



# Saint Philip Catholic Parish

*The People of God in Pittsburgh, Thornburg, Ingram, and Crafton*

**WEEK OF DECEMBER 13, 2020**

*Download the bulletin at [www.parishesonline.com](http://www.parishesonline.com)*

## **PASTORAL STAFF**

### **OFFICE HOURS:**

*Monday - Friday Hours vary due to pandemic.*

Rev. James R. Torquato, Pastor  
Rev. John E. Forbidussi, Parochial Vicar  
Dr. Brian Dougherty, Saint Philip School Principal  
Ms. MaryAnn Garfold, Dir. of Religious Education  
Ms. Mary Beth Barsh, Music Director  
Ms. Dorothy Mancini, Assistant Organist  
Ms. Dorothy Kraemer, Office Manager  
Ms. Ursula Eberle, Business Coordinator  
Ms. Maureen Takach, Administrative Assistant  
& Safe Environment Coordinator  
Ms. Linda Bey, Religious Education Secretary  
Ms. Michele O'Toole, School Secretary  
Ms. Chris Archacki, Maintenance  
Mr. Richard Hufnagel, Maintenance  
Mr. Brian Cox, Maintenance  
Ms. Nancy Mehal, Housekeeping

## **PRIESTS IN RESIDENCE**

Rev. Joseph Scheib, Saint Philip Rectory  
Rev. Gary Oehmler, Saint Philip Rectory

## **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

Robert Bertocchi, Frank Bey, Judi Cagley,  
Patricia Cygrymus, Barbara Hendrick,  
Joseph Hoover, Dolores Leone, Martin Matko,  
Patricia McDermott (Co-Chair), Katie Phillips,  
David Pilarski (Co-Chair), Mary Schubert  
and Richard Schubert.

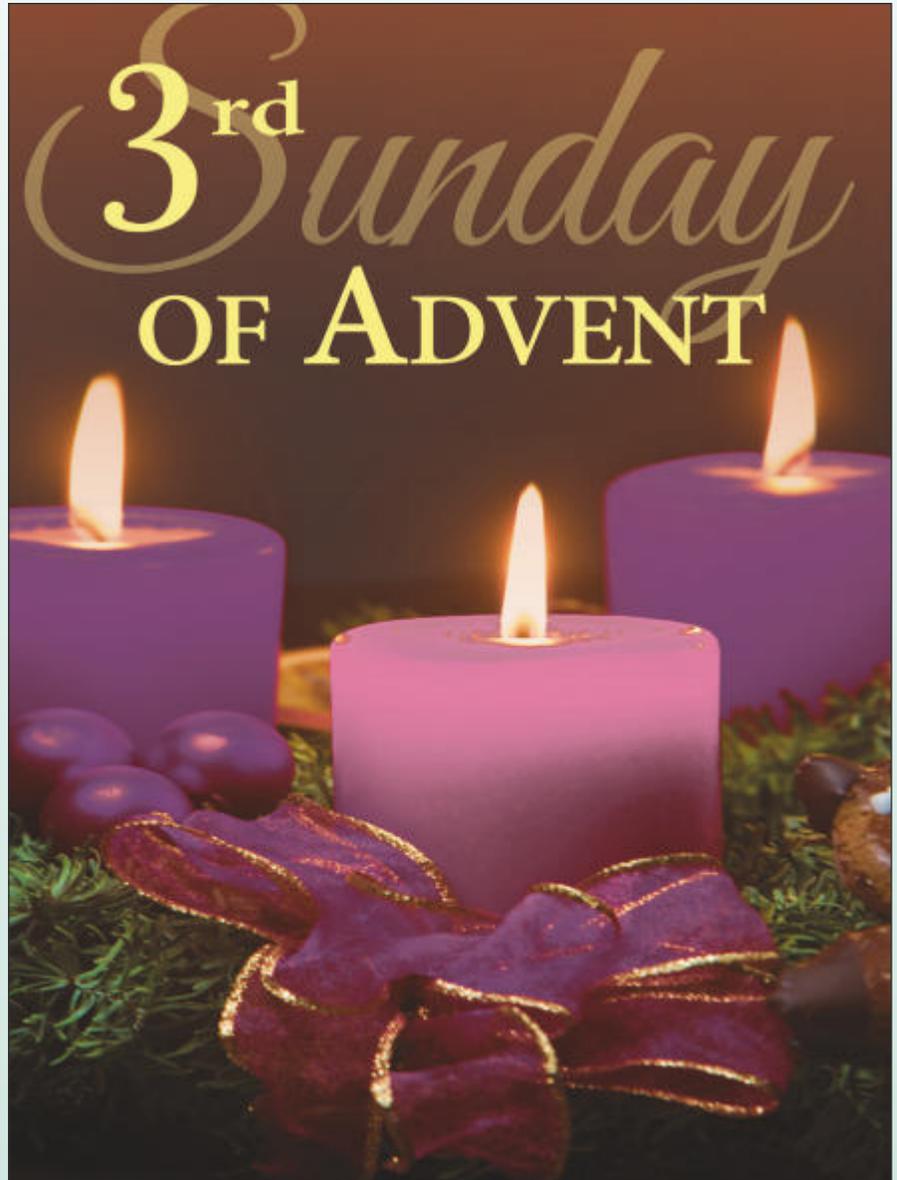
## **PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL**

Benjamin Bannon, Thomas Hipkiss,  
Joseph Hoover, Joseph Rynn, Gary Urbatis

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**

114 Berry Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15205  
[parishoffice@saintphilipchurch.org](mailto:parishoffice@saintphilipchurch.org)

Saint Philip Office (412) 922-6300  
Saint Philip School (412) 928-2742  
Saint Philip CCD Office (412) 922-6388  
Society of SVdeP (412) 444-8140



**Saint Philip Church**  
50 West Crafton Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15205

**Ascension Church**  
114 Berry Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15205

**Saint Philip School**  
52 West Crafton Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15205  
[www.spsangelway.org](http://www.spsangelway.org)

**BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS:** Should be submitted to [maureen@saintphilipchurch.org](mailto:maureen@saintphilipchurch.org)  
no later than 12:00pm on Friday to be included in the following week's bulletin.





## CONFESSION

Offered Saturdays from 12:15pm to 1:15pm at *Ascension Church*.

## SACRAMENTS

**Baptism:** A seminar is required for first-time parents. Baptisms are celebrated on the first and third Sundays of the month at 12:15pm at *Saint Philip Church* or at the *Ascension Church*. Please call the Religious Education Office at 412-922-6388 for more information.

**Matrimony:** Priest is to be contacted six months in advance of wedding. Participation in Pre-Cana Program required. Please contact the Parish Priests for more information.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Following a weekend Mass and on the last Saturday of the month at 8:30am at *Ascension Church*.

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA):** Call the Office of Religious Education for more information.

**Priesthood/Religious Life:** Contact the Parish Priests for more information.

**Victim's Assistance Hot-Line:** If you are a person who has been hurt by abuse from clergy or others associated with the Church, the Diocese of Pittsburgh offers assistance with counseling, spiritual direction and referrals to other supportive services.

For information, contact our Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 412-456-3093.

Protecting God's Children —  
VICTIM HOTLINE: 1-888-808-1235

CHILDLINE: 1-888-932-0313 to report child abuse  
Call 911 if a child is in imminent danger.

# MASS SCHEDULE

*Masses are held at Saint Philip Church and Ascension Church*

LOCATION	TIME	MASS INTENTION	REQUESTED BY
<b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12 — OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE</b>			
Ascension	8:00am	Mary Ann Gibbons	Maureen O'Donovan
Saint Philip	2:00pm	Wedding - Michael C. Paliani and Rachael A. Callen	
Saint Philip	4:00pm (V)	Florence T. Hall	Brother, Bill Collavo
Ascension	5:30pm (V)	Brian Lach & Annette Demor	Family
<b>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13 — THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>			
Saint Philip	7:00am	Catherine Migliozi	Joe & Edna DiPaolo
Ascension	9:30am	Doris Urbatis	Jim Lyons
Saint Philip	11:00am	Dr. Joanne Oleck	Husband, Mike
<b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 14 — SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS, PRIEST &amp; DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH</b>			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Armando Pigoni	LeMasters Family
<b>TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15 — ADVENT WEEKDAY</b>			
Ascension	8:00am	Jean & Joan Gajewski	Mary Ellen Askin
<b>WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16 — ADVENT WEEKDAY</b>			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Living & Deceased Members of St. Philip Parish	
<b>THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17 — LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY</b>			
Ascension	8:00am	Francis & Catherine Ruffalo	Rose
<b>FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 — LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY</b>			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Michael H. Ciamacco	Wife & Sons
<b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 — LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY</b>			
Ascension	8:00am	Louis & Vivian Kukuruda	Kukuruda Family
Saint Philip	4:00pm (V)	McDonald & Auth Families	McDonald Family
Ascension	5:30pm (V)	Catherine E. Rodgers	Maureen Rodgers & Family
<b>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20 — FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>			
Saint Philip	7:00am	Mary A. Goyke	Janine M. Wilson
Ascension	9:30am	Sophie Pescuric	A. J. Pescuric
Saint Philip	11:00am	Frances Murrmann	Philbin Family



*Saint Philip Parish is on Facebook! Follow us today to learn about upcoming events and happenings.*



# Notes from the Pastor

Greetings everyone, and best wishes for a holy Season of Advent and a Merry Christmas Season! As we continue this pandemic year - and prepare for Christmas, I hope you'll make use of this quieter time for prayer and for reflection on Jesus and all that he means to us!

## Introducing others to Jesus!

In this Sunday's Gospel account, we hear once again of Saint John the Baptist introducing the people of Israel to Jesus. This event was certainly an important historic event as Jesus began his public ministry which, from that day forward, changed the world and human history.

We don't think of the past 20 centuries in such large terms, but it is very true that **Jesus of Nazareth has changed the world and human history** for the better throughout these 2000 years. Beginning with the introduction provided by John the Baptist, Jesus teaching of God's love, goodness, and presence in the world has changed humanity. Jesus' disciples have improved human society and the life of the world following and living Jesus' teaching in our lives.

**I also hope that our individual lives are also blessed because we know Jesus** and the love of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that is shared with us and taught us by our life in the Catholic Church. Our own lives would not be the same if we hadn't been introduced to Jesus by our parents and raised in our Catholic Christian faith in our parish communities.

**Now, following the example of John the Baptist, it's our turn to introduce (or re-introduce) others to Jesus as well** - even if they're already baptized into our faith and Church. It's our turn to share the Good News of Jesus with our family members, relatives, friends, and neighbors. Like John, may we bold and brave in sharing our Catholic Christian faith with others, and may we tell them of the blessings, joy, and hope that we receive through our faith every day and every year of our lives!

## Still working on the future of our Catholic School

For the past several months, Saint Philip Parish and Saint

Margaret of Scotland Parish in Greentree have been discussing the future of our two elementary schools. This discussion has been requested by officials of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh as well as SRCES, the South Region Catholic Elementary Schools, Inc., which oversees the nine parish elementary schools in the south and west of Allegheny County as well as Washington County.

**These discussions will continue as everyone involved tries to find an agreeable solution** to retain Catholic elementary education here in our local area. In the end, please know that any final arrangement is NOT the decision of the Saint Philip Parish pastor or principal. In the end, a recommendation will be given to the Bishop by the SRCES Board, and then, the final decision will be made by Bishop David Zubik in consultation with his senior diocesan officials.

**One additional note is that, as these discussions continue, we have all realized that this pandemic year - and its effect on the financial situations of both parishes and both schools - must also be considered seriously.** As our Pandemic Appeal has made clear, Saint Philip Parish (and School) - and, in fact, Catholic parishes and schools across the Diocese and across the United States (like every person, family, community, business, and government) - have found this pandemic year to be very, very difficult. School fundraising and parish contributions have certainly been effected during this difficult year. All the current factors of 2020 must be considered in the deliberation and the forecasting needed to plan and ensure Catholic schools now and in the future.

**The SRCES Board and our school administration will be communicating with school parents and families as to plans and recommendations. I will continue to communicate with you, our parish community.** Meanwhile, as always, the Saint Philip School community and I are all very grateful for your support of the school and for your interest in this important ministry of Saint Philip Parish and of the entire Church. We're all doing our very best to continue the work and the future of Catholic schools in our local area!

## Supporting our parish's Pandemic Appeal

In these months, we are asking your help to address the financial shortfall in donations that has been caused by the current worldwide pandemic. **Without your generous help, Saint Philip Parish will experience a \$384,000 financial deficit by the end of this 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. This will result in our exhausting ALL of our savings by July 1, 2021.**

To remedy this pandemic situation, I'm asking every family and member to consider both a Pandemic Appeal donation of \$250, \$500, \$1000, or more - as well as an increase in your weekly parish contribution. I am well aware of the hardship that this year's pandemic is causing for all of us, but if we want our Catholic parish to remain stable and alive, then your contribution is absolutely necessary in these months. In order to maintain our parish, two churches, two campuses, and a Catholic school, your help is truly needed now.

If you still have your yellow Pandemic Appeal Reply Envelope, please use it this week to send a generous donation to Saint Philip Parish. You're also encouraged to increase your weekly offering on a continuing basis. You may also visit our internet site at [www.saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org](http://www.saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org) to contribute an online donation. Again, your generosity toward our parish community is needed and is most appreciated!

So far, Pandemic Appeal letters have been sent to our 1050+ households who contribute weekly or monthly to our parish. To date, about 300 families and members have sent a donation. In December, we will send Pandemic Appeal letters to the 1,300+ families which don't contribute regularly, asking them for a special Christmas donation to Saint Philip Parish.

Contributions have been good, and we will share the total of the 2020-2021 Pandemic Appeal in the summer months once this Appeal has been completed. Thank you for your help and for contributing to keep Saint Philip Parish alive in this very difficult time. God bless!

Upcoming Confession Times at Ascension Church

Because our parish has been holding Confession times at Ascension Church (because of the ease of access), we will also hold Advent Confessions there.

One of our priests will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation on these days and at these times at Ascension church:

Wednesday, December 16	6:00pm - 8:00pm
Saturday, December 19	12:15pm - 1:15pm
Monday, December 21	12:00pm - 1:00pm AND 7:00pm - 8:00pm
Tuesday, December 22	12:00pm - 1:00pm AND 7:00pm - 8:00pm
Wednesday, December 23	12:00pm - 1:00pm AND 6:00pm - 8:00pm



Our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Liturgy Schedule

At this time, Saint Philip Parish will celebrate our Christmas Liturgies at these times:

**Christmas Eve, December 24**

- 2:00pm at Saint Philip Church (300 person limit)
- 4:00pm at Saint Philip Church (300 person limit)
- 4:00pm at Ascension Church (200 person limit)
- 6:00pm at Ascension Church (200 person limit)
- 12:00 Midnight at Saint Philip Church (300 person limit)

**Christmas Day, December 25**

- 8:00am at Saint Philip Church (300 person limit)
- 9:30am at Ascension Church (200 person limit)
- 11:00am at Saint Philip Church (300 person limit)

Please visit [www.saintphilipchurch.org](http://www.saintphilipchurch.org) to register now, or call the parish office. Please also say a prayer that our gatherings on Christmas will NOT be affected by the ongoing pandemic. Thank you!



Best wishes for a very good Advent Season and Christmas Season!

Best wishes, once again, for this week and for a good and prayerful Season of Advent - as well as a blessed celebration of Christmas! Thank you very much for your goodness and your generosity to our parish community, to one another, and to those in need.

Until next Sunday, may you and our parish and school communities receive goodness, health, and divine grace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. May the good Lord bless you and your family and our parish community now and always!

Yours,

Father Jim Torquato

## Our Parish's Pandemic Appeal

Please help Saint Philip Parish  
in this very difficult pandemic year.

Your special monetary donation now and your  
increased weekly donation will help us to  
remedy the decline in donations this year.

Our sincere thanks are extended  
to these recent parish donors:

*(as of December 4, 2020)*



**29 Anonymous Donors**

and

**Alison Barnhart**

**Roberta J. Clayton**

**Michael and Patti Diduch**

**Pat Hudson**

**Dennis and Karen Joyce**

**Dan and Kelli Kirsch**

**Greg Laepple and Leah Laepple**

**Maureen McMahon**

**Kathleen Meyer**

**Patricia Miller**

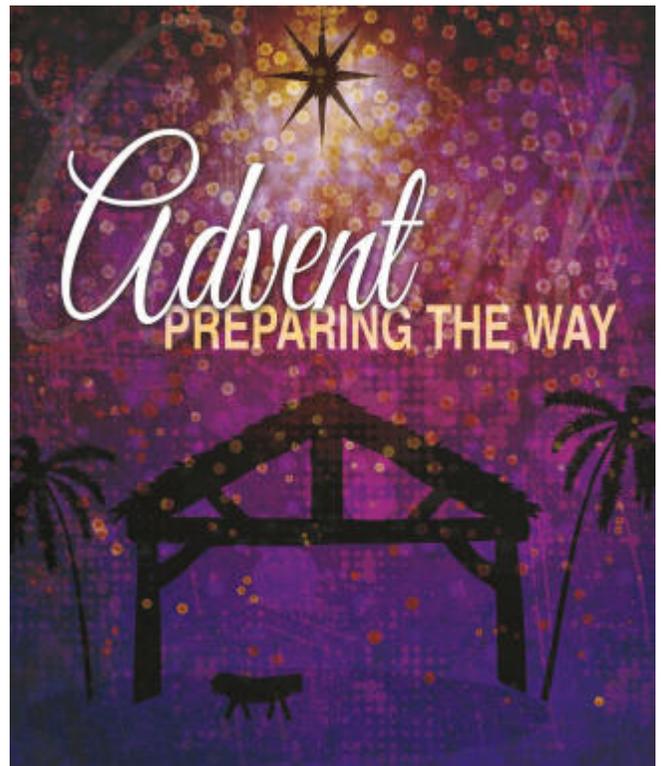
**Joseph Mosko**

**M/M Jude Pankiewicz**

**Ronald Ramolt**

**Andrew Reilly**

**Steve and Joyce Zamiska**



**PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD  
Praise, Proclaim, Pray, Ponder**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13**

**THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT: PRAY**

*Brothers and Sisters: Rejoice Always. Pray without ceasing*

**9:15am to 9:30am** Live Stream Community Gathering

On Sunday Morning at **Ascension Church** we will gather for a short reflection on the theme of the week. We will have a scripture reading, witness talk, hymn reflection and scripture possibilities for the week ahead. Please join us in person or live stream for our Advent Community Gathering at 9:15am each Sunday in Advent. Continue to join us for Sunday Mass either in person or live stream.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20**

**FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT: PONDER**

*Hail favored one! The Lord is with you. But she was greatly troubled and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.*

**9:15am to 9:30pm** Live Stream Community Gathering

On Sunday Morning at **Ascension Church** we will gather for a short reflection on the theme of the week. We will have a scripture reading, witness talk, hymn reflection and scripture possibilities for the week ahead. Please join us in person or live stream for our Advent Community Gathering at 9:15am each Sunday in Advent. Continue to join us for Sunday Mass either in person or live stream.

***Please support  
SAINT PHILIP PARISH!***

*by including the parish  
in your will and estate planning.*

***Thank you!***



# Parish News

## MINISTRY SCHEDULE

### LECTORS - December 19 & 20

4:00pm at St. Philip - Gregory Healy  
5:30pm at Ascension - Grace Berard  
7:00am at St. Philip - B. J. Gamble  
9:30am at Ascension - Francis Sullen  
11:00am at St. Philip - Katelyn Hoff

### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS - December 19 & 20

4:00pm at St. Philip - Art Bannon  
5:30pm at Ascension - Patricia Adamski  
7:00am at St. Philip - Dian Perkins  
9:30am at Ascension - Debby Sullen  
11:00am at St. Philip - Joe Allen

## OPLATKI

“Oplatki” is the traditional Christmas Wafer, sometimes referred to as the “Bread of Angels. The Christ Child was born in Bethlehem which means “House of Bread,” and Jesus is “The Bread of Life.” The custom began in Poland, Slovakia and Lithuania millenniums ago. By breaking and sharing “oplatki” on Christmas Eve our prayers for health and happiness are offered for the family. It unites heaven and earth and reminds us of the “Unseen Guest,” Jesus Christ. (Some families set an extra place as a reminder of the Christ Child who was born in a manger to save us all.) To order “Oplatki,” please call the parish office. Donation is \$3.00.

We are looking forward to an Easter Cookie & Bread Sale in the Spring. Watch the bulletin for details.

## EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

Due to the upcoming holidays, LPI, the publisher of our weekly bulletin has asked that we submit bulletin information earlier than our usual transmission dates.

**Articles must be received in the Parish Office no later than 9:00am on the following dates:**

- Sunday, December 27 Bulletin **articles due by Dec. 16**
- Sunday, January 3 Bulletin **articles due by Dec. 18**



## ADVENT PRAYER BY ST. OSCAR ROMERO

*Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness send Your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear Your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to Your coming. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of Your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of Your presence. We are Your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To You we say, “Come, Lord Jesus!”*

## ORIGINS OF ADVENT

Advent began sometime after the 4<sup>th</sup> century at a time of preparation for Epiphany - not in anticipation of Christmas. Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of Christ by remembering the visit of the Magi and the baptism of Jesus. At this time new Christians were baptized and received into the faith, and so the early Church instituted a 40-day period of fasting and repentance. Later, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Pope St. Gregory the Great was the first to associate the season of Advent with the coming of Christ. Originally it was not for the coming of the Christ-child that was anticipated, but rather, the second coming of Christ. By the Middle Ages the Church has extended the celebration of Advent to the familiar format we know today. The early weeks are rich with the prophecies of

Isaiah, reminding us to wait and prepare for the coming Messiah. Later, the pace quickens and we focus more directly on the events leading up to Jesus' birth.

(All Saints Press, 2015)

### GAUDETE SUNDAY

This Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, is known as Gaudete Sunday, or Rejoice Sunday. It is a reminder that our preparation, though it includes repentance and efforts to bear fruit, is a joyful endeavor. Our Lord is coming! By the pink candle that we light this week during our Advent meditation, we can see that the time is near. The light is returning to the world. What happiness we can enjoy as we make straight the paths! We can be full of joy knowing that when the Messiah comes, we will celebrate with Him.

(*A Light in the Darkness, Our Sunday Visitor*)

### PARISH SUPPORT

We are grateful for your continued support!

If you are unable to attend Mass, you may mail your weekly offering to the Parish Office at 114 Berry Street, Pittsburgh 15205 or drop it off in the mail box located outside the main office door. St. Philip Parish also offers the option for ONLINE GIVING.

### PARISH OFFICES

The Parish Offices are closed until further notice for all in-person business. The offices may be contacted by phone Monday through Friday from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

### JUST A REMINDER. . .

Sunday Masses

- **50% Occupancy: 300 (SP) & 200 (A)** may gather at each Mass as per the directives of the Diocese.

Attendees at every Mass should:

- Enter church no earlier than 30 minutes before Mass through the Courtyard Door (St. Philip) and Main Doors (Ascension).
- Ushers will moderate entry.
- Use hand sanitizer when entering church.
- Remain 6 feet apart from other individuals (families may sit together).
- Wear a face mask, except for Holy Communion.
- Proceed immediately to vehicles at the end of Mass.  
(The church will be sanitized after each Mass).

### RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND MASS

[www.Signup.com/go/FGmSpoq](http://www.Signup.com/go/FGmSpoq). Reservations accepted by phone from those **without internet access** on Tuesday & Wednesday from 10:00am to 12:00 noon. Call the parish office at 412-922-6300, x 5.



### SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ADVERTISERS

*Our advertisers need your help during these difficult times!*

Please show your support for your parish by also supporting our advertisers. We wouldn't be able to bring you our bulletin every week without them, and right now they need your help more than ever. Please encourage and remind others to show their support and shop local during these hard times!

## Sanctuary Lamp

This week's Sanctuary Lamp at **St. Philip** burns

*In Loving Memory of Marie ☪ Bill Reif*

Offered by Sue & Mike Rust

This week's Sanctuary Lamp at **Ascension**

burns *In Loving Memory of O'Connor*

☪ *McElligott Families*

Offered by Cathy O'Connor



**ROBERT P. BOTT, D.M.D**

*Thank you for helping to underwrite the production of our weekly Parish Bulletin.*



# St. Philip School News

women who were either born in the United States or came here to spread the Catholic faith and through their work, became saints: Elizabeth Ann Seton, Katharine Drexel, Frances Cabrini, and Rose Phillipine Duchesne. They also offered prayers for all those enrolled in the November GRACE Program.

## GRACE PROGRAM

Deadline for January enrollments is January 15. Requests for enrollment may be made by visiting [www.spsangelway.org/support-sps](http://www.spsangelway.org/support-sps) or may be placed in the collection basket or sent to the school office at 52 West Crafton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15205. Any donation is gratefully accepted and directly benefits the school. Thank you to all for your support of the GRACE Program.

## SEND THE CARD THAT IS A GIFT

You can send a special gift of prayer this holiday season by enrolling loved ones in the December GRACE Program. Special Christmas cards inform the person to be remembered that you have made a donation to St. Philip School in his/her name. Enrollment can also be made as a memorial for the deceased and the card can be sent to his/her family. The names of all those enrolled will be read during our Christmas Novena which will be said daily during the nine school days before Christmas. They then will be placed in the cradle beneath our Christmas tree in the main hallway and the cradle will be presented with the gifts at the children's Christmas Mass. Any donation is appreciated. Request for cards made be made by sending a note in an envelope marked GRACE Christmas Cards in the collection basket or to the school office at 52 West Crafton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15205. Deadline for enrollment is December 20.

## SPS THIS WEEK

- To get ready for the Advent season, KA and First Grade worked together to make Advent wreaths. Each class stayed in its own room but joined together through zoom. KA also worked on making Thanksgiving pumpkins.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade did a great job leading the school in prayers for the November GRACE Program. In November, we celebrated the founding of our country and offer thanks for God's blessings. The Pilgrims came to North America to find religious freedom and many who came after them found special ways to worship God in America through service to others. The children learned about 4

- This week brought the first snowfall of the year. During recess, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls were having SNOW much fun making tiny snowmen.





# Spotlight on our TEACHERS



**Miss Meghan Heymann,  
Sixth Grade - Section B**

*"Every day is a brand new day!"*

This will be my first year teaching, and I'm excited to start it here at SPS!



**Education/Certifications**

- Bachelor of Arts in Middle Childhood Education from the University of Mount Union
- Minor in Mathematics for Education
- Concentration in Science
- PA Certifications in:  
Middle Grades 4-8 Mathematics  
Middle Grades 4-8 Science  
General Science 7-12
- Google Certified Level 1 Educator

**Mrs. Jessica Shade,  
Sixth Grade - Section B**

*"By doing what you love, you inspire and awaken the hearts of others."*

**Education / Certifications:**

- Master's in Educational Leadership (Edinboro University)
- Bachelor's Degree in Middle Level Education (4-8)
- Additional Certification in Early Childhood Education (PK-4)
- Google Certified Educator



**Experience:**

- 1 Year Substitute Teaching in Various School Districts
- 2 Years as a 6th Grade Mathematics & English Language Arts Teacher
- 1 Year as an Intervention Tutor

**Classroom+:**

Middle School Musical, Safety Committee



# Religious Education

Ms. MaryAnn Garfold, Director of Religious Education  
412-922-6388 [stphilipreligioused@gmail.com](mailto:stphilipreligioused@gmail.com)

**A NOTE FROM MARYANN:** Season's Greetings. Our theme for this week is *Pray Without Ceasing*. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. One of the most beautiful thoughts on prayer comes from Saint Therese of Lisieux when she says, "When we are in darkness, in dryness, there is no wood within our reach, but surely we are obliged to throw little bits of straw on the fire. Jesus is quite powerful enough to keep the fire going by Himself, yet He is glad when we add a little fuel through a small gesture like a smile, a kind word, or small act of kindness. When I am incapable of praying, that is the moment to look for small occasions. Then Jesus throws wood on the fire and we feel the strength of Love's heat." Let us look for occasions for small gestures these final days of Advent.

## FAITH FORMATION

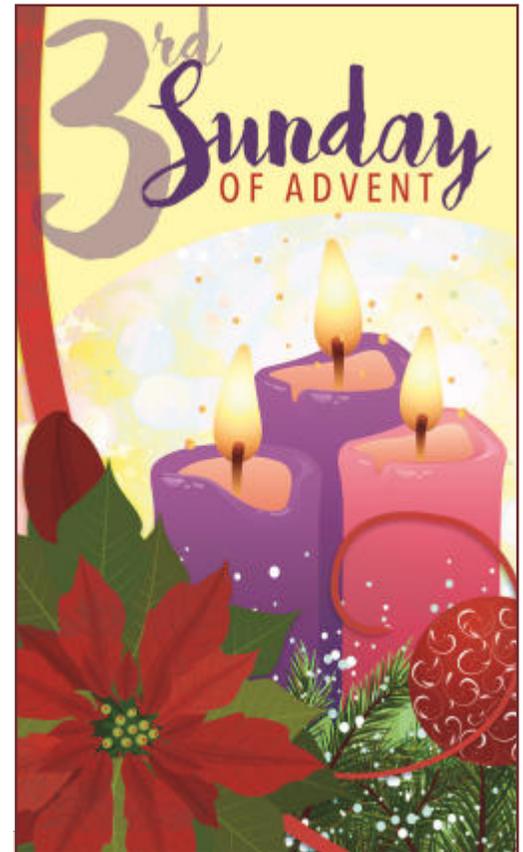
**BAPTISMS:** We are currently accepting baptism request for 2021. To obtain a baptism request form, call the Office of Faith Formation at 412-922-6388.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Students participated in a project for the St. Vincent de Paul Society on Monday, November 23 during their session of EDGE. They addressed Christmas cards, sorted socks and packaged items for the homeless of downtown Pittsburgh. We are grateful for their assistance as they helped those in need. This season we are happy to wish all our Religious Education Families a Merry Christmas. We will be giving each family a small token of our joy in having them as part of our program. At this time we have 63 families as we journey together in faith.

Beginning Monday, December 7, the Religious Education Program will begin At-Home Learning in consideration of COVID safety. Families are asked to pick-up their learning packet on Monday, December 13 or phone MaryAnn at 412-922-6388 to make pick-up arrangements. Please consult your e-mail in January for updates as they occur.

**ADVENT HAPPENINGS:** Join us each Sunday Morning in Advent at 9:15 for our Advent Community Gathering in Ascension Church. You can join us in person or by visiting St. Philip Crafton Facebook Page.

**IT'S COMING:** Watch this space for our new Family Initiative Ministry coming this Spring.



The desire  
for God  
is written  
in the  
human  
heart.



**One more thing that has changed due to COVID -19.**

The *Giving Tree* as we know it cannot happen this year. So, instead of taking a tag off the *Giving Tree* and going shopping, please send your monetary donation to one or more of the following organizations. These are the organizations that St. Philip Parish has helped over the past 25+ years. Please make your check payable to the organization and mail it directly to them. Thank you, and Merry Christmas!

**ST. VINCENT DEPAUL SOCIETY** is the organization of our parish that helps the needy. They are currently helping

70 families in our neighborhoods. Within these 70 families there are 20 Children. They also provide gifts for our sister parish in Tunnelton, West Virginia. There are 50 children who are hoping for a good Christmas, and 20 people in the local group home for whom we usually provide gifts. Please send donations to: **114 Berry St., Pittsburgh, PA 15205.**

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES** helps many of our needy neighbors. Send donations to: **Sarah McMurtry, Donation Coordinator, 212 Ninth Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.**

**LIFELINE OF SOUTHWEST PA** helps expectant mothers and new moms and babies. Send donations to: **Megan Gerber, 401 Investment Bldg., 239 Fourth Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15222.**

**WOMEN'S CENTER & SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH** Send donations to: **P.O. Box 9024, Pittsburgh PA 15224.**

**BACKPACKS FOR PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN** Please make checks payable and mail to: **Jean Harkins, 1421 Justine St., Pittsburgh, PA 15204.** Suggestion is Giant Eagle gift cards.

# SPS LOTTERY CALENDARS

*The gift that gives ALL YEAR LONG!*

To order calendars, you can fill out the form here and send it in to the school by mail or in the drop box at the main entrance. You can also email your request to [spscalndars@gmail.com](mailto:spscalndars@gmail.com).

There is also a limited quantity at the Parish Office, open during the week from 10am to 2pm.

Please return the COMPLETED stubs and payment to the school office to the attention of Lottery Calendars by December 21st.



**ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ONLINE AT [SHOPSPS.ORG](http://SHOPSPS.ORG)**



Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity of Lottery Calendars: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pick-up at School Office  
Please allow a week, 9am-1pm Monday-Friday

Mail to Address: \_\_\_\_\_



# Ministries & Societies

## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY UPDATE

Even though the collection looked slightly different this year, our Thanksgiving food drive was a huge success! We are, once again, humbled by the generosity of our donors. Our Hope House meeting room was filled with bags and boxes of donated food. We also received over \$700 in monetary donations. The donations will help to feed the 70+ families to which we deliver food each month as well as the people who request emergency food assistance. Thank you once again for unceasingly supporting our mission!



**This is your last chance to donate to our Christmas Gift program**, which will provide gifts to children that we assist both within our parish boundaries and in Tunnelton, West Virginia. This is a new program designed to provide gifts to children who would normally have received gifts from the parish's Giving Tree. There are three ways that you can make a donation. Donate online at <https://saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org/ws/opportunities/SaintVincentDePaul/donate>. Be sure to write in the comment section that you are donating for Christmas gifts. You can mail your donation to the parish office at 114 Berry Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15205. Lastly, you can drop your donation in one of the poor boxes located at St. Philip and Ascension. If you mail or drop off a donation, be sure to note on the envelope and/or check that your donation is for Christmas gifts.

This week, your generous donations allowed us to assist a single mother who is about to start a new job with \$300 toward rent, and a woman with \$70 for emergency heating oil. While this may have been a slower week for

assistance requests, we know that will change after the first of the year when mortgage foreclosure and eviction protections are expected to end. But thanks to your donations, we will be ready for the onslaught of requests when they come! Please continue to pray for all those who are in need during this Advent season.

If you would like to make a monetary donation or a donation of \$10 Giant Eagle gift cards, please place your donation in one of the poor boxes, mail them to the parish office at 114 Berry Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15205, or donate online by visiting <https://saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org/ws/opportunities/SaintVincentDePaul>. If you would like to make a donation of furniture or household goods, please call or text our hotline at 412-444-8140 or email us at [svdp.saint.philip@gmail.com](mailto:svdp.saint.philip@gmail.com). If you would like to donate clothing, shoes or accessories, please place your donation in the blue bins in front of the Hope House at St. Philip or in the rear parking lot at Ascension, or you can call, text or email us to arrange a pickup if you are unable to transport them yourself. Please do not place any other items in those bins or leave anything outside of them because they will be thrown away. Also, we are always looking for volunteers! Any donation of your time is extremely valuable to us. If you'd like to join us in helping our friends in need or just want to learn more, please call, text or email us for more information.

As always, if you, or someone you know, are in need of assistance, please call or text our hotline at 412-444-8140 or email us at [svdp.saint.philip@gmail.com](mailto:svdp.saint.philip@gmail.com).





## December 13, 2020 | 9:15am in Ascension Church

Welcome to our Advent Community Gathering. We greet all who join us in person and all who join us on our Facebook page. This is a time where we pray together, reflect together, and prepare for the coming of Jesus. Our parish theme for this season of Advent is *Prepare Ye*. This week we watch and wait as we pray to welcome that which God has prepared for us. For information, contact the Office of Faith Formation.

### Let us Pray:

#### LEADER:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us.

#### ALL:

Amen.

#### LEADER:

Let us pray for the coming of the Lord.

#### ALL:

He is a God of faithfulness and love.

#### LEADER:

Let us prepare to rejoice always, pray without ceasing and in all circumstances give thanks.

#### ALL:

For the One who comes is faithful and He will accomplish it.

#### LEADER:

This week we continue waiting in hope as we pray. We sit in the silence and in the stillness of our heart. But prayer is not passive. We do not sit quietly doing nothing. We begin prayer with the very breath of life. We breathe in the Spirit of the Lord with every breath. With every inhale and exhale we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus." Then we listen attentively. We listen to our breathing. We listen to the sounds of God around us and we listen for the Word of God given to us by the Holy Spirit. Our conversation in

prayer can last but a few seconds, a few minutes or a much longer time. We listen in prayer so that we may recognize the Christ within us. We listen and prepare to respond.

#### LET US PRAY.

Please respond: "*We wait and listen in prayer, ever-present God, knowing you are always near.*"

- In our world of misunderstandings, we wait in a new way, for the God of understanding.
- In our world of sickness and illness, we wait in a new way, for the God of healing.
- In our world of brokenness, we wait in a new way, for the God of forgiveness.
- In our world of pain and hurt, we wait in a new way, for the God of compassion.
- In our world searching to find You again, we wait in a new way, for the God of life.

#### LEADER:

God of waiting, You desire to live within us in new ways. Allow us to prepare our hearts in quiet prayer and in loving one another. Within our searching today, within our prayer, within our desire to proclaim Your goodness, we keep watch and wait. We know from Your promises that something new is always near. Help

us to listen with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, our whole strength so that with every feeling, every desire and every hope, we may welcome the Christ Child and love Him with all our being. May all who come upon us see the Christ within by our actions, words, and deeds. We ask this through the help of Mary, our Mother. Amen.

**Witness Talk:** Katie Phillips. "How has prayer been important in my life?" or "Why do I pray?" (1-4 minutes)

**Song:** *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

**Scripture Suggestions for the Week:**  
*Matthew 1: 18-25 ; Isaiah 40: 1-5*  
*Where in your life now do you need to hear the words, "Do not be afraid?"*  
*What do you need to turn over to God?*  
*How are you different from when Advent began? In these last days before Christmas, how can you continue to prepare?*

#### LEADER:

Lord, we wait in prayerful silence as we listen. We wait anxiously for Your coming. Throughout these days of Advent we continue to watch and wait as we prepare for Your coming into our lives and into our hearts in new ways. Let us join together now as we prepare to celebrate the Eucharist for this Third Sunday of Advent.



**ADVENT CONFESSIONS TIMES**

One of our priests will be available for the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** on these days and at these times at **Ascension Church**:

**Wednesday, December 16**  
6:00pm - 8:00pm

**Saturday, December 19**  
12:15pm - 1:15pm

**Monday, December 21**  
12:00pm - 1:00pm  
7:00pm - 8:00pm

**Tuesday, December 22**  
12:00pm - 1:00pm  
7:00pm - 8:00pm

**Wednesday, December 23**  
12:00pm - 1:00pm  
6:00pm - 8:00pm

**DONATE ONLINE**

**Make donating easy!**

Your regular online contributions to Saint Philip Parish are encouraged and always welcome!

You can send your weekly donations through our *We Share!* internet service at [www.saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org](http://www.saintphilipchurch.weshareonline.org).

**SAINT PHILIP PARISH**



We don't know who will play in this year's Super Bowl yet, but we do know the game is scheduled for **Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021** between the AFC and the NFC. We are having a Super Bowl Pool. The cost is \$50 per block. There are 100 blocks in the pool. We will have 4 payouts:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter score — **\$375**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter score — **\$750**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter score — **\$375**
- Final score — **\$1,000**

The names and numbers will be randomly drawn in advance. You will receive a copy of the completed pool prior to the Super Bowl. Don't be left out.

**We already have blocks sold!!**

Purchase a block for yourself or partner with a friend. Please fill out the form below and return to the parish office. **Thank you.**

**SAINT PHILIP SUPER BOWL POOL**

\_\_\_\_\_ Square(s) @ \$50 each

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

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