



Saint Philip Catholic Parish

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

WEEK OF JANUARY 10, 2021

Download the bulletin at 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

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



THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

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

BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS: Should be submitted to 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
SATURDAY, JANUARY 9 — CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY			
Ascension	8:00am	Rev. Walter Sobon	Joanne DiCesare
Saint Philip	4:00pm (V)	Bernard T. Tokarczyk	Friends
Ascension	5:30pm (V)	Stephen Caruso	Gorman Family
SUNDAY, JANUARY 10 — BAPTISM OF THE LORD			
Saint Philip	7:00am	Margaret Wadowsky	Michael A. Wadowsky
Ascension	9:30am	Audrey Heigl	Debby Sullen & Peggy Baehr
Saint Philip	11:00am	Bernard Flynn & Joseph Wallace Families	Jim & Mary Flynn
MONDAY, JANUARY 11 — WEEKDAY (FIRST WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME)			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Paul B. Collins	Estate
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12 — WEEKDAY			
Ascension	8:00am	Delfina Rose	Judy Boenigk
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13 — WEEKDAY			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Living & Deceased Members of St. Philip Parish	
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14 — WEEKDAY			
Ascension	8:00am	John Henkel	Joanne DiCesare
FRIDAY, JANUARY 15 — WEEKDAY			
Saint Philip	8:00am	Mary Bridget Collins Klemmer	Estate
SATURDAY, JANUARY 16 — WEEKDAY			
Ascension	8:00am	Paul Korol	Wife, Claudia Korol
Saint Philip	4:00pm (V)	Alice Cummings	McDonald Family
Ascension	5:30pm (V)	Kay & Jim Gorman	Gorman Family
SUNDAY, JANUARY 17 — SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME			
Saint Philip	7:00am	Rose Rynn	Pat & Bernice Gallagher
Ascension	9:30am	Raymond Best	Terry Best
Saint Philip	11:00am	Herb Lucot, Jr.	Craig Lucot & Family



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



Notes from the Pastor

Happy January, everyone, and best wishes for a healthy, joyful, and peaceful 2021! As always, I hope you'll make use of this quiet time for prayer and for reflection on Jesus and all that he means to us as we celebrate the Christmas Season and today's Epiphany of the Lord!

Remembering the Baptism of the Lord Jesus

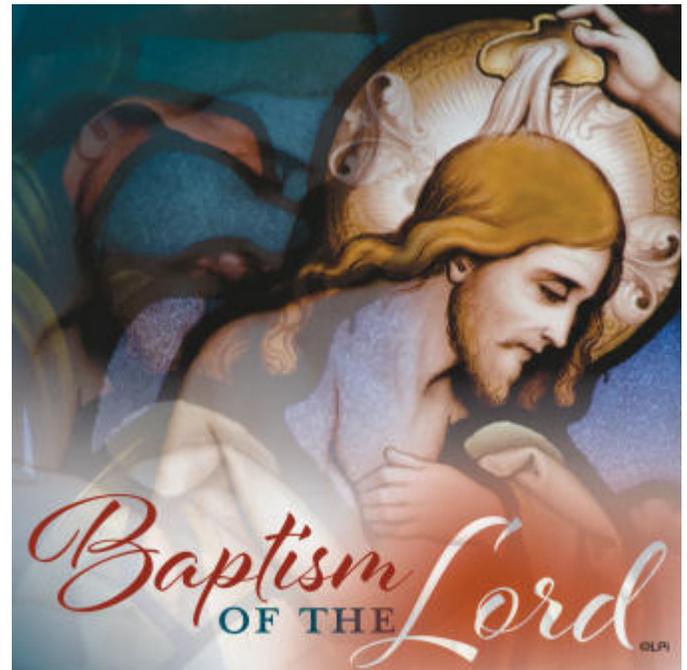
Today, at the conclusion of our annual Christmas Season, we remember and celebrate the Baptism of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus the Christ, the Anointed One. The practice of Baptism was conducted by John the Baptist, the first Prophet of the New Testament, and by others among the people of Israel as a ritual of cleansing from sin. The Gospels inform us that Jesus participated in this ritual at the Jordan River - not for the remission of any sins since he was sinless, but as a sign that he is fully human and shares this life with all people.

Because of Jesus' Baptism, this religious action became the accepted practice of initiation into the Christian community since its first days and first generation. For the past 20 centuries, Baptism has been essential for all who wish to be disciples of the Lord Jesus and members of his Church.

In our Catholic Christian understanding, we receive three essential gifts through our own Baptism: 1.) we become members of Jesus' community, his chosen people; 2.) we are cleansed from the sin and darkness of this world; and 3.) our souls are filled with divine life and grace for the very first time. While almost all of us were baptized as infants, this sacrament is permanent and eternal, and it changes our lives forever - for the better. Our initiation in Baptism and the grace received throughout our lives make us members of the Lord's holy Church joined to Jesus in this life and making the journey to life in the Lord's Kingdom.

Why do we baptize children? There are a number of reasons. First, our Catholic faith and life in God are wonderful, divine gifts. It's important that we share these gifts

with everyone - especially with children and the next generation. Second, parents make every decision for their child/ren for the first 18 years. There's NO more important decision than which faith and way of life children will receive and follow. Without giving our Catholic faith and life to children, they will probably have nothing to guide them in their lives. Third, the Baptism of infants dates back to the first Christian generation. It's been our practice from the very beginning. Fourth, it's important to introduce children to our spiritual life in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit so that they too will receive the blessings and divine life of the Lord throughout their years. These are the basic reasons why Catholic Christians have always celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism when a youngster is still a child.



Today, we remember the important event of Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan River. We also remember the tremendous importance of our own Baptism as it makes us people of God and fills us with divine life and grace. Finally, we dedicate ourselves to the practice of sharing Baptism with all children as the first step on their lifelong journey (along with all of us) to everlasting life in the eternal Kingdom of God!

Thank you for your financial support during this awful pandemic

Yes, I'm repeating this article often so that every parish member receives this important news. Once again, as Saint Philip Parish continues to make our way through this

pandemic year, your financial support is very much appreciated. At this time, every one of our nearly 2500 households has received a Pandemic Appeal Letter from me. Some have just now received their third letter. So far, we've received donations from 390 households. Yes, that's 16% of our households responding with a donation, but my hope is that, in the coming days and weeks, more families and members will see the importance and necessity of supporting the parish during this national and worldwide crisis.

As you saw in the December 6 bulletin, our parish had a (\$156,341) spending deficit in the last fiscal year because of the decreased contributions due to the pandemic as well as a total \$255,000 subsidy to our parish school. This year, as you know from my Appeal letter, we will be entirely out of reserve funds by June 30 because of lower contributions and a possible \$250,000 school subsidy once again this year. As has been announced, our parish is looking at a (\$384,000) deficit for this fiscal year, and that could leave us with no parish savings beginning July 2021. That would leave the parish in a most difficult situation.

Thank you so very much once again to the 16% of our members and families who have contributed to this Appeal. To all who have been waiting to respond, please help this, your parish community now so that we can remain alive and be stable in 2021. Thank you!

Still working on the future of our Catholic School

And yes, I'm also repeating this article often so that every parish member receives this important news. Since September 2020, Saint Philip Parish and Saint Margaret of Scotland Parish in Greentree have been discussing the future of our two elementary schools. (A similar discussion is also taking place between Saint Elizabeth School in Pleasant Hills and Saint Gabriel School in Whitehall.) 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.

In the coming days and weeks, the SRCES Board and officials of our Diocese will be sharing communications with each school community and each parish community.

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!

Best wishes for a very good, blessed, and healthy 2021!

Best wishes, once again, for this week and for a very good 2021! 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 in 2021 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 January 3, 2021)



17 Anonymous Donors

and

Rick and Marie Dettling

Richard Dettling, Jr.

Vanessa and Blake Getz

Janet Herczak

Gary McHenry

Richard Nania

Carol Pawlos

M/M Edward Tuszynski

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.

Thanks to all our Christmas Volunteers and Staff!

Our Christmas celebrations this year were very special and truly memorable thanks to our parish volunteers and parish staff members. Many thanks go to our decorators at both Saint Philip Church and Ascension Church, to our Music Director, to our musicians and vocalists, to our maintenance staff and office staff, to our parish ushers, our collection counters, our lectors, our sacristans, our Communion ministers, and all our dedicated parish members and parish volunteers! Your love of the Lord and of our parish community are so evident as you participate in our parish life and make our celebration of the Christmas Season memorable, joyful, and prayerful. Thank you all so very much! May you be all blessed by God in 2021!



Thank you for our new parish calendars!

Our parish community extends our grateful thanks to the Schepner-McDermott Funeral Home and to Wolbert Auto Body for providing our 2021 Catholic Parish Calendars from J.S. Paluch, Inc. These annual calendars have an important place in every Catholic home. If you still need a 2021 Saint Philip Parish calendar, they are in the church entrances, or contact the parish office (412-922-6300) to schedule a pickup day and time. **Thanks again to the Schepner-McDermott Funeral Home and to Wolbert Auto Body for your generosity and your support of our parish community!**



Parish News

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

LECTORS - January 16 & 17

- 4:00pm at St. Philip - Gregory Healy
- 5:30pm at Ascension - Colleen Pilarski
- 7:00am at St. Philip - Beth Ayres
- 9:30am at Ascension - Rose Musser
- 11:00am at St. Philip - Katelyn Hoff

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS - January 16 & 17

- 4:00pm at St. Philip - Art Bannon
- 5:30pm at Ascension - Nancy Salinski
- 7:00am at St. Philip - Dian Perkins
- 9:30am at Ascension - Dan Welsh
- 11:00am at St. Philip - Tom Koger

NEXT WEEKEND'S SPECIAL COLLECTION

Next weekend has been designated for the special collection to benefit **St. Anthony School Programs and DePaul School for Hearing and Speech**. A new year is upon us and we are so grateful to have the opportunity to share a bit about our programs and to work together once again. On behalf of our students and staff, we can't thank you enough for supporting these invaluable programs that benefit many members of our Diocese.

St. Anthony's and DePaul both fill a necessary role for special education with the Diocese of Pittsburgh. St. Anthony School Programs offer an inclusive education to children ages 5-21 years with special needs and DePaul School for Hearing and Speech teaches children, birth to 14 years, who are deaf or hard of hearing to listen, speak, and learn. Both programs empower students to become active and contributing members of their respective communities.

Any help you can give is deeply appreciated and makes a tremendous impact on the students we serve, as well as their families. Our fundraising efforts have been greatly impacted by the pandemic, so again, any support you are able to give means so much. Thank you for your time and God bless.

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. 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.

GUIDELINES FOR CATHOLIC GODPARENTS / SPONSORS

When choosing godparents or sponsors for Baptism or Confirmation, please keep in mind the following: Godparents/Sponsors must be at least 16 years of age, and be a baptized and confirmed Roman Catholic. They must lead a life in harmony with the Catholic Faith (including valid Catholic marriage). The mother or father cannot be the godparent/sponsor. For the Sacrament of Baptism: A baptized person who belongs to another Christian community (Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, etc.) may be admitted only as a Christian Witness (not a godparent) provided there is at least one Roman Catholic

godparent who fulfills the above criteria. A non-baptized person cannot be a witness (Code of Canon Law, cc.872-874).

WEDDINGS AT ST. PHILIP PARISH

Are you seeking to be married in the Catholic Church? Would you like to have your wedding at St. Philip Parish? Please remember that engaged couples are required to meet with one of our parish priests for an Intake Meeting prior to scheduling a wedding date. Diocesan policy also asks that a six-month period of preparation take place prior to any wedding. Couples are also asked to complete an approved Pre-Cana experience. We strongly recommend waiting to book your reception venue until you have met with the priest. This will ensure that there are no impediments preventing a wedding in the Catholic Church and enable you to secure a wedding date. Please contact Maureen Takach in the Parish Office at 412-922-6300 ext. 6 for additional information.



DID YOU KNOW?

While the Catholic Church allows for cremation, it still guards against situations where cremains are not given proper respect. As the Rite states, “the cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come.” This respect includes a proper burial. As the Rite continues, “The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires.” Reverence for the body, therefore, is the underlying reason why the Church opposes the above practices, which would also include distributing cremains to be worn in jewelry. Our bodies, and the remains of our bodies, are not mere objects or commodities; rather, they have dignity that demand respect and reverence.

Rest in Peace

We offer our sympathy to the families of **Mary Louise Dzadony, Mary Patricia Kennedy, Alberta J. O'Hara and Jane E. Potteiger** who entered into eternal life. Please keep them in your prayers.



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 William Kocyan
Offered by Wife & Children

This week's Sanctuary Lamp at **Ascension**
burns *In Loving Memory of Marie Rogers*
Offered by Daughter, Pat

ADVERTISER of the Week

ANTHONY G. STAAB FUNERAL HOME, INC.

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



St. Philip School News

GRACE PROGRAM

Deadline for January enrollments is January 15. Requests for enrollment may be made by visiting 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.

CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

The last day of school before Christmas vacation was filled with many memorable activities. The day began with the last day of prayer of the Christmas Grace Program Novena. Miss McGaughey led everyone in singing three Christmas songs: *Away in a Manger*, *Joy to the World*, *Mi Burrito Sabanero*. Then the individual classes held special Christmas activities such as hot chocolate in the courtyard for 7th grade. Kindergarten presented its Christmas program and there was a special lunch for teachers. 6A brought in the most cans for the St. Vincent DePaul food collection with a total of 163 cans. This was very impressive, considering there are only 10 kids in the class and cans were only collected on two days. 6A and 6B spent their last day before Christmas break together. They enjoyed many festive activities along with spending time with each other and enjoying each other's company.

The highlight of the day was the Christmas Caroling event in the courtyard. The students prepared to go outside and closed their doors. Mary (**Natalie Kirsch**) and Joseph (**Max Yelich**) began to knock on classroom doors starting at KA, asking "Do you have any room for baby Jesus in your Inn?" Students were primed to respond with "NO." After they rejected Mary and Joseph from entering their classroom, the students were led to the courtyard. The children then sang (acapella) the first two verses of "Silent Night" and welcomed the baby Jesus.

PRESCHOOL AND PRE-K

Preschool and Pre-k have been so busy preparing for

Christmas! They have made Advent wreaths, ornaments, and many other pieces of art to celebrate. They also had a virtual story-time with Kindergarten, a Christmas Sing-a-long, and a birthday party for Jesus.

GOOD LUCK TO THE OLSH GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM AND OUR SPS ALUMNAE!!

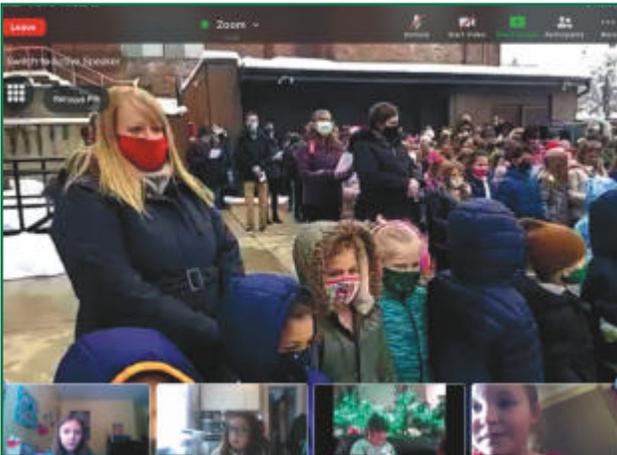
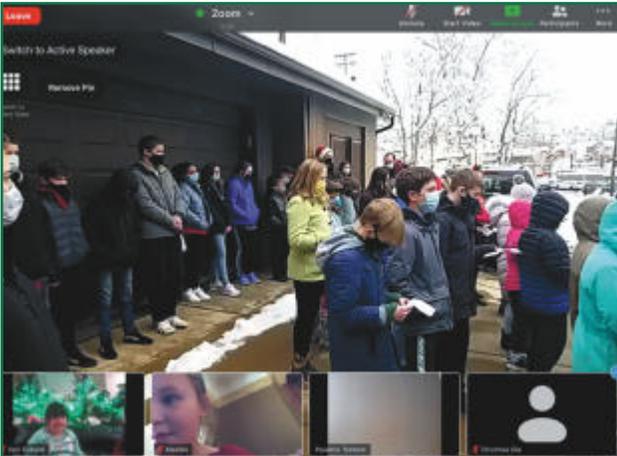
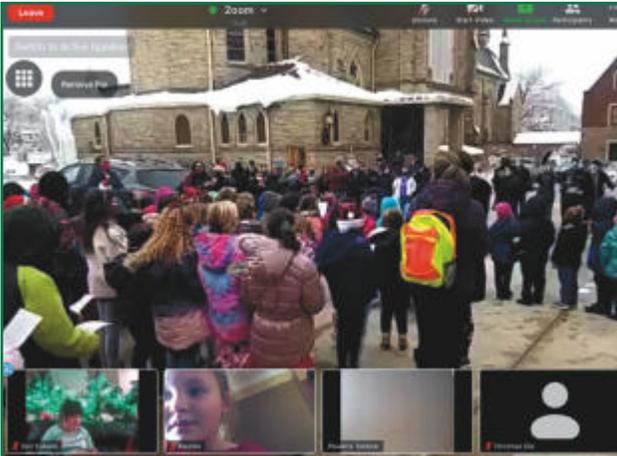
From The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette:

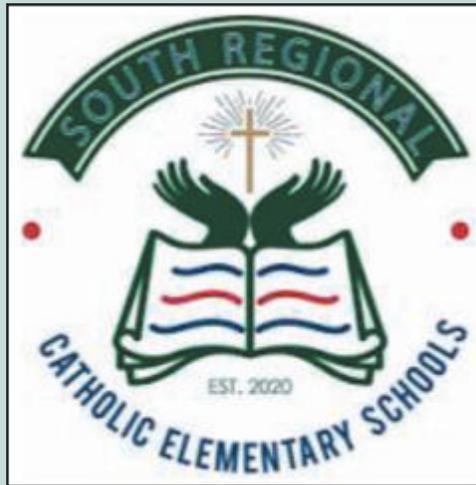
Class 2A

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (18-4) — If history is any indication, the Chargers should be one of the top teams in the class. Coach Don Eckerle's team has won at least 18 games each of the past six seasons and has claimed at least a share of a section title three years in a row. Senior guard, **Grace Bradley** is a three-year starter who helped the Chargers win a WPIAL title her sophomore season. Also returning are junior guard-forward, **Emily Schuck** and junior guard, **Kaleigh Costantino**.

Players to watch: 2A "Fab 5," **Emily Schuck** and **Katie Hoff**.







A MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL SCHOOLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh adapt to be more *On Mission for The Church Alive!*, the nine South Regional Catholic Elementary Schools (SRCES) are also adapting to the process of regionalization. Regionalization involves a great deal of consultation and study with clergy and lay leaders.

The SRCES Board of Directors is committed to providing affordable, accessible Catholic elementary education in our region. We have been exploring ways to combine institutions to achieve that goal. At our most recent monthly meeting, the SRCES board discussed two school pairings:

- (1) St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, and
- (2) St. Margaret of Scotland and St. Phillip.

At that meeting, pastors from each of the four spoke on behalf of their school and parish communities, relaying the ways in which you value your schools. The SRCES board noted the many qualities of the schools and appreciate your love for them.

At the same time, demographic and financial trends make it clear that very few, if any, of our parish schools are sustainable on their own. Our question is not whether to change, but how. Now that the director board has deliberated, our next step is to refine our recommendations and pass them on for review and approval by Bishop David Zubik.

At each level—pastor and school community, SRCES board, and Diocese—we make our decisions out of a deep commitment to our Catholic schools and parishes, with a primary concern for what is best for our students in the long term, ensuring that families who desire a Catholic education for their children will have a school that is affordable, geographically accessible, and financially stable within the south region.

Catholic education is at the heart of the Catholic mission. Through Catholic schools, the Church helps parents bring their children and youth into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Whether or not you have a child or grandchild in a Catholic school in our region, you support Catholic education through a portion of your offertory donations, and we thank you and appreciate you for the vital role you play in supporting Catholic education and building a vibrant faith community. We will keep you informed as the regionalization process continues.



Religious Education

Ms. MaryAnn Garfold, Director of Religious Education
412-922-6388 stphilipreligioused@gmail.com

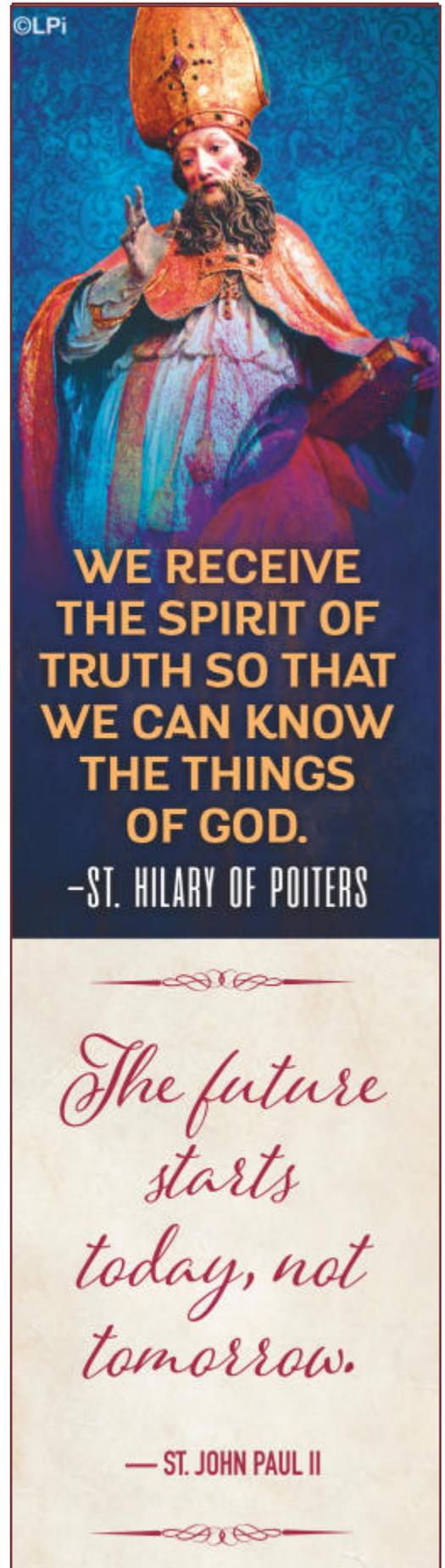
A NOTE FROM MARYANN: This Sunday we end our Christmas Season with the Baptism of the Lord. This is a time for us to think about our own baptism. Baptism is the first sacrament that we celebrate. We are marked as belonging to Christ. When we are baptized, we receive the gift of God's grace. So just as the voice of The Father was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" following Jesus' baptism, so it is with us. We often ask, "How can this be?" but if we respond to God's grace throughout our lives, we respond to the grace of baptism when we offer help to a stranger, forgive someone who has hurt us, care for a sick child, be a caregiver for someone in our family, wait up for a teenager who is late, go out into the cold to support a family or shovel snow from a neighbor's driveway. These are just a few ways in which we can respond to God's grace. Let us be aware of God's grace throughout our days in this New Year.

WATCH THIS SPACE: COMING SOON! A new family initiative. Coming Lent of 2021. The Diocese of Pittsburgh will be hosting a new program for Catholic Family Life. St. Philip will be part of the pilot program this Spring with anticipation of participation in a Diocesan Family Retreat this Summer. In this program families will:

- Help families live "the Catholic difference" in the way they relate to each other.
- Empower families to experience Christ more meaningfully in the day-to-day activities of family life
- Learn how our Catholic Faith can help families love and cherish each other more deeply. Learn how Catholic Faith can help families communicate better.
- Help families create rituals that strengthen their ability to work, play, talk and pray together.
- And much more

If your family is interested in joining this program and would like to add your name to the participation list, please call MaryAnn in the Office of Faith Formation at 412-922-6388. This is open to all families of St. Philip Parish.

RCIA: Our RCIA candidates with the support of our RCIA Team continue to study and pray in their individual homes during this pandemic. Please keep **Tibor Kovesdi** and **Justin Durick** in your prayers. They will be joining us in person once we are able to gather together again.





Ministries & Societies

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY UPDATE

Before going on Christmas break, the students of St. Philip School held a food drive for our food pantry. The students were able to collect over 400 non-perishable food items! We would like to give a huge thank you to all of the students, teachers and administrators who made this possible. It is wonderful to see our young people take an interest in helping our friends in need!



For those of you who are not aware, the St. Philip Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul runs a food bank that delivers food to approximately 70 families a month who do not have transportation with which to reach traditional food banks. We also provide emergency food assistance to anyone in need. If you would like to donate to our food bank, or if you would like to volunteer with us, please call or text our hotline at 412-444-8140 or email us at svdp.saint.philip@gmail.com.

Over the past few weeks, your generous donations allowed us to assist a family of five with a couch, kitchen table and chairs; a single mother was given a couch and bed; an elderly woman was given \$300 toward her water bill; a single mother was given a washer and dryer; a woman who was previously homeless was given \$300 toward rent, a bus pass, clothing voucher and furniture; a single mother was given \$300 for rent; a couple was given \$89 for their electric bill; a single father was given

two beds; and a disabled woman was given \$300 for rent and various pieces of furniture. As we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord, please pray that by helping our friends with their material needs, we are also able help them to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

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 at <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. 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.



WORSHIP & MEDITATION

This Sunday's Bible Readings

FIRST READING

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call him while he is near.
Let the scoundrel forsake his way,
and the wicked man his thoughts;
Let him turn to the LORD for mercy;
to our God, who is generous in forgiving
(Is 55:6-7)



PSALM

You will draw water joyfully from the springs
of salvation. (Is 12:3)



SECOND READING

This is the one who came through
water and blood,
Jesus Christ,
not by water alone, but by water and blood.
(1 Jn 5:6)



GOSPEL

And a voice came from the heavens,
"You are my beloved Son; with you I am
well pleased." (Mk 1:11)

*Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001,
1998, 1970 CCD. The English translation of Psalm
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GOSPEL MEDITATION

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

We need history. We need it in order to understand ourselves, personally and collectively. The pieces of our histories may not have always been the most positive, honest, exemplary, dignified, proud and best moments of our lives, but they are ours. We have to acknowledge, remember, accept, and often heal them. We cannot forget them or pretend that they never existed. As horrible as the atrocities of events like Auschwitz, brutal injustices committed throughout the human journey, or personal painful experiences in our own stories, we need to remember. These times when humanity in general or people in particular have lost their way are times that need to be reconciled and redeemed.

If we lose the memories, we will make the same mistakes again. The human soul needs a strong sense of affirmation, direction, and clear purpose. Without these essentials, we will easily run amuck and repeat the sins of our past. God's voice throughout history has spoken precisely about this! We are reminded through the voices and example of many prophets and witnesses not to make the same mistakes again, come back to center, discover the purpose given to us by God, maintain a sense of proper direction, seek healing for wounds and be reconciled to our Creator.

Baptism is so incredibly important for the salvation of humankind, not only eternally but here and now. Our existence depends upon it. It gives us the affirmation we need from God by gifting us with the same intimate relationship Jesus had with the Father. We are blessed with the direction and clear purpose we need in order to be productive stewards and faithful Christians. Baptism calls us to remember, accept, and deal with the sins and inequities of our past regardless of how hurtful and serious. We consciously choose to turn away from them and put on the new life of Christ. To do this well, we must look hard and long at our sins and failings, listen to what they are saying and learn from them. If we ignore the past, collectively or personally, or pretend that it never happened, we will never grow. We will surely die.

People need to hear the message, lived and spoken, delivered by the baptized members of the Body of Christ. It is an essential message of hope that is layered with visions of justice, peace, reconciliation, redemption, blessing, and healing. It is a message that helps us remember what has gone before, the graces and the sins, and bring ourselves by God's help where we need to be. We are called to do much more than sit home behind our closed doors. We have a message to deliver. Are we ready to do so?

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:

- 1st Quarter score — \$375
- 2nd Quarter score — \$750
- 3rd 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

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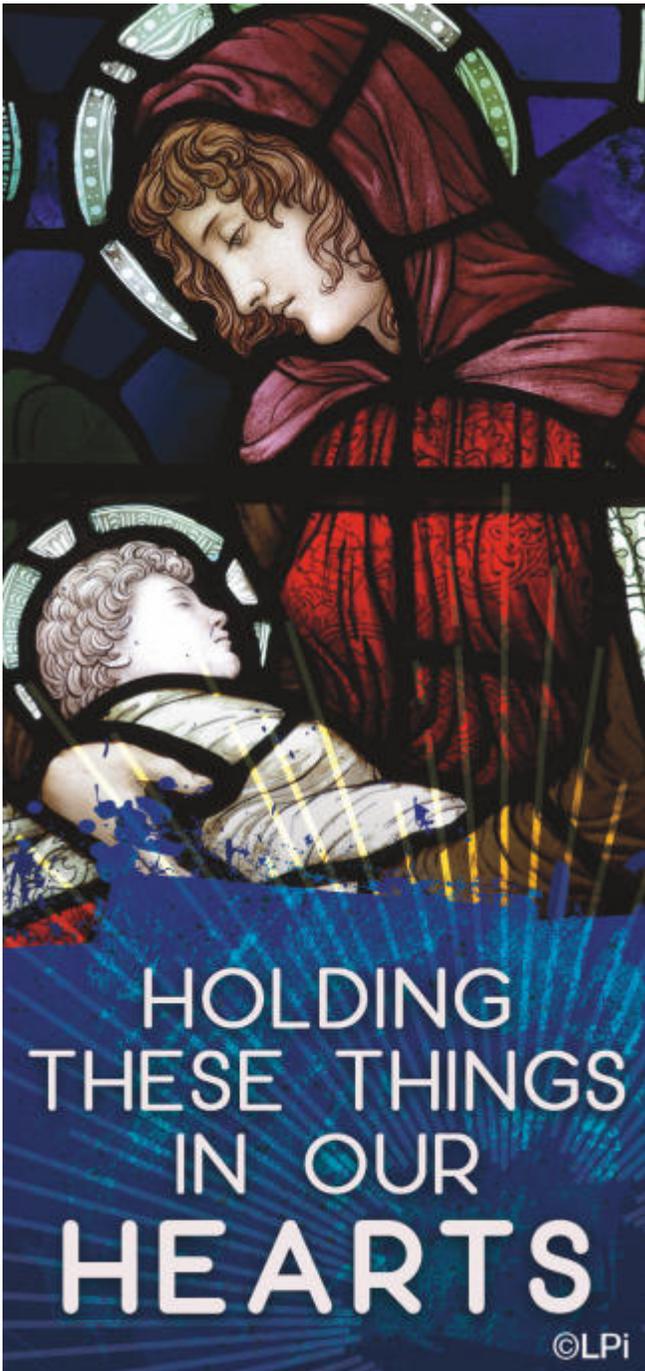
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