ALL ARE WELCOME!

St. Joseph Church

26 Erie Avenue • Gowanda, NY 14070

DECEMBER 19, 2021 • FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Calendar of Events

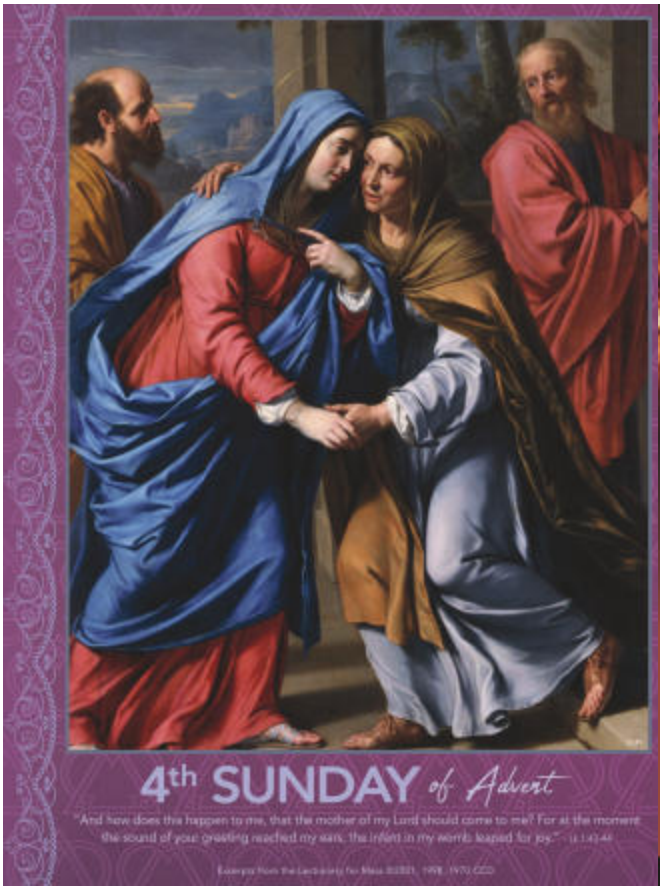
Saturday, December 18
8:00 pm.....AA Meeting, Church basement
Tuesday, December 21
6:30 pm.....Al-Anon Meeting, school
Wednesday, December 22
9:00 am.....Bible Study, school
Friday, December 24—Christmas Eve
Rectory Closed
No 8:30 am Mass
4:30 pm.... Mass at St Mary's/Cattaraugus
7:00 pm..... Mass at St. Joseph Church
10:00 pm.....Mass at St. Joseph Church
Saturday, December 25—Christmas Day
9:30 am.....Mass at St Joseph Church
Note: No 4:30 pm Mass at St. Joseph
8:00 pm.....AA Meeting, Church basement
Tuesday, December 28
6:30 pm.....Al-Anon Meeting, school
Wednesday, December 29
9am.....Bible Study, school
Friday, December 31
8:30 am.....Mass at St. Joseph Church
5:00 pm.....Vigil Mass at St. Mary's
Saturday, January 1– Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
9:30 am.....Mass at St. Joseph Church
4:30 pm.....Mass at St. Joseph Church
8:00 pm.....AA Meeting, Church basement

Rectory: 26 Erie Ave. • 532-5100 • **Fax:** 532-4096 • **Hours:** M-F 9 am to 2 pm
Email: rectory@stjoesgowanda.com • **Website:** www.sjcgowanda.org
Faith Formation: Wilma Parry 532-2520, reled@stjoesgowanda.com

Rev. Innocent Diala, *Pastor*
Deacon Wally Samick

MASS SCHEDULE

St. Joseph Church: Saturday 4:30 p.m. • Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.
Weekdays: 8:30 a.m.



SICK CALLS: Anytime. Call the rectory as soon as possible.
CONFESSIONS: Saturday at 3:45 p.m. or by appointment.
RCIA: Please contact the rectory.
BAPTISMS: Upon request; pre-baptismal instruction is required. Please contact the rectory.
PRE-CANA: Classes can be scheduled by calling the rectory.
MARRIAGES: Arrangements should be made at least 6 months in advance at the rectory.
NEW PARISHIONERS: Please register at the rectory as soon as possible after you have moved into the Parish. Registration as a member of the parish requires the completion of an application available at the rectory.

"And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." - Lk 1:43-45 Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

The Sanctuary Candle burns this week in memory of ***Tom Stelley*** as requested by *Kathy Stelley*.

PRAYER REQUESTS

For all those serving in our **Armed Forces** here and around the world. For those who are suffering from pain and illness, especially**: Dale Koch, Patricia Leonard, Mary Stelley, Carol Regan, Joan Cain, Leo Gassman, Colt William Matz, Mark Smith, Mike Gernatt, Kiley Denea, Melissa Moulton Peglowski, Peter Johnson, Justin Regan, Beatrice and Donald Swanson, Sister Lucina Stang, Mary Vanderbosch, and Mike Wesley.** For those who have died**…*Mike Eddy.***

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And blessed are you who hear Jesus call to ministry and respond! If you hear this summons, contact Fr. Dave Baker at 716-847-5535 or visit buffalovocations.org.

HONOR ROLL

St. Francis High School is pleased to announce that Samuel Comstock has achieved First Honors during the First Quarter of the 2021-2022 academic year.

ST. JOSEPH DIRECTORY

RECTORY

Office, Connie/Sandy/Jenny 532-5100
Parish Email..... rectory@stjoesgowanda.com
Parish Fax 532-4096
Pastor Fr. Innocent Diala 532-5100
Email……...frdiala@stjoesgowanda.com
Deacon Wally Samick……532-5100
Email…….deaconwally2020@gmail.com

FAITH FORMATION

Wilma Parry..... 532-2520
Email..... reled@stjoesgowanda.com

DIOCESE OF BUFFALO

Website: www.buffalodiocese.org

WEEKLY COLLECTION

Collection information was unavailable due to the early submission deadline of this bulletin.

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

Baby Jesus' Wish List

Odds are you've got a Christmas list going by now — gift ideas for everyone from your nephew to your goddaughter to your mailman. But what about the birthday boy? What's the gift Jesus gets from you this Christmas?

If you've ever read the Book of Leviticus, you know all about the sacrifices God asks of the Israelites, referred to in the reading from Hebrews today. Leviticus can be a chore to read — a little repetitive, a little intimidating. There's a lot of very specific actions that God asks His Chosen People to complete to make up for whatever they have done wrong. In essence, it's a bit of a wish list for gifts.

But it's a wish list that can really confuse you. What's God going to do with a cereal offering? The kidneys of an animal? If you look closely, what God is doing here is beautiful. He's customized his wish list to only those things He knows the Israelites can give. It's God saying, in what amounts to theological baby-talk for folks who barely know of Him and His ways, exactly how they could be stewards. "Do this, but don't do that. If you do that, do this and you will find My mercy."

Our guide to stewardship — the Gospels of Christ — is less precise because by the time of Christ, God's people have grown in understanding of love and mercy and relationship with the divine. Through Christ, we find out that God's real wish list didn't really consist of cereal offerings and the kidneys of various animals. It's far simpler, but luckily, it's something we still have on-hand. All He wants is our whole heart. — *Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS* ©LPi

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Religious give thanks. A sister writes, "Our prayers belong most of all to the generous benefactors whose donations have made this financial assistance possible." Thank you for supporting last week's Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Visit **retiredreligious.org** *to learn how your gift supports elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.*

MEN'S MINISTRY

The "Men of the Challenge", a ministry of men from St. Aloysius, Epiphany & St. Joseph Gowanda parishes, invites the men of our parish to gather on the 2nd Saturday of each month to EAT, to LEARN more about our faith, & to be CHALLENGED to live as men of God each day. Join them for their upcoming gatherings: Jan. 8th, and Feb. 12th from 8 am to 9:15 am at Epiphany of Our Lord Parish Hall—10893 Route 75 Langford. Please call or text your RSVP to Deacon Jeff at 716-432-8717.

HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24th:
4:30 p.m. Mass at St. Mary's —-Cattaraugus
7:00 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church
10:00 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church

Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25th:
9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church
Note: There will not be a 4:30 p.m. Mass.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Schedule:

New Year's Eve, Friday, December 31st:
8:30 a. m. Mass at St. Joseph Church
5:00 p.m. St. Mary's—Cattaraugus

New Year's Day, Saturday, January 1st:
9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church
4:30 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church

OPERATION ALL REMEMBERED

Love INC. is partnering with the Gowanda Nursing Home this year to make sure that all residents without family are remembered by Santa. Your donations would be greatly appreciated. The following are items frequently requested: chocolate (some soft with no nuts)/sweets, coloring supplies, word finds, playing cards, blanket throws, soap sets, and Teddy Bears/snuggly stuffed animals. You can also donate cash to purchase specific items requested but not donated. **Please drop off your donations at Love, Inc. by 12/20/21.**

CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Due to ongoing restrictions, we will **not** be asking for help with the decorating of the church for Christmas.

MARCH FOR LIFE 2022

The Diocese of Buffalo has canceled their trip to the March for Life for the year 2022 in Washington, DC. They will have specific scheduled activities in the diocese to continue their support on a local level.

GOSPEL MEDITATIONS

4th Sunday of Advent

St. Augustine tells us that a "Christian is a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart through which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks and a hand through which Christ helps." As we look around and out at the world, we do not have to search too far before we come face to face with inequity and injustice. There is so much unfairness, prejudice, anger, hatred, violence, and want. The stories of human heartache, people being hurt, deprived of life's necessities, loneliness, and sickness are far too commonplace. For many of the world's ills, the vices of greed, lust, pride, gluttony, and jealousy are clearly among the more significant root causes.

Why doesn't God just step in and fix this mess? After all, God created this world, and one would hope that he would step up and take some measure of responsibility for it! Once we sit with this thinking for a while, we can begin to realize just how flawed it really is. God did take responsibility and God did fix the problem! God sent us Jesus Christ as the divine solution to the world's ills. It is not God who has shirked responsibility, we have. We are the ones who continually fail to set our own personal needs, wants, and securities aside so that One more powerful than us can use us.

Mary had to set her needs aside in order for the Son of God to come into the world. Put simply, Mary listened and believed. Having opened herself to being an instrument of the Divine, God could use her as his mind, heart, voice, and hand. She became God's vessel so that God's greatness could reach the ends of the earth and peace could come upon the world. God's fix for the world's difficulties is you and me. We are the ones who confess that Jesus Christ came into the world as the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, and herald of justice. All we have to do is believe, as did Mary, that what has been spoken to us by the Lord will be fulfilled. Then, we can step aside and be the Christians we claim to be. What a difference it would make if every person who professed to be Christian truly understood that their one and only vocation is to be God's instrument. What a beautiful, equitable, and just world it would be. ©LPi

CHRISTMAS WAFERS-OPLATKI

Oplatki or Christmas Wafers are available at the entrances. Oplatki means "Angel Bread" and is a Polish tradition. A wafer, bearing a simple design commemorative of Christ's birth, is broken by the head of the family and distributed to each member, with a simple prayer for God's grace and the welfare of the present and absent members of the family.

Saturday, December 18
4:30 p.m. Alexander Skoczylas † by Wife and Daughter
Sunday, December 19—Fourth Sunday of Advent
8:00 a.m. Julius and Anne Szymanski † by Mary Sladich
9:30 a.m. Dorothy Selan † by Terrie DeHos
11:15 a.m. St. Mary's—Cattaraugus
Monday, December 20
8:30 a.m. Edmund Filipiak † by his Wife
Tuesday, December 21
8:30 a.m. All Souls
Wednesday, December 22
8:30 a.m. Jim Rebmann Sr. † by Wife and Family
Thursday, December 23
8:30 a.m. For the Parishioners
Friday, December 24—Christmas Eve
7:00 p.m. Clayton and Mary Comstock † by the Comstock Family
10:00 p.m. John and Lillian Sharkey † by Estate
Saturday, December 25—The Nativity of Our Lord
9:30 p.m. John and Lillian Sharkey † by Estate
No 4:30 p.m. Mass
Sunday, December 26—The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
8:00 a.m. John and Lillian Sharkey † by Estate
9:30 a.m. Werner Stang † by Joanne Sisti and Family
11:15 a.m. St. Mary's—Cattaraugus
Please remember that all Masses are subject to change.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE
DECEMBER 24/25

7:00 PM
Altar Server: Chase and Weston Bolen
Lector: Kevin Regan
Eucharistic Minister: Clergy

10:00 PM
Altar Server: Daniel Stang
Lector: Bob O'Connor
Eucharistic Minister: Clergy

9:30 AM
Altar Server: Any Available Server
Lector: Jud Foy
Eucharistic Minister: Clergy

DECEMBER 26

8:00 AM
Altar Server: Any Available Server
Lector: Jud Foy
Eucharistic Minister: Clergy

9:30 AM
Altar Server: Any Available Server
Lector: Wendy Samick
Eucharistic Minister: Clergy

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

□ **New Registration** □ **Change of Address**
□ **Want Envelopes** □ **Other**_____

Name_____

Address_____

_____

Phone #_____

Email _____

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