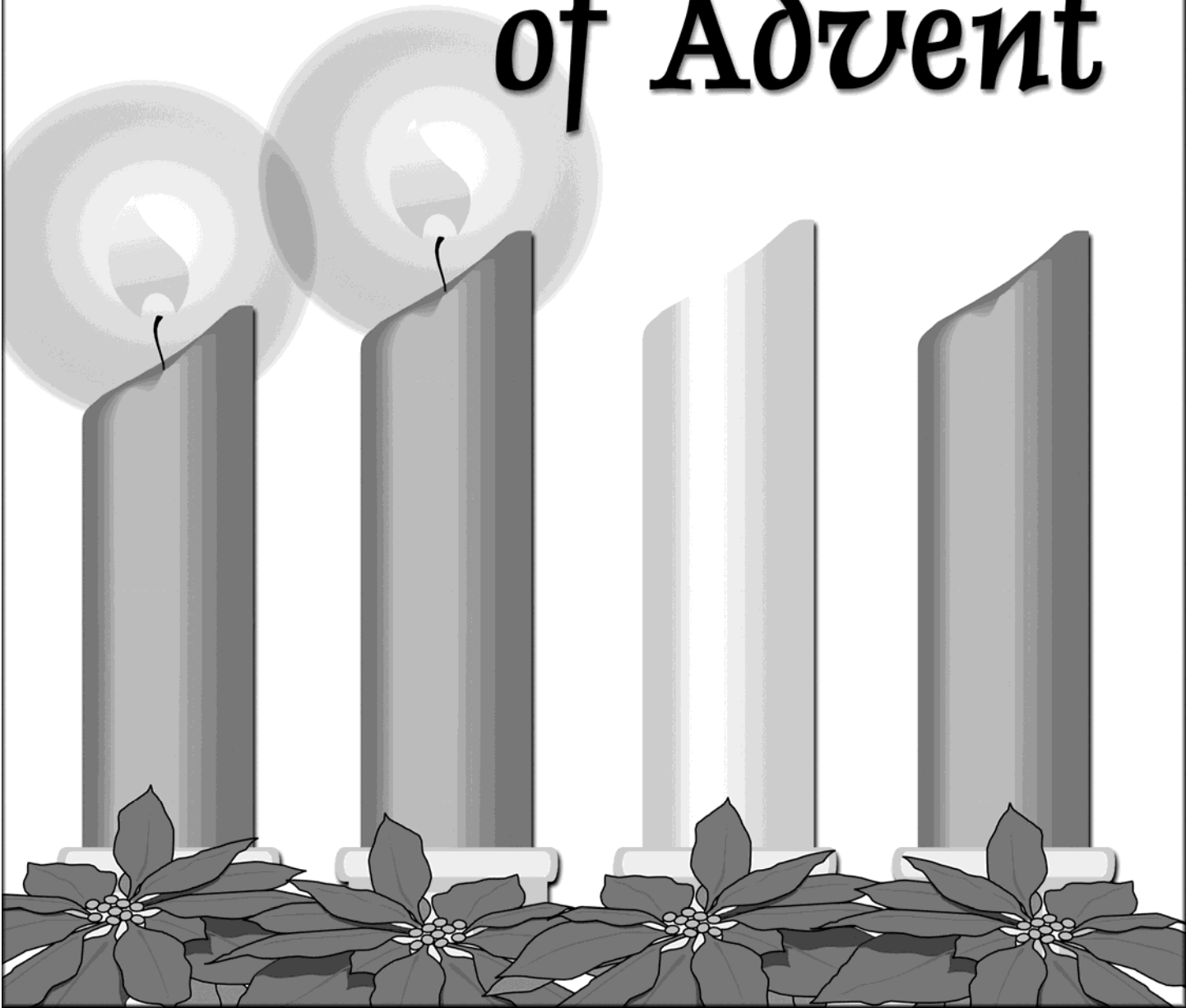




Second Sunday of Advent



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Church of St. Mary • Closter, New Jersey

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 –

Bar. 5: 1-9; Phil. 1: 4-6, 8-11; Lk. 3: 1-6

5:00 PM Fanny Bermudez / req. by Mildred Petrinic

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9 –

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Bar. 5: 1-9; Phil. 1: 4-6, 8-11; Lk. 3: 1-6

7:30 AM All Parishioners – Living and Deceased

9:30 AM Deceased Members of the Bishop and Hau Families / req. by Dick and Jane Bishop

12:00 PM Angelica Bettinardi
req. by the Bettinardi Family

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10 – ADVENT WEEKDAY

Is. 35: 1-10; Lk. 5: 17-26

8:00 AM Norma Campbell / req. by Marilyn Martin

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11 – ST. DAMASUS I, POPE

Is. 40: 1-11; Mt. 18: 12-14

8:00 AM Orlando Tobia / req. by the Tobia Family

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12 –

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Zec. 2: 14-17 or Rv. 11: 19a, 12: 1-6a, 10ab; Lk. 1: 26-38 or Lk. 1: 39-47

8:00 AM Mary, James and Andrew Piccione
req. by Mary and Bruno Macchiavelli & Family

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13 –

ST. LUCY, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

Is. 41: 13-20; Mt. 11: 11-15

8:00 AM Barney Hausheer
req. by Thom and Grace Calabro

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14 – ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS,
PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Is. 48: 17-19; Mt. 11: 16-19

8:00 AM Anthony Moliterno / req. by the Grieco Family

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15 – ADVENT WEEKDAY

Sir. 48: 1-4, 9-11; Mt. 17: 9a, 10-13

8:00 AM Bernard Kelly
req. by Ellen and John Gloistein

5:00 PM Louis Buonomo / req. by Phyllis Buonomo

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16 –

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zep. 3: 14-18a; Phil. 4: 4-7; Lk. 3: 10-18

7:30 AM All Parishioners – Living and Deceased

9:30 AM Margaret Corrigan
req. by the Corrigan Family

12:00 PM Dominick Calabro / req. by Joan Westervelt

From the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

This Sunday we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. As we light the second candle on the Advent wreath, we are reminded that the day is approaching when we celebrate the Nativity of the Lord once again. But, until then, we wait, and as we wait, we listen. We listen to the message of John the Baptist telling us to "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

And how are we to do this? There are many ways. One way in particular is to heed the message of John which was a message to proclaim repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Yes, we are all sinners and in need of God's mercy and forgiveness. What better time than Advent to prepare our hearts for his coming than to have our sins forgiven. If it has been a while, come to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. God's forgiveness is there for us, all we need to do is ask.

This coming Saturday, December 15th, the Fr. Jim McKenna group will celebrate their monthly mass for those who are in recovery and for those suffering from addictions of any kind. This Saturday, the celebrant for this Mass will be our Archbishop, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.S.s.R. Please join us as we welcome Cardinal Tobin to our parish once again and pray for all those who suffer from addictions and for those in recovery.

This week our nation said a final farewell to former President George H. W. Bush, the 41st president of our country. What a beautiful tribute it was for a good, decent, faithful and prayerful person that he was. Many find accolades were said of him, but one that did shine through was the fact that each night, he and his late wife Barbara prayed together and thanked God for all the blessings they received in their lives. May his example of faith, family, and country, be an example to us all. May he rest in peace.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Fr. Joe

We Pray for the Sick

Irene Abad, Paula Bertelloni, Christian Brueck, Fran Caldwell, Dolores Collier, Lee Ann Davito, Lisa Deegan, Desiderio Fernandes, Frank Forte, Ed Koch, Sr. Dominic Marie McDonnell, Carol Munkins, David O'Hanlon, John Pagano, Alicia Parent, Joan Pinto, Richard Pinto, Jim Walsh, Samantha

SECOND COLLECTION

Next weekend, **December 15th** and **16th** the second collection is for Repairs and Maintenance

Why the MAINTENANCE COLLECTION?

The monthly MAINTENANCE COLLECTION funds the regular upkeep of St. Mary's physical plant: school, former convent, rectory, church and grounds. Our buildings are certainly not "new" and we have a responsibility to maintain these resources entrusted to us. Donations to this collection are "restricted" and are not subject to the 14% assessment by the Archdiocese. Thank you for being good caretakers of our spiritual home, St. Mary's.

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Altar Bread – With love on Fran Semler's 100th Birthday, req. by Sharon and Lenore Levine and Family.

Blessed Virgin Mary Candle – Intentions of families of Michael Berrian, Patricia Mueller and Thomas Berrian

Sanctuary Candle – Intentions of the Conetta and Cantarella Families.



PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED

*L. Robert Connolly
Helen G. King*

HACKENSACK WALK-IN DINNER ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PREPARE FOOD

Once again, our Parish will be serving dinner to the homeless and working poor at the Family Promise Shelter in Hackensack on **Wednesday, DECEMBER 12TH**. We anticipate feeding about 120 people. We are in need of volunteers to prepare various food dishes in their homes and to bring the hot food to the Fr. Roger Troy Hall between 12:30 PM and 3:00 PM on December 12th.

Information and sign up sheets are located on easels in the outer vestibules of the church.

For further information, please call Jane Bishop at 201-739-5622. Thank you for your generous support!!

Thank You . . .

From the Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry would like to say Thank You to all who participated in our recent blessings of our shawls. We received the names of forty-four people to be added to our prayers at our gatherings. We appreciate your continued support and generosity to our Ministry.

Sincerely, Cathy Thornhill

To Hope Pepe

We would like to thank Hope Pepe for her time putting messages on our sign board on High Street over the years. Hope is relocating and we wish her best wishes on her move and the next chapter in her life. Thank you Hope!

To Bishop Flesey



Thank you, Bishop Flesey, for your beautiful preaching at St. Mary's recent Advent Vespers.

Altar Linen Help Needed

Our parish altar linen ministers are responsible for laundering the liturgical linens (purificators, corporals, and towels) used during Mass and baptisms. We need volunteers to help with weekly laundering and ironing. The commitment is one assigned week per month, takes less than one hour, and is an easy way to share your time and talent with the parish. If you can assist please call Chris Hofmann at 201-768-6535. Thank you!

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARY PARISH

Dec. 9:

9:30 AM – LWC
10:30 AM – 11:50 AM – Religious Education – Grades K – 6
11:15 AM – Parish Choir meet
12:00 PM – Parish Choir at Mass

Dec. 10:

No – Prayer Shawl Ministry
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Deepening the Journey – Parish Life Room

Dec. 11:

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM – Religious Education – Grades 6 – 7
7:30 PM – Parish Choir Rehearsal – Church
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Women's Cornerstone – Parish Life Room

Dec. 12:

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM – Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament – Church
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Morning Scripture Study – Parish Life Room
12:30 PM – 3:00 PM – Drop off Food for Hackensack Walk-in Dinner – Fr. Roger Troy Hall
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – Evening Scripture Study – Conference Room
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Men's Cornerstone – Parish Life Room

Dec. 13:

7:30 PM – Marian / Eucharistic Holy Hour
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – K of C Meeting – Fr. Roger Troy Hall

Dec. 15:

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM – Breakfast with Santa
12:00 PM – AA Special Mass and Meeting – Church and Fr. Roger Troy Hall
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM – Choristers Rehearsal – Church
4:15 – 4:45 PM – Reconciliation

Dec. 16:

9:30 AM – LWC
10:30 AM – 11:50 AM – Religious Education – Grades K – 6
10:30 AM – Christmas Pageant
11:15 AM – Parish Choir meet
12:00 PM – Parish Choir at Mass
12:30 PM – 4:30 PM – Third Order Lay Carmelites – Fr. Roger Troy Hall



Special Noon Mass

A special mass and a support group meeting for all who are affected by the disease of alcoholism will take place at Church of St. Mary, on Saturday, **December 15th**, at 12:00 noon. Our celebrant will be Cardinal Tobin. Mass is offered for the support, healing and recovery of not only the man/woman directly affected with the abuse of alcohol and/or drugs, but also for anyone involved in the life of the alcoholic or drug addict. For information please call 201-768-7565.

Religious Education News

The fourth grade is working hard on the Christmas Pageant. Save **December 16th**, 10:30 AM in Church to attend.

Christmas Schedule

Individual Confessions – every Saturday, 4:15 PM – 4:45 PM and Wednesday, **December 19th**, 7:30 PM – 8:00 PM.

Christmas Masses – Christmas Eve, 5:00 PM (with Childrens Choir and the Choir of St. Mary's) and 10:00 PM, Christmas Day, 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM.

Your Christmas Gift to Beloved St. Mary's:

Needed Now More Than Ever

As the end of year and Christmas approaches, now is the time to remember a special stewardship gift to support the work of St. Mary's financially. As we report it monthly in our bulletin, St. Mary's is challenged in meeting operating expenses and is in debt. The Sunday collections, special collections and school rental income are not covering the operating expenses, which themselves have been carefully scrutinized for saving opportunities without cutting back on basic ministries and services offered by St. Mary's. The parish is relying on year-end and Christmas gifts to help offset the deficit. All parishioners and friends are asked to make a very special stewardship gift at Christmas to beloved St. Mary's. Tax advantages may benefit the donor. Most importantly, in light of all that God has given to us, your gift will help St. Mary's continue to be the hands of Christ in the local community and beyond. Please consider a generous Christmas gift today. The best way to donate is via parishgiving.org or a check payable to St. Mary's Church. May God's peace reign in your hearts and may those in need spiritually or materially know that St. Mary's will be here to serve. God bless you and yours!

St. Mary's Benefits from Amazon Smile

Did you know your purchases can make a difference? AmazonSmile donates to St. Mary's Catholic Church when you do your holiday shopping at smile.amazon.com/ch-22-1512275.



Advent Giving Tree – Gifts Due December 16th

Our parish Advent Giving Tree again supports the New Bridge Medical Center (formerly Bergen Regional MC) in the "Share the Christmas Spirit" program for their 575 long-term care residents. Take a gift tag (or two) that has the resident's desired gift, unit and room number. Shop for the

gift, wrap it, and tape the gift tag with the unit and room number facing outward. **Please return all gifts no later than Sunday, December 16th, and place under the Giving Tree.** No late gifts will be accepted – you will need to drive the gift to Paramus. Thank you for your generosity!

Place Your Christmas Gift Order TODAY: A Win for St. Mary's!



We will be placing an order for Scrip Gift Cards Monday morning, **December 17th**. Scrip cards are prepaid cards, used like cash at many different stores, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, etc. The Church of St. Mary

receives a certain percentage of each card purchased (2% to 15% or more depending on the card) and doesn't cost you anything extra. Please have your orders to us no later than 10:00 AM Monday. Info and order forms can be found in the vestibules and on our website or you can setup an account online at www.ShopwithScrip.com (registration # is D84E6EB522L51) pay either by PrestoPay or check made out to Church of St. Mary. If you don't see a certain card on the list feel free to call, it may be available. Contact John Hernandez at jah21344@aol.com or 201-768-8871 or Grace Ditzel at gditzel@stmarycloster.org or 201-768-7565 for further information. GIFT CARDS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS! This is the last order we will be placing before Christmas. We will contact you when your order is available for pickup at the Rectory, probably Wednesday afternoon.

The Advent Wreath: Progressing Forward

Traditionally, Advent wreaths are constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which four candles are inserted, representing the four weeks of Advent. Ideally, three candles are purple and one is rose, but white candles can also be used.

The purple candles in particular symbolize the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas.

The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead. Whether at home or in the church the Advent wreath reminds us to re-focus on Christ.

YOUTH SING CHRISTMAS

*Help Saint Mary's
Celebrate the Birth of Christ
Sing at Christmas Eve Mass*

High School - Grade 3

Rehearsals

Saturdays December 8, 15, 22: 1—2 pm in Church

**Wednesday, 12/19: 3:30—4:30 pm church with a
healthy snack provided**

Christmas Eve arrive 4:15 for 5 pm Mass

**Send a message to Mr. Scarpa at
ministry@stmarycloster.org to get started**

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