

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF  
**ST. PIO OF PIETRELCINA**

REVEREND JEREMIAH N. MURASSO, PH.D., ED.D., PSY.D., PASTOR  
REVEREND PATRICK KANE, PAROCHIAL VICAR  
REVEREND THOMAS KELLY, PAROCHIAL VICAR



**Third Sunday of Advent  
December 11, 2022**

*Mass Intentions for the Week*

**SATURDAY, December 10 - Vigil – 3rd Sunday of Advent**

4:00pm OLOP Dr. Carl Prota & Family  
by Danick Family

4:30pm SVDP + Jerry & Lucy Gallicchio  
by Chuck, Joann & Sandy

**SUNDAY, December 11 – 3rd Sunday of Advent**

8:00am OLOP + Paul Carrera  
by Wife, Caroline

9:00am ST. B + Annette Talbot  
by Family  
+ Liberato Riccio  
by Riccio Family

10:00am OLOP + Ann Marie Murasso (Birthday)  
+ William Ready  
by Wife, Lucille

11:15am SVDP + Vincent Falco by Family  
+ Andrew & Frank Criscuolo  
& William Pettijohn  
by Joseph & Debra Criscuolo & Family

**MONDAY, December 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe**

8:00am OLOP + Rose Savo  
by Porto Funeral Home

8:00am SVDP + Margaret Malone  
by Clancy-Palumbo Funeral Home

**TUESDAY, December 13 – St. Lucy**

8:00am OLOP + Viola & Ralph DeMarco  
by Kathy Mauro

8:00am SVDP + Michael Bucci  
by Family

**WEDNESDAY, December 14 - St. John of the Cross**

8:00am OLOP + Concetta Criscuolo  
by Porto Funeral Home

8:00am SVDP + Angelo Musco  
by Family

**THURSDAY, December 15 - Weekday**

8:00am OLOP + Paul Beisler, Sr.  
by Porto Funeral Home

8:00am ST. B + Shirley Cacace  
by Clancy-Palumbo Funeral Home

**FRIDAY, December 16 - Weekday**

8:00am ST. B + Jerry Redenti  
by Wife, Diane

**SATURDAY, December 17 - Vigil – 4th Sunday of Advent**

4:00pm OLOP +Deceased Mem. of Hall & DeRose Families  
by Family

4:30pm SVDP + William Mitsakos, Jr. USN  
by Mom & Sister

**SUNDAY, December 18 – 4th Sunday of Advent**

8:00am OLOP + Filomena Lavorgna  
by Husband, Attilio

9:00am ST. B + Bea Acqua by Niece, Catherine  
+ Liberato Riccio by Riccio Family  
+ Philomena DeRosa (birth.) by Children

10:00am OLOP + Anthony Amendola by Family  
+ Paula AnneMarie Conte (Birth.)  
by Husband, Calvin Conte

11:15am SVDP + Spadacenta & Camera Families by Family  
+ Anthony Amendola by Family

**STEWARDSHIP**

**Regular Collection - 12/4** \$10,509.00

**Monthly Collection** \$4,936.00

**Online Giving** \$742.00

**December 17 & 18 Second Collection:  
Utility**

Thank you to the many of you who have been so  
generous and responsive in these difficult times.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Sunday: Is 35:1-6a, 10/Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10/Jas 5:7-10/  
Mt 11:2-11

Monday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt  
13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and  
23/Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12,  
13-14/Lk 7:18b-23

Thursday: Is 54:1-10/Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b/  
Lk 7:24-30

Friday: Is 56:1-3a, 6-8/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 7-8/Jn 5:33-36

Saturday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/Mt 1:1-  
17

**CONFESSION SCHEDULE:**

**Our Lady of Pompeii:** Saturday at 3:00-3:30pm

**St. Vincent de Paul:** Saturday at 3:30-4:00pm

**SILENCE.**

**Please, be mindful that many parishioners arrive early  
prior to the start of Mass in order to sit reflectively with  
the LORD in prayer. Please, be mindful of the level of your  
voice and that voices carry from the back of the church to  
the front. Please, maintain a subdued tone when speaking  
so that other's quiet time is not disturbed.**



**Holy Hour**  
Come spend time in  
the presence of Jesus.

Every Monday, immediately following morning Mass at  
Our Lady of Pompeii, there is one hour of **Exposition of the  
Blessed Sacrament**. This *Holy Hour* is also streamed for  
those who cannot join us. Go to [https://  
www.stpioofpietrelcinaeh.com](https://www.stpioofpietrelcinaeh.com)

**St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish**

**Address:** 355 Foxon Road, East Haven, CT 06513

**Phone Number:** (203) 469-0764

**Office Hours:**

**Foxon Road:** Mon-Fri 8:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:00

**Taylor Avenue:** Mon. & Fri. 10:00-2:00

**E-Mail:** [stpioofpietrelcina@gmail.com](mailto:stpioofpietrelcina@gmail.com)

*THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT*

# MINISTRY & EVENT CALENDAR

<p><b>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11</b>  <b>Lessons &amp; Carols - 2:00pm at St. Bernadette Church</b></p>	<p><b>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18</b>  <b>NO EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED</b></p>
<p><b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 12</b>  <b>Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church</b>  <b>Fr. Patrick Prayer Class - 2:00pm at SVDP Parish Office</b>  <b>Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823</b>  <b>Midnight Run - 7:00pm</b>  <b>Contact Sue Stacey at 203-214-1762</b></p>	<p><b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 19</b>  <b>Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church</b>  <b>Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823</b></p>
<p><b>TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13</b>  <b>Fr. Patrick Prayer Class - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>	<p><b>TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>
<p><b>WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14</b>  <b>Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office</b>  <b>Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21</b>  <b>Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office</b>  <b>Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>
<p><b>THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15</b>  <b>Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>	<p><b>THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22</b>  <b>Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>
<p><b>FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>	<p><b>FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>
<p><b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17</b>  <b>Divine Mercy - 11:00am at Our Lady of Pompeii Chapel</b>  <b>Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom</b>  <b>Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</b></p>	<p><b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24</b>  <b>Christmas Eve</b></p>



**FROM THE PEN FR. MURASSO  
 GIFT CARDS NEEDED**

**As the food prices continue to rise and the holiday season upon us, several of our parishioners are having trouble buying food as they struggle to purchase other household necessities.**

**Grocery Shopping cards in any denomination to any of the local supermarkets would help me help members of our parish family who presently are in need of assistance for the purchase of food. These gift/shopping cards can be dropped into the collection basket or brought to the parish office. Whatever you can do, is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance. JNM**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #3300**



Our Knights of Columbus Assembly in conjunction with the Catholic War Vets of Derby will be sending Christmas care packages to active duty military. Please help us identify Active duty, deployed Military personnel that are friends, neighbors or relatives of anyone from the parish. Email their full name, Rank, Unit, and Military APO, FPO, DPO or domestic address if deployed Stateside and reside off-base to Chris Neumann at [Hello.Neumann@KOLonline.com](mailto:Hello.Neumann@KOLonline.com) or call 203-393-2924. Deadline is Nov. 21

**The Candles burn this week for these special intentions:**

**Our Lady of Pompeii Candles**

*Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of Billy Richmond & For All the Souls in Purgatory*

*Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~ In Memory of the Mauro & Elko Families*

*Chapel ~*

*Sacred Heart of Jesus ~*

*Our Lady of Perpetual Help Icon ~*

*Our Lady of Pompeii Picture ~*

**St. Vincent de Paul Candles**

*Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of the Balzano & Avitable Families*

*Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) - In Memory of Ronald Paolillo*

*Our Lady's Altar ~ Kathleen Youngs*

*by Cousin, JoAnne MacCatherine*

*St. Joseph's Altar ~*

**St. Bernadette Candles**

*Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~*

*Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~*

**PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH**

Nick Vessicchio, Sally Ann Fallon, Lynette Ely, David T. Boyle, Richard Lucibello, Carmel Ferretti, Bryan Surprenant, Sharon Spadacenta, Marie & Charles Zambrano, Helen Langello, Brian Savo, Gerry Andrea, Alan Poirier, Connie Rasimas, Jane Pyka, Harry Clark, Lou DiNola, Geraldine Licciardi, Joanne Cretella, Joseph Anyzeski, Fran Sofo, Elizabeth Kuen, Deborah Sanning, Paula Ferrara, Patricia Brasile, Tina Marie Fionia, Joseph Parise, Frank DelGrego, Moira Ferguson, Danielle Joubert, Frances Polaski, Pauline Condon, Rose Anna Izzo, Angelo DeMatteo, Patricia Aulenti, Michael Pascale, Alyce Richmond, Catherine Leach, Mark Schettino, Patty DiMilo, Rose Rogalski, Elaine Smith, Karen Rescigno, Virginia Pisano, DJ DiVincenzo, Sgt. Anthony Rybaruk, Philip & Sally DeMilo, Anna Concelmo, Anna Marie Nappi, Brian Higney, Rich Tortora, Denise Bailey, Joseph Peterson, Marion Mahl, Paula Ruddock, Pamela Willis, Laura Luzzi, Brian Wilson, Maureen Redmond, Kristianne Argentino, Shirley Perrelli, Bill Izzo, Andrew & Catherine Criscuolo, Patricia Miles, Joe Coscia, Deborah Verab, Dona Marie, Louis Messina, Christina Meoli, Michelle Smith, Ron Mattei, Angela Riccio, Charlene Tantalò, Al Forgiione, Gabriella Garrity, Beverly Fucci, W.D. Merkle, Phyllis Anastasio, Cheryl Barbara, Carmine DelBasso, Laura-Phyllis Esposito, Diana Vitelli O'Brien, Meghan Keeney, Gennaro Milone, Jo Vuolo, Felicia DeRoche, Marilyn Kozin, Mike Barnett, Richard Costanzo, Carole & Frank Casapulla, Gerie Amendola, Michael Bowen, Linda Montone, Mary Diamante, Carol Esposito, Fred & Barbara Brow, Christopher Farrell, Roberta Sanders-Gray, Jeannette Winston, Marilyn Sisson, Ryder Feeley, Theodore Siwinski, Michael Enders, Nicholas Cerillo, Edwina Cinque, John Sole-ski, Rudolph Pohlman, Linda Esposito, Renee Flynn, The Cooper Family, Rosemary Riccitelli, Marie Riccitelli, Lynn Ely, Ethan Roche, Frances Graney, Barbara Kapusta, Megan Maturo, Rose Paula Dziedu-lonis, Roma Criscuolo, Lucille Ready, Taras Mychajlowskyj, Denise Steiner, Mary Ann Anastasio, Guy Brasile, Gloribeth R., Stacie Bou-chard, Daija Diaz, Al Sappinetti, Guy Racino, Michael Polaski, Martha Catel, Eddie Villecco, Isaiah Colville, Marie Monico, Jennie Nazario, Joan Proto, Caitlin Rustic, Michael Filion, Joanne Gondek, John Torello, Mauro Antonio Bezanilla, Matteo Criscuolo, Robert Filion, Lucy Car-bone, Dorene Izzo, Lucille Palange, Carmine Riccitelli, Sr., Louise Ama-to, Mark Houston, Avery Bye, Mark Palmisano, Alex Bernaitis, Vincent Pisano, Charles Scalesse, Ann Hamilton

Please send prayer requests to [stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com](mailto:stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com) so that our parishioners and friends can be remembered in our prayers.

**Midnight Run  
Taylor Avenue Campus**

The Midnight Run for **December** is the **2nd Monday**, which is **December 12th**. Donations of brown bag lunches, water, juice boxes and toiletries are appreciated. These donations can be dropped off to Sue Stacey's home, 82 Forbes Place, up until 7pm on **Monday, December 12th**. Thank you and God bless you for all donations. Stay safe & well.

**Midnight Run  
Foxon Road Campus**

On the last Monday of each month, we bring 75 bagged lunches to the Columbus House Overflow Shelter.

**Donations Needed:**

ShopRite Gift Cards or

Gallon Size Ziploc Bags

Quart Size Ziploc Bags

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Juice Pouches

Raisin Boxes

Fruit Cups & Pudding Cups

Granola Bars

Individual Packaged Cookies, Crackers or Chips

We are also looking for small amounts or full skeins of yarn, it will be used to make hats and scarves for the midnight run. Please leave your donations at any entrance of the church. Thank you.

Midnight Run is the **LAST** Monday of **EVERY** month from Our Lady of Pompeii Church from 6-7 pm. Thank-you for being so generous!



**St. Bernadette Food Pantry** located at the East Shore Senior Center is open every Saturday from 10:00am-11:00am. We are always in need of non-perishable foods. Top choices are, canned: tomatoes, tomato sauce, vegetables, tuna fish, soups and fruits. Pasta, mac & cheese and peanut butter. Consumption guidelines provided to us from the CT

Food Bank: Expiration/Code Date Extensions past expiration: high acid foods (i.e. tomatoes) 12-18 months. Low acid foods (canned meat, most vegetables) 2-5 years. Food in jars, 12 months past expiration, dry cereal 6-12 months, rice/pasta (dry) 1 year. Questions, please contact Deb or Rico at 203-468-7489



**THE EAST HAVEN FOOD PANTRY** is asking for pasta, cereal and peanut butter the month of December. Please leave your donations of food at the church entrances.

\*Starting October 1, the Food Pantry will be open from 9:00am-11:00am on Saturdays & Tuesdays.

For more info call Christine Sandford 203-469-7823

**From the Pen of Fr. M.**

Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, Ph.D., Ed.D., Psy.D.

**Third Sunday of Advent**

***Gaudete Sunday: A Reason for Rejoicing***

*Isaiah 35:1-10, James 5:7-10*

*St. Matthew 11:2-7*



This weekend, December 11, the Church celebrates the *Third Sunday of Advent*, which traditionally has been referred to as *Gaudete Sunday*; coming from the Latin, *Gaudete* is translated as *Rejoice!* The readings for this week reinforce the theme of *rejoicing*. In the first reading from the Prophet Isaiah, we listen attentively as the Prophet speaks about the rejuvenation of the created world at the arrival of God's kingdom. The reading from Isaiah merits a line-by-line description of Isaiah in order to fully appreciate the power of the Prophet's message.

***“The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom” (35:1).***

Isaiah indicates that on the day when the glory of the Lord is revealed, marvelous and miraculous things will occur. The desert will no longer be uninviting or intolerable because its austere and uninhabitable environment will be transformed. The created world will bring forth new life; it will burst into a display of flowers. The rejuvenation of nature signifies *new life* and a *new beginning*. The transformation from *life-less-ness* to *life* will be dramatic. All of mankind as well as the animal kingdom and the entire created world and beyond will be aware of the presence of God.

The transformation of the created universe will not occur just anywhere; it will initially occur in the desert where the land is dry, parched and seemingly lifeless. This is Isaiah's way of saying that the onset of God's presence will be radically apparent to all. People will not miss this spectacular event; an ostentatious display of life! The faithful followers will know the grandeur of their God just as God had promised.

***“They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of God” (35:2)***

In Isaiah 33, the Prophet makes mention of the foliage of Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon, but in this particular verse, they are dying:

***“The land mourns and languishes; Lebanon is confounded and withers away; Sharon is like a desert; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves” (35:9).***

In the absence of God's favor, the created world is described as a wasteland. This is truly a daunting description of the absence of God from His creation, which is paralleled by an incredibly joyful description in Isaiah 35:2, as God's presence *breaths life* and *hope* into His creation. The response is described with a high-spirited, joyful visual aid of rebirth; a demonstration of gratitude in which, the created world blankets the earth with blossoms galore.

***“Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak (35:3).***

Isaiah's description of “*feeble hands*” is another way that the Prophet chooses to describe the state of discouragement and hopelessness. In addition, his portrayal of “*knees that are weak*” is a portrayal of humanity at its lowest; completely and totally spiritually and physically depleted as a result of man's abandonment of God and His commandments.



The visual aide of an individual who experiences difficulty walking or standing due to the malfunctioning of his/her limbs, in this case, *frail legs* suggest that such an individual experiences difficulty with mastering his/her surroundings. The image provides a masterful metaphor, which describes a climate where due to man's detachment from God, he cannot adequately master his environment; even the most rudimentary of tasks like walking, standing and grasping.

*“Say to those whose hearts are frightened, ‘Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you’” (35:4).*

This incredible image describes a world that has *refused* God's kindness; thus, having removed God from His creation, humankind takes God's place, foolishly assuming God's role as having dominion over His creation. In God's place, man becomes the normative value of truth and justice. *“Becoming frightened”* refers to a society that has become overly introspective and self-absorbed with its own *perceived* influence over its citizens.



This kind of behavior will usually lead to man's confusion; thus, it becomes a source of distraction from embracing and living Truth. Consequently, such a society hemorrhages in the absence of order and direction in the midst of spiritual and ethical disorder and chaos. According to Isaiah, the remedy for a *“fearful heart”* is trust; faith of a kindred spirit who will assist in the *re-kindling* and the *re-connecting* with a loving and merciful God. Having *re-gained* hope in God's presence, such a society can *re-claim* meaning in the lives of its people. Isaiah's message is simply this:

*‘Life-lived in the absence of God is like a barren, lifeless desert where man cannot actualize his human potential to its fullest. Life-lived with God is like a plantation in full bloom, generating life in abundance.’*

God's presence will wipe away infirmity and hardship and man will once again renew his relationship with God. He will *re-establish* his rightful place in the presence of God. Isaiah says:

*“The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: say to daughter Zion, ‘See your salvation comes; his reward is with him and his recompense before him.’ They [the faithful] shall be called, ‘The Holy people, the redeemed of the Lord;’ and you, you shall be called, ‘Sought Out, a city not forsaken’” (62:11-12).*

The recognition of God's presence among His chosen people will be proof of God's determination to heal His people. God will also provide His faithful with the necessary spiritual compensation for those who have been mistreated as well as reprisal and condemnation for the enemies of His faithful.

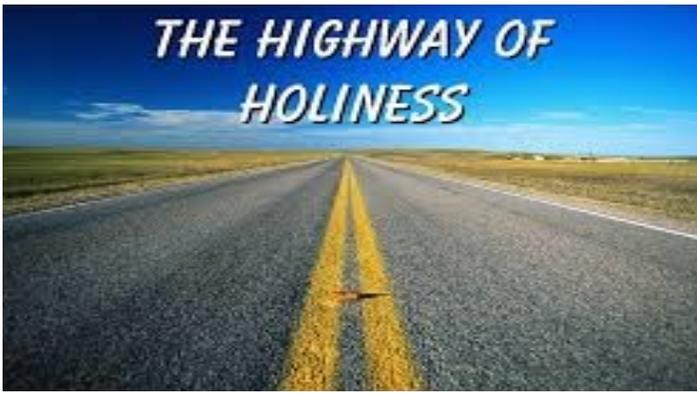
*“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared. Then will the lame leap like a stag, and then the tongue of the dumb will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert and rivers in the steppe” (35:5-6).*

Isaiah makes mention of four parts of the body in the above verse. The proper functioning of the eyes, ears, legs and tongue is considered to be a *blessing* from the Lord. Israel was hardhearted, blind and deaf to the *Word* of God. The Israelites were indifferent to God. They appeared paralyzed, unable and unwilling to open their hearts and minds to God.

Isaiah uses the metaphor of human frailty in his description of Israel's lack of spiritual wholeness. The *healing* of human fragility and the healing of physical disabilities in man are meant to describe the *return* of harmony and compatibility among the various species in the animal kingdom. The fruitful flourishing of nature and the overall prosperity of the entire created world will be recognized by all. *“The streams and rivers which burst forth”* are proof of a world transformed and renewed, as the dry burning and parched sands of the desert are blanketed with springs of water.

*“A highway will be there, called the Holy Way; no one unclean may pass over it, nor fools go astray on it. No lion will be there, nor do beasts of prey go up to be met upon it. It is for those with a journey to make, and on it the redeemed will walk. Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy. They will meet with joy and gladness; sorrow and mourning will flee” (35:8-10).*

The highway about which Isaiah speaks will provide passage for believers and nobody who embarks upon this road will get lost. In addition, there will be no need to be afraid of wild and untamed beasts. Having experienced the glory of God, they too will live in complete harmony with the rest of the animal kingdom, including man.



The passage on this *Third Sunday of Advent*, referred to as *Gaudete Sunday* describes for the believer a measure for determining the legitimacy and authenticity of the presence of God: the created universe in its entirety will rejoice and will become rejuvenated; there will be healing of mind and body and the earth shall bring forth lush vegetation and blossoms; the animal kingdom will become compatibly passive.

In the Gospel from St. Matthew, Jesus quotes Isaiah in establishing proof that he is who he says he is:

*“When John the Baptist heard in prison, of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?’ Jesus said to them in reply, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them” (11:2-5).*

The celebration of *Gaudete Sunday: Rejoice Sunday* comes midway in the celebration of the *Season of Advent* as a way of calling attention to the fact that the *Season of Advent* and the period of *waiting* is coming to an end. We light the third candle on the Advent Wreath; the rose candle. The vestments, also go from purple on this special Sunday, to rose. The rose color is a happy color, as opposed to the purple, which while more regal, suggests penitential prayer. The rose is a softening of the purple as we make our way to pure white at the celebration of Christmas. The white symbolizes light. The celebration of Christmas is *Light* shining through darkness. JNM



From the Pen of the *Parish Nurse*  
Kimberly Petrillo, R.N.

### Medication Safety

Medicines generally are not additive in nature, unlike drugs. Medicines are made for the treatment of a particular disease or chronic condition. A drug is often considered a narcotic, a stimulant, or hallucinogen. Medicines usually never cause confusion, however, drugs can and do. Medicines, both prescribed and non-prescribed can be harmful and can cause negative affects like drugs.



People often refer to pills, liquids, creams or sprays as “*medicine*” or “*drugs*.” Both words mean: medicines obtained from a pharmacy with a doctor’s prescription. Pills, liquids, or creams purchased without a prescription are called *over-the-counter* medications. Mixing certain medications can cause problems to the body.

It is important to let the doctor and nurse know what prescription and *over-the-counter* medications you take. This includes vitamins, supplements, herbs and recreational drugs. Remind the health care team about any allergies or side effects from medications that have occurred in the past or present. The pharmacist is knowledgeable about medications and can be very informative with regard to the various interactions that can and do occur when certain medicines are taken together. A pharmacist is a wonderful resource for educating us about the effects that medication can and does have on the body as well as with our moods and emotional states



Information facts sheets are given with each prescription. A list of possible side effects from taking the medication help the person to be educated about the medication.

Once the doctor has prescribed a medication and the pharmacist has filled the prescription, it is up to the responsibility of the patient to **consume medication safely**. A medication list consists of all medicines, including over the counter products, vitamins and dietary supplements. This list should be shown to all health care providers including the dentist. Keep one copy at home and one copy in the wallet or pocketbook. The list should include the name of each medication, the reason it was prescribed, the dosage, the prescriber, and the frequency the medication is taken.

It is important that the patient take the medicine in the exact amount and at the time of day that the doctor prescribes. Use a memory aid to take medicine on time. Some people use meals, or bedtime as reminders to take their medicine.



Charts, calendars and weekly pill organizers can be helpful reminders when taking medications. Find a system that works best for you and stick to it. Do not skip doses of medication or take half doses to save money. Talk with the doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you cannot afford the prescribed medicine. There may be less costly choices, or special programs to help with the cost of certain drugs.

**Avoid mixing alcohol with medication.** Some medicines may not work as efficiently, or may make the body feel ill when drinking alcohol. Drinking alcohol and taking narcotics can cause difficulty breathing. Take all medication until it is finished or until the doctor advises you to stop. Do not take medicine in the dark.

**To avoid making a mistake, turn on a light, or grab your eye glasses or magnifying glass before reaching for any pills.** Check expiration dates on the medicine bottles. The pharmacist can advise on how to safely get rid of medication that is no longer needed or expired. It is wise to store all medications and supplements out of sight and out of the reach of children. Do not take medications in front of young children as they may try to imitate your behavior.

### Generic or Brand Name Medications

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Safe</li> <li>✓ Effective</li> <li>✓ Same Active Ingredients</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Safe</li> <li>✓ Effective</li> <li>✓ Same Active Ingredients</li> </ul>

Generic and brand name medicines are alike because they act the same way in the body. They contain the same active ingredients, the part of the medicine that makes it work. A generic drug is the same as the brand name drug in dosage, strength, quality, the way it works, the way it is taken, and the way it should be used. Generic drugs usually cost less.

Medicines can be costly. Medicare has prescription drug plans for people with Medicare to help save money on medications. For information, call 1-800-633-4227 or visit the Medicare website at: [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). If ordering medication on the Internet (which can be cheaper), it is advisable to check with the Food and Drug Administration to see which websites are reliable and safe. Call 1-888-463-6332, or go to [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

A general understanding and knowledge base about chronic health conditions is important because this can help to manage a medical condition properly. For example, high blood pressure can be controlled by a low salt diet in addition to taking anti-hypertensive medications. Monitoring blood pressure is important because often times when blood pressure is elevated, no symptoms are present (asymptomatic). Monitoring and knowing your blood pressure numbers help to keep the condition under control, which promotes better health of the body.



Taking charge of your health and caring for the body should be the most important aspect of each day. Good health should *not* be taken for granted. In order to maintain good health, the body needs to be cared for physically, mentally, spiritually and psychologically. How the body is cared for will reflect how well each day one feels. Make it a priority to stay healthy and practice healthy behaviors. **KP**

Parish nurse can be contacted via email [kimp51@comcast.net](mailto:kimp51@comcast.net) or mobile 203-980-0931.

### **SOMETHING TO PONDER**



#### **Memories of the Past**

**Christmas is about family and friends. It is also about remembering those special people in our lives who are no longer with us, and who have made us what we are today.**

**Take a few moments to think of those special people who were once in our lives and who helped us become the man or the woman that we are today. And...know how proud they must be that we are thinking of them today.**

**From the Pen of Fr. M.**  
Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, PhD, EdD, PsyD.



**SIGNS OF THE SEASON**  
*Part 2*

**POINSETTIA PLANT**



The poinsettia plant is one of the most outstanding reminders of the *Christmas Season*. The poinsettia plant, which is also referred to as the *Star of Bethlehem* has its origin in Mexico. The poinsettia was named after the first ambassador to Mexico, Joel Poinsett. It was he who brought the poinsettia plant to America in 1928. In the eighteenth century, the Mexican people believed that the poinsettia plant was symbolic for the Star of Bethlehem. Since that time, the poinsettia has been associated with the *Christmas Season*. The actual flower of the poinsettia is small and yellow. Surrounding the flower are large red, white or pink leaves that are often mistaken for the flower.

According to tradition, the poinsettia was originally a green weed that grew in abundance in Mexico. There is a story about a poor Mexican girl named Pepita who had no gift to present to the Christ Child at the village's annual Christmas Eve service. As the young child made her way to the little chapel, she paused fixing her eyes on the elegant gifts that the other children were bringing in procession to the crib of the Christ Child. Pepita began to cry, fearing that she would disappoint the Baby Jesus as she had nothing to present to him. She also feared that the other children would pause long enough on their way to the crib to laugh at Pepita.



A priest happened to see the little girl as she wept by the roadside. Inquiring as to why she was so sad at such a joyous time of year, Pepita proceeded to explain to the old priest her dilemma. The priest told the little girl that the humblest of gifts, if given to Jesus with love would please him very much. As he was talking, the priest bent down and collected several common weeds that were plentiful by the roadside and gathered them in a bouquet. He then tied them with a string and gave them to little Pepita. As Pepita knelt before the Infant's Crib, the green top leaves turned into brilliant red petals, which filled the manger with star-like flowers.

In addition to being a wonderful story about the origin of the beautiful poinsettia, it is also a story about our own relationship to Christ as well as our relationship to one another. We hear so often, and most will agree that this festive *Season of Advent*, which leads up to Christmas has become disguised and even buried in commercialism. This season is about God becoming a man and bringing the message of peace, love and good will to all. The best gift each of us can give to one another is the gift of self in an authentic spirit of love...with joy!



**CHRISTMAS TREE**



The Christmas tree is another *sign of the season*. Germany is traditionally credited with the beginning of the Christmas tree tradition. In the sixteenth century, devout Christians are said to have brought evergreens into their homes and decorated them with special trinkets, goodies and candles. Some built Christmas pyramids out of wood and decorated them with evergreens.

The Christmas tree custom, also became popular in other parts of Europe. In 1841, Prince Albert of England, the husband of Queen Victoria started the tradition when he decorated the first English tree at Windsor Castle with a variety of sweets, fruits and gingerbread. Soon after, many other wealthy English families followed suit, using a variety of lavish items as ornaments. Charles Dickens describes such a tree as being covered with dolls, miniature furniture, tiny musical instruments, costume jewelry, fruit, candy and of course flickering candles. Whether simple or ornate, the ornaments used to decorate the Christmas tree were meant to symbolize the *fruits of redemption*.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the Christmas tree tradition began to catch on in America. It was about that time when Christmas ornaments began arriving from Germany. It is interesting that Europeans used small trees between three and four feet, while Americans preferred trees that reached from floor to ceiling.



It was at the beginning of the twentieth century that Americans began decorating their trees with homemade ornaments along with popcorn that was dyed in a variety of bright colors and interlaced with berries and nuts. With the invention of electricity, candles were no longer needed; thus, the trees were able to glow and flicker for days on end and even began to appear in town squares.

Important buildings, private and public alike, signaled the beginning of the Christmas holiday with tree-lighting ceremonies. Lights that are strung on an evergreen tree have always symbolized Christ's birth. Saint John tells us in the prologue of his Gospel that Jesus came into the world as "*Light dispelling the darkness:*"

*"In the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came into being, not one thing came into being except through him. What has come into being through him was life and this life was the life of men; and light shines in darkness, and darkness cannot overpower it"* (John 1:1-5).

Horns and bells were also used as part of the tree's decorations as a means of warding off evil spirits. Eventually, an angel acquired a place at the top of the tree as a way of recreating and remembering the angels that swarmed over the Child Jesus at the first Christmas.



## CHRISTMAS CRECHE



St. Francis of Assisi is credited with having created the first Christmas crèche. It was the year 1223, three years before Francis' death and one year prior to his receiving the stigmata, the five wounds of Christ. This is also the year that Francis received approval from Rome. Pope Innocent III gave permission for the establishment of the Franciscan Order, the Order of Friars Minor (OFM).

Francis had recently returned to Assisi from Rome with the good news from the pope; thus, the young friar wanted to celebrate his joy and to thank God in a very special way. Because it was near to the Feast of Christmas, Francis desired to recreate the birth at Bethlehem as a way of inspiring the village people to receive the Christ Child with both joy and awe. Francis wanted to demonstrate God's love with the sending of His Son into the world who was born *not* in luxury but in poverty, and in stark simplicity.



Locating a small cave in his little town of Greccio, Francis enlisted the help of friends and townspeople in preparing the little cave with straw and live animals, an ox and a donkey. The manger was a stone slab upon which Francis placed a little baby. The people in the town marched in procession with candles. The flame was meant to depict Jesus as the *Light of the world; Light shining through darkness*. Midnight Mass was celebrated and Francis who was a deacon preached about God's love in sending His Son to be born in simplicity and poverty, destined to suffer greatly out of love for humankind.

Greccio is a little hill town in Italy in the providence of Lazio, which is located north of Florence. There is a small shrine in the town that contains what is believed to be the actual slab of stone used for the First Christmas Crèche in 1223.



## CHRISTMAS ROSE



The Christmas Rose is native to Europe and is said to bloom throughout the winter months in the cooler climates of Great Britain, Spain, Portugal and the Scandinavian countries. Unlike the roses that we see in our New England climate, which lose their petals as part of the life cycle, the Christmas Rose, a bushy shrub consists of five white or whitish/pinkish petals that remain intact throughout the duration of the plant's life cycle.

Tradition places this legend in the fifteenth century in Scandinavia. Like the legend of the poinsettia, this story, also involves a young girl whose name was Madelon who like Pepita desired to be part of the Christmas procession to the Infant Jesus' crib with the other children in her village. Madelon was saddened by the fact that while her peers brought exotic and extravagant gifts, she had nothing of value to present to the Christ Child.

Although driven to find a flower to present to the Baby Jesus, Madelon found nothing, due to the fact that it was a cold and snowy winter and nothing was in bloom. Crying by the roadside and feeling quite ashamed, an angel appeared to Madelon. Moved by the young girl's innocent and pure love for Jesus, the angel began to beat the ground at the spot where the tears of the young Madelon fell. From the ground burst forth a magnificent bush of white roses.

The angel told Madelon that nothing that anyone could bring to the Christ Child was more fitting than the Christmas Rose.



## CHARLIE BROWN



This time of the year would not be complete without Charlie Brown and *The Charlie Brown Christmas Special*. It is a heartwarming story about the *search* for the *true meaning* of Christmas. However, the only person who is actually searching for the real meaning behind the holiday season is Charlie Brown. His friends seem to be going through the motions of decorating, shopping and celebrating. All of Charlie's friends *appear* to lack a purpose and a reason for what they are doing.



As Charlie Brown observes his friends decorating and merry-making, he takes note of the fact that they *appear* to be overly consumed with the *secular* demands of the *Christmas Season*. In other words, although they decorate their houses and trees with lights, tinsel and glitter, they *appear* to lack an understanding as to how these decorations contribute to the meaning of the *Christmas Season*. Charlie reacts to their lack of *apparent* focus on Jesus who is the *reason for the season*.

Charlie Brown cannot quite put his finger on it. However, he *does* know that something is missing from his friends' preparation for Christmas. There is something about the Christmas preparations that fail to provoke meaning in the hearts of the participants. Whatever it is, Charlie Brown knows that it *has to be* something that is *extremely necessary* and something that definitely speaks to the *real meaning of what Christmas* is all about.

### Who Do You Identify With?

Who is it that you most identify with? Is it Charlie Brown who wants to *feel* the real meaning behind the tinsel and glitter of the season? Or do you identify with Lucy and the others who just go through the motions simply because it seems like the right thing to do this time of year?

Some adults, like children, love everything about Christmas. They love the food, the decorating and the shopping. However, they are so invested in these things that they forget the *real meaning* of the Christmas celebration. They forget the *reason for the season*.



There is always Linus! He is the one who never forgets that the *true meaning* of Christmas is about Jesus. Do you remember the exchange between Lucy and Charlie as they prepare for their Christmas pageant? Lucy as always takes charge. As she distributes the script to the cast, she assigns the part of the shepherd to Schermie who becomes visibly upset. "Shepherd?" he asks, "I *always* have to be a shepherd!"

The truth? Nobody wants to be a shepherd. Shepherds seem so unimportant. Yet, if we *listen* to the Gospel of Saint Luke *with our eyes*, we should all want to be shepherds. The shepherds are in fact, the superstars in Luke's account. The Gospel of Saint Luke is so beautiful in its simplicity. It is about Mary, Joseph and Jesus, along with the angels and shepherds. Luke makes no mention of Magi because his focus is *Jesus*. Jesus humbled himself to become one of us. In addition, Luke tells us much more. He is telling us *why* Jesus was born into the world and *for whom* he was born. Jesus came into the world for the shepherds and for the salvation of humankind.



The shepherds are real people living in the midst of their own world, sleeping with and protecting their flock. Sheep were very important to the economy of everyday life in Israel two thousand years ago. Yet, the shepherds were not considered to be very important, nor did they enjoy any prestige among their peers.

Luke portrays the true meaning of Christmas when he describes the shepherds who were the *first* to receive the announcement regarding the birth of the Son of God, the long awaited-for Messiah. The shepherds were also the first to offer praise and adoration. Although they were the first, the shepherds were terrified and perhaps, even confused upon seeing the *Glory of God* in their midst.



This is the real meaning of Christmas: *The Incarnate God who has broken through human history.* God has come not to the rich and the powerful but to the lowly, those of us who recognize the need for His Son. The message that was proclaimed by the shepherds is clear: *“We do not have to fear God, for today we have been given Joy;”* joy that both Isaiah and Paul speak about in the readings for the third week of Advent, which is referred to as *Gaudete Sunday.*

An anemic, lackluster little Christmas tree was made beautiful by Charlie Brown’s friends; thus, as a result of the transformation, Charlie Brown discovers the real meaning of Christmas: *Light! A Light* that expels darkness in the birth of God’s Son.

The *Christmas Season* is a reminder to those of us who believe that in spite of a world gone mad on so many different levels, there is reason for joy; reason for hope; reason for faith. Luke reminds us of the great joy that was present among the shepherds, the lowliest of all who tell us not to fear because joy is ours.

good  
TIDINGS  
of great  
JOY

The *Advent Season* ushers in the *Christmas Season.* It is about *reading the signs of the times!* We are called to bask in the joy of the season as all the signs that usher in the birth of Christ prepare us for this great event: *“Light shining through darkness!”* In the readings for the *First Sunday of Advent,* St. Paul instructs the followers of Jesus to *“Throw off the works of darkness and to put on the armor of light”* (Romans 13:11-14). Let this holiday season mark a new beginning for *your* life. Walk in the *Light* of Christ and transmit his *Light* throughout the *NEW YEAR!*



### **ABC'S OF CHRISTMAS**

**A...is for Animals who share the stable.**

**B... for the Babe with their manger for His cradle.**

**C... for the Carols so blithe and so gay.**

**D... for December, the twenty-fifth day.**

**E... for the Eve when we are all so excited.**

**F... for the Fun when the tree is at last lighted.**

**G... for the Gifts Santa leaves on that special day.**

**H... for the Holly with pointed leaves on that special day.**

**I... for Ivy that clings on the wall.**

**J...is for Jesus, the reason for it all.**

**K... for the Kindness begot by this feast.**

**L... for the Lights of the season.**

**M... for the Manger bed for Jesus at his birth.**

**N... for the Nowells we sing Christmas night.**

**O... for the Oxen, the first to adore Him.**

**P... for the Presents the Wise Men laid before Him.**

**Q...is for Quiet night, with hardly a sound.**

**R... for the Reindeer leaping the roofs.**

**S...is for the Stockings that Santa Claus stuffs.**

**T... for the Toys, the Tinsel, the Tree.**

**U...is for Us...the family of God.**

**V...is for Visitors bringing us cheer.**

**W...is Welcome to the Happy New Year.**

**X...is for X-tra special feelings of Christmas surrounding us all.**

**Y...is for Your Christmas Joys- may they be bright.**

**Z...is for the animal Zoo at his crib that First.**

Let us all use the Joyful Signs of the Season as a means of drawing closer to the Christ who lives within each of us, not only at Advent and Christmas but throughout the year. **JNM**



From the Desk of the Religious Education Director  
Carol Silva

The Religious Education students in grades four, five and six along with the Ladies Guild of St Pio would like to thank the parishioners for their help with the "Soxtober" sock drive. Your generous donations helped so many in need! The students sorted and rolled socks that filled up twelve large boxes and bins!! God bless you all and thank you again for your generosity and support of this drive.



FR. MURASSO'S MESSAGE BOARD



**LESSONS & CAROLS**  
SUNDAY, December 11 @ 2:00pm  
at St. Bernadette Church



**Saturday, Dec. 24**  
**Christmas Eve**  
SVDP: 4:30pm & 11:00pm  
OLOP: 4:00pm  
SB: 4:00pm

**Sunday, Dec. 25**  
**Christmas Day**  
OLOP: 8:00am & 10:00am  
SVDP: 11:15am  
SB: 9:00am

**HOLIDAY CLOSINGS**

THE OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED:  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 26  
MONDAY, JANUARY 2



Mass  
Schedule

December 10 & 11, 2022

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Murasso  
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick  
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick  
9:00am SB: Fr. Borino  
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly  
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso  
\*\*\*\*\*

December 17 & 18, 2022

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Patrick  
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Murasso  
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Borino  
9:00am SB: Fr. Murasso  
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly  
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Patrick  
\*\*\*\*\*



December 24 & 25, 2022

**Christmas Eve**  
4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Borino  
4:00pm SB: Fr. Meehan  
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick  
11:00pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick



**Christmas Day**  
9:00am SB: Fr. Borino  
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Murasso  
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly  
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso