

SACRED HEART CHURCH ♥ SAINT MARY CHURCH



3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

March 23, 2025

Jesus said to them in reply, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!" - Lk 13:2-3



The Annunciation of the Lord

ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA 16602

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Sacred Heart Formation Center: 814-944-3922

Sacred Heart Food Pantry: 814-943-4529

Saint Mary Rectory: 1401 5TH AVENUE

Telephone: 814-942-2416

FAX: 814-944-5049

Saint Mary Email: stmaryaltoona@dioceseaj.org

Website: <http://stmaryschurchaltoona.wixsite.com/saintmarys>

DIRECTORY OF PARISH STAFF

Rev. Lubomír J. Strečok, Pastor of Sacred Heart and Administrator of Saint Mary

Rev. Ashok Kumar Alphonse, Weekend Assistant

Kellie Rivera, Sacred Heart Parish Secretary

Joel Caracciolo, Sacred Heart Parish Council Chairperson

James Rokosky Sacred Heart Finance Council Chairperson

Judy Wahl, Sacred Heart Director of Religious Education

Patrick Dorman, Sacred Heart Choir Director

Anita Wavrek, Saint Mary Parish Secretary

Joseph Eckels, Saint Mary Finance Council Chairperson

Debbie Bartley, Saint Mary Director of Religious Education

Jim Mock, Saint Mary Director of Christian Initiation

Terry Carnicella, Saint Mary Choir Director

Terry Carnicella, Jean Ann Mitchell, Karen Koehle, Mary Villani, Organists

CELEBRATIONS OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday Vigil Masses: **4:00 p.m.** (Saint Mary) **5:30 p.m.** (Sacred Heart)

Sunday Masses: **8:00 a.m.** (Saint Mary) **10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon** (Sacred Heart)

Weekday Masses: Monday-Friday: **7:45 a.m.** (Sacred Heart)

CELEBRATIONS OF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions)

Saturday: 12:30 p.m. (Sacred Heart)/Saturday: 3:00 p.m. (Saint Mary)

or by appointment

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK: You are encouraged to notify the rectory as soon as there is a serious illness. You are also asked to notify the rectory when a relative is admitted to a hospital or nursing home.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM: The Sacrament of Baptism for Infants normally takes place during a weekend celebration of the Eucharist or on Sundays at 1:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart or 9:00 a.m. at Saint Mary. For the baptism of their first child, parents are expected to attend a baptismal session with Fr. Lubomír. Please call the rectory office for an appointment. Godparents for infants must be at least 16 years of age, confirmed, and regularly practicing the faith with a freedom to receive the Eucharist. Sponsor certificate for Godparents is necessary and can be obtained from their parish office of their current Church of registration.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION: Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Catholic Church should contact a member of the parish staff.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY: Please call the Pastor/Administrator nine months in advance to make arrangements for instruction and planning the marriage ceremony.

FOOD PANTRY: The Sacred Heart Food Pantry will be open on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. until 1:45 p.m.

REGISTRATION OF PARISHIONERS: We are always happy to welcome new parishioners to Sacred Heart Parish and Saint Mary Parish. Please introduce yourself to a member of the parish staff and register at the rectory. Registration, the practice of stewardship, and regular participation in the Eucharist indicate that a person is an active member of the parish and is eligible to act as a godparent or sponsor. As a Church community seeking to be faith-filled disciples and good stewards, the sacrifice of our time, talent and treasure is essential for the common good.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS**Saturday, March 22nd**

4:00 p.m. (SM) Charles Hinterberger (Stephen Hinterberger)
 5:30 p.m. (SH) Mary Ann Hetrick (Glenn Hetrick & Family)

Sunday, March 23rd, The 3rd Sunday of Lent

8:00 a.m. (SM) Mike & Mary Melnick (The Family)
 10:00 a.m. (SH) Pro Populo (Living and Deceased members of Sacred Heart and Saint Mary Parishes)
 12:00 p.m. (SH) Matthew Landolfi (Guy & Marianne Landolfi)

Monday, March 24th

7:45 a.m. (SH) Mike McKnight (John & Alice McKnight)

Tuesday, March 25th, The Annunciation of the Lord

7:45 a.m. (SH) Patricia Koehle McTavish (Chuck & Carol Allese)

Wednesday, March 26th

7:45 a.m. (SH) Regina Kelly (Sacred Heart Food Pantry Volunteers)

Thursday, March 27th

7:45 a.m. (SH) Edmund McConnell (Family)

Friday, March 28th

7:45 a.m. (SH) Penny Lafferty (John & Elaine Toomey)
 4:00 p.m. (SM) Randy Pielmeier (Ruth, Don & Lexie Ciambotti)

Saturday, March 29th

4:00 p.m. (SM) Nancy Foster (Kathleen Foster)
 5:30 p.m. (SH) Jack & Zita Milliron (Children)

Sunday, March 30th, The 4th Sunday of Lent

8:00 a.m. (SM) Clara Bennett (Ray & Sue Johnston)
 10:00 a.m. (SH) Pro Populo (Living and Deceased members of Sacred Heart and Saint Mary Parishes)
 12:00 p.m. (SH) Charles E. Huffman (Wife & Family)

Weekly Collection at Sacred Heart March 9th, 2025

Envelopes	\$7,338.00
Loose Change	\$293.00
Total	\$7,631.00

Weekly Collection at Saint Mary, March 9th, 2025

Envelopes	\$7,446.00
Loose Change	\$75.00
Total	\$7,521.00

EVERY DAY STEWARDSHIP

Today's readings capture the essence of God's Lenten message to us, His people, offering words of compassion and mercy as well as warning of the need to repent and make the most of the gift of time He has given us.

Jesus offers the parable of the unfruitful fig tree to further illustrate this truth. The owner of the orchard came searching for fruit on a fig tree he had planted in his orchard. Finding no fruit on the tree after three years, he told the gardener to cut it down. But the gardener intercedes and asks for one more year to cultivate and fertilize the tree in hopes it would bear fruit in the future. The fig tree was not dying, it simply wasn't doing much of anything at all. Can this be said of us and our lives at times as well?

The season of Lent is a time to reflect carefully on the way we spend our time. Do we give first priority to God, tending to our spiritual growth and sacramental life with diligence? Do we give next priority to our loved ones, focusing intentionally on them each day without distractions from phones, screens, or thoughts of work? If not, now is the moment to repent of our waste of time or of misplaced priorities on our use of time. God is merciful but just. Let's turn to Him and ask Him to make our lives fruitful while we still have time to do so.

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES SCHEDULE**MARCH 29TH AND 30TH****(Also posted on the Sacred Heart Facebook page)**

Time and Location	Altar Servers	Lectors	Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	Organist/Cantor
Saturday 4:00 p.m. Saint Mary	Volunteer	Joe Varner	Host-Laurie Woomer Chalice-Jim Woomer	Jean Ann Mitchell Sophie Wise
Saturday 5:30 p.m. Sacred Heart	Stu Trotter	Dave Diedrich	Host-Gerry Milliron Chalice-Theresa Adams	Karen Koehle Maddie Trotter
Sunday 8:00 a.m. Saint Mary Youth Mass	Dominic Sparacino Gaby Sparacino	Jill Helsel	Host-Nick Anderson Chalice-Noah Anderson Choir-Dee Bradfield	Karen Koehle Marian Choir
Sunday 10:00 a.m. Sacred Heart	Henry Drumm	Tish Crum	Host-Patty Wolf Chalice-Becky Bimle Chalice-Jann Dalansky	Mary Villani Ryleigh Stollings
Sunday 12:00 p.m. Sacred Heart	Ella Lauver John Lauver	Ron Adams	Host-April Lauver Chalice-Jim Imler	Mary Villani Tom Liszka



PRO-LIFE CORNER Words matter. Mankind is really good at rationalizing evil behavior and words matter in the fight for truth. Often times, positive-sounding phrases mask the true intent and outcomes of actions. In the fight for life, we have to shine a light on this false terminology. Perhaps this is why surveys show that ultrasounds are so powerful in changing the minds of abortion-minded women. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words and words matter.

PRO-LIFE ROSARY As Catholics, we proclaim that human life is a precious gift from God; that each person who receives this gift has responsibilities toward God, self and others; and that society, through its laws and social institutions, must protect and nurture human life at every stage of its existence. The USCCB Committee on Pro-Life is inviting Catholics to join a focused effort of prayer for the end of abortion and for the protection of women and pre-born children. Join us at **Sacred Heart every Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. in the Church**. All are welcome to attend. No commitments. Come when you can!

FAMILY LENTEN PROJECT CARE PACKAGES FOR COUCH SURFING (HOMELESS) CHILDREN Saint Mary's and Sacred Heart Churches are participating in a FAMILY LENTEN PROJECT for Homeless Children in the Altoona Area School District. These children range in age from Kindergarten to 12th grade and are identified as having no permanent address (couch surfing – going from location to location). Below are items that we will be collecting to put into packages for these children. Please place your donations in the Blessed Mother Room at St. Mary's or at the Main Entrance at Sacred Heart. This project has begun and will continue through Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025.

HYGIENE ITEMS: Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Bar Soap, Wash-cloth, Deodorant, Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash, Body Lotion, Mouthwash, Feminine Hygiene Products,

PERSONAL ITEMS: Socks, Underwear, T-Shirts/Hoodies (not white), Hair Accessories (comb, brush, barrettes, hair clips, headbands, etc.)

We will accept monetary donations by envelope marked "Family Lenten Project" dropped in the collection basket at either church.

LENTEN GROUP SESSION ON "LIVE THE MASS - DISCOVER THE MYSTERY OF THE MASS" - This Lenten Reflection Series will be held each Monday during Lent in the St. Mary's Church Rectory from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM. Please register by contacting the St. Mary's or Sacred Heart Rectory. The First Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 4. All other sessions will be on Monday Evenings. March 10 will be Praise and Holy Mass; March 17 will be The Eucharist: A Personal Relationship with Jesus; March 24 will focus on the Eucharist; March 31 will be on Jewish History of the Eucharist Part 1; April 7 is on Jewish History of the Eucharist Part 2; April 14 will be the conclusion on Angels and The Mass. We are happy to offer this series and hope many will take advantage of this opportunity.



SAINT MARY CANDLE MEMORIAL: The Altar Candles and Sanctuary Lamp will burn the week of March 23, 2025, in loving memory of Agnes Najduch from The Family.

SAINT MARY PRAYER CHAIN: Please call the St. Mary's Rectory at 814-942-2416.



PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Kathy Ansman, Mark Blackie, Rod Baronner, Dan Bauer, Dave Bauer,

Dennis Born, Vince Bumann, Jack Chilcote, Harry Chirdon, Karen Claar, Brandon Conaway,

Shirley Conlon, Denise Conrad, James Conrad, Kathy Corl, William Costlow, Bob Decker,

Colette DiMemmo, Margaret Dodson, Tim Dodson, Joan Donnelly, Matthew Dorman, Nate Dorman, Amelia Dougherty,

Lois Duncan, Thomas Duncan, Paul Dunmire, Ashley Eagen, Corinda Ermin, Herman Frederick, Pat Harpster, Leighton Hess, Dolly Holzer, Lucy Horton, Raymond Kargo, Carol Keagy, Kenny Anthony Keagy, Russell Keith, John Kleine, Sue Koehle, Ruth Lamca, Cyndi Lansberry, John Leshene, Beth Lloyd, Charles McGrain, Shirley McIntyre, Mason Wayne McManus, Jim Mock, Paul Angelo Morelli, Bev Mueller, Bonnie Neal, Jessica Neff, Lee Neff, Kevin O'Rourke, Mark Pacifico, Sarah Rihnovich, Nancy Servello, Laura Snyder, Alex Walter, Margo Wascherl, Alan Watson, Joan Weston, Hank Williams, Renee Williams, Mikayla Yanchik.



SACRED HEART NOVENA The 60th Annual Novena in HONOR OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS will be held from Monday, March 31 to Tuesday, April 8, 2025. Bishop Mark Bartchak will be the Celebrant and Homilist on the opening night. A reception will follow in the Formation Center and all are welcome. Sign-up sheets will be placed on the table at the main entrance of Sacred Heart.

Sacred Heart Memorial Fund Donation was made in the memory of Mrs. Mary Jacobs from Mrs. Linda Ofiesh.

CHRISTIAN MOTHERS LCBA #1290 Will be holding their monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., with Rosary at 6:15 p.m. in the St. Mary's Church Basement.

Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown STRENGTH IN CHRIST Men's Conference-Sunday, March 30th, 2025 from 11:30 AM-5:30 PM at Mount Aloysius College, Cresson. Join us for a day that includes lunch, Sunday Mass, talks from local priests, personal testimonies, and a panel discussion with local Catholic men. There is no cost to attend. Visit www.dioceseaj.org to register online. For those unable to register online, paper registration forms can be found at the entrance of both churches and return via mail. Registration closes March 21st.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Altoona, PA and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Altoona, PA

GOSPEL MEDITATION

March 23, 2025

The 3rd Sunday of Lent

John 4:5-42

My childhood best friend was Xander Price. He was the fastest runner in school, an excellent baseball player and Jewish. Though his family wasn't intensely religious, I felt totally at home with them despite our religious differences. Everything about their Judaism seemed to undergird and strengthen my own experience of being a Catholic. I knew they didn't believe in Jesus like my family did, but I intuited somehow that Jesus was "hiding" in their religion. Like a cat moving under a blanket, ready to emerge at any moment, the Lord was hidden there in a special way.

In the Gospel for this third Sunday of Lent, Jesus says, "For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Stunning words, those. Moses wrote about Jesus. The way therefore that we come to know and believe in Jesus is to discover him lurking in Moses' writings. The Hebrew Scripture is the wonderful womb in which Jesus gestates within a host of images: Adam, Isaac, David, Melchizedek, the Temple, sacrificed lambs, prophets and so on. Right now, in your parish's OCIA program, soon-to-be baptized people are carefully studying where Jesus is in the writings of Moses, so that they may believe in him. This works for all of us, too, who wish to deepen our knowledge and love of Jesus.

Lenten challenge: Take some time to prayerfully study one of the images of Jesus listed above in the Old Testament. Identify which one you find compelling and consider why this is so. If you don't know where to start, begin with the prophet Jeremiah as an image of Jesus. - *Father John Muir*

Please join in praying for the Priests of our Diocese this week

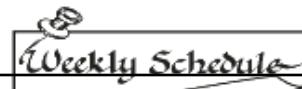
we are praying for Rev. Nelson Javier

Pastor of Holy Rosary

O Jesus, you are the eternal High Priest, the Good Shepherd, the Source of life. Through the singular generosity of Your most sensitive heart, You have given us our priests for the purpose of fulfilling in us that plan of sanctification which Your grace inspires in our hearts. We beg You come to their aid with Your merciful assistance.

O Jesus, may they possess faith which energizes their actions, Hope which is unshakable in trials, And charity which permeates their endeavors. Through their constant meditation, may your word, Which is an outpouring of eternal wisdom, Become the everlasting nourishment of their interior life; And may their conduct and suffering reflect the example of Your life and Passion, So as to serve for our instruction, and as a beacon of consolation in our sorrows.

O Lord, grant that our priests be detached from all worldly interests, and labor only for Your glory. With a pure conscience may they persevere in their duties faithfully until their dying breath. And when death has claimed their bodies, and they place back into Your hands the account of their faithful stewardship, May they enjoy in You, Lord Jesus, their divine teacher on earth, the everlasting reward of the crown of justice in the splendor of the Saints. Amen.



Saturday, March 22nd

11:00 a.m. **1st Reconciliation For 2nd Grade Students (SH)**
12:30 p.m. **Sacrament of Reconciliation (SH)**
2:00 p.m. **1st Reconciliation For 2nd Grade Students (SM)**
3:00 p.m. **Sacrament of Reconciliation (SM)**
4:00 p.m. **Vigil Mass (SM)**
5:30 p.m. **Vigil Mass (SH)**

Sunday, March 23rd The 3rd Week of Lent

8:00 a.m. **Holy Mass (SM)**
9:00 a.m. **K-11 Religious Education (SM)**
10:00 a.m. **Holy Mass (SH) & 12:00 p.m. Holy Mass (SH)**
11:00 a.m. **PreK-11 Religious Education (SH)**

Tuesday, March 25th

7:00 p.m. **Choir Practice (SH)**

Wednesday, March 26th

10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. **Food Pantry is Open (SH)**
3:00 p.m. **Pro-Life Rosary said in the Church (SH)**

Friday, March 28th

4:00 p.m. **Stations of the Cross followed by Holy Mass (SM)**
5:30 p.m. **Stations of the Cross Only (SH)**

Saturday, March 29th

12:30 p.m. **Sacrament of Reconciliation (SH)**
3:00 p.m. **Sacrament of Reconciliation (SM)**
4:00 p.m. **Vigil Mass (SM)**
5:30 p.m. **Vigil Mass (SH)**

Sunday, March 30th, The 4th Week of Lent

8:00 a.m. **Holy Mass (SM)**
9:00 a.m. **K-10 Religious Education & 11th grade Reflection Session (SM)**
10:00 a.m. **Holy Mass (SH) & 12:00 p.m. Holy Mass (SH)**
11:00 a.m. **PreK-11 Religious Education (SH)**

CREATED FROM THE HEART Do you sew? Do you crochet? Or knit? Do you want to bring comfort to others? A new ministry called Created from the Heart may be for you. Come to an informational meeting at the Sacred Heart Faith Formation Center on Saturday, April 12 at 1:00 p.m. to see how you can bring comfort to the homeless, the sick, the dying and the grieving. All Sacred Heart and St. Mary's parishioners are welcome! If you have any questions please call Betsy Chilcote at 814-934-7737. *The group is in need of plastic grocery bags, they can be dropped off at the main entrance of Sacred Heart Church.

Lent and Easter Program at the CCW INCAMATION CENTER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM: Untold Blessings Our ultimate goal is to be a saint. It is our greatest calling and what is desired for us by our Creator. Bishop Robert Barron paints a beautiful and mysterious image of what it takes to be a follower of, 'the One who is, Jesus Christ.' He lays out three intriguing paths to holiness: Finding the Center; Knowing You're A Sinner; and Realizing Your Life is Not About You. You are invited to join in this program offered April 7, 14, 21, & 28, 2025. It will take place at Incarnation Center each day from 10-12N and at the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel from 6 – 8 PM. Pre-registration is requested by calling 814-886-4098 or by email: CommunityofficeCCW@gmail.com by March 28.

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