation.** On Sunday, December 13 at 2pm, there will be a Holy Hour for Vocations at St. Patrick's Church in Watertown. All are invited and encouraged to pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life. At 6:30 pm there will be a virtual question and answer session on Zoom with Bishop LaValley, Sister Mary Gregory Munger, SSJ, and Seminarians on the topic of vocations. For more info, contact the Vocations Office at 315-393-2920.

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