

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



**Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2022**

Mass Intentions for the Week

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

MONDAY, December 19 - Weekday

8:00am OLOP + Gloria Calandrelli
by Porto Funeral Home
8:00am SVDP + Emilio Infante
by Family

TUESDAY, December 20 – Weekday

8:00am OLOP + Joann Farrell
by Tom & Family
8:00am SVDP + Claire Bernardo
by Clancy-Palumbo Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, December 21 - St. Peter Canisius

8:00am OLOP + William C. Richmond
by Alyce Richmond
8:00am SVDP + Fred & Mary Colloso
by Children, Grandchildren & Great-Grandchild

THURSDAY, December 22 - Weekday

8:00am OLOP + Stephen Fowler
by Family
8:00am ST. B + Jennie Criscuolo
by Son, Henry

FRIDAY, December 23 - St. John of Kanty

8:00am ST. B + God's Graces & Blessings for Good Health
by Anastasio Family

SATURDAY, December 24 - Vigil – Christmas Eve

4:00pm OLOP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
4:00pm ST. B + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
4:30pm SVDP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
11:00pm SVDP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio

SUNDAY, December 25 – Nativity of the Lord

8:00am OLOP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
9:00am ST. B + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
10:00am OLOP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio
11:15am SVDP + Living & Deceased Members of St. Pio

STEWARDSHIP

Regular Collection - 12/11	\$0.00
Retired Rel. Fund Collection	\$0.00
Online Giving	\$0.00

December 24 & 25 Second Collection: Christmas

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

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:1
-7/Mt 1:18-24
Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk
1:5-25
Tuesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38
Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-
21/Lk 1:39-45
Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46
-56
Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/
Lk 1:57-66
Saturday: *Morning:* 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3,
4-5, 27 and 29/Lk 1:67-79

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.**



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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MINISTRY & EVENT CALENDAR

<p align="center">SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 NO EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED</p>	<p align="center">SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 Christmas Day Please see Mass Schedule</p>
<p align="center">MONDAY, DECEMBER 19 Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823</p>	<p align="center">MONDAY, DECEMBER 26 Parish Offices Closed Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823</p>
<p align="center">TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p align="center">TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p align="center">WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21 Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p align="center">WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28 Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p align="center">THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22 Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p align="center">THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29 Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p align="center">FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p align="center">FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p align="center">SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 Christmas Eve Please see Mass schedule</p>	<p align="center">SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31 New Years Eve</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 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 ~ George Fortino by Wife, Rita

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 ~

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, 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 Tantalio, Al Forgione, 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, Gerrie 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 Soleski, 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 Dziedulonis, Roma Criscuolo, Lucille Ready, Taras Mychajlowskyj, Denise Steiner, Mary Ann Anastasio, Guy Brasile, Gloribeth R., Stacie Bouchard, 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 Carbone, Dorene Izzo, Lucille Palange, Carmine Riccitelli, Sr., Louise Amato, Mark Houston, Avery Bye, Mark Palmisano, Alex Bernaitis, Vincent Pisano, Charles Scalesse, Ann Hamilton

Please send prayer requests to stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com so that our parishioners and friends can be remembered in our prayers.

**Midnight Run
Taylor Avenue Campus**

The Midnight Run for **January** is the **2nd Monday**, which is **January 9th**. 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, January 9th**. 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) 1year. 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.

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 7:10-14 Romans 1:1-17
St. Matthew 1:18-24



This weekend, the Church celebrates the Fourth Sunday of the *Advent Season*; a season that is quickly coming to an end. The overall theme is one of trust. The mark of a true disciple is demonstrated in the ability and the desire to trust in God's providence even in the midst of trials and tribulations. The scriptures for this weekend provide two different pictures of man's response to God.

In the book of the Prophet Isaiah, the prophet describes Ahaz, the king of Judah who is unwilling to yield to God's *Word* and decides *not* to trust in God's providence. Ahaz appears to have more reverence for the opinions of man than he has for God. Ahaz is a good example of those in society who place more confidence in man and the material world than in God and His providence.



Such individuals continue to accumulate material treasures in this world instead of looking in anticipation to the kingdom of God. Such individuals eventually realize as did Ahaz that the feelings of emptiness result from an inability or unwillingness to place God at the center of their lives and life choices.

St. Matthew gives another picture in his description of St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus. Matthew describes Joseph as a man of deep faith. His faith is demonstrated by his trust in God's *Word*. Genuine faith leads to trust in the powers beyond earthly experiences, placing trust in God's providential love and mercy. Openness to the ways in which God's *Word* permeates life and life choices inevitably leads to a desire to be obedient when confronted by the magnitude of God's presence along with His mysterious ways.

Joseph was just this sort of man. He was an upright man of integrity who desired to listen to God's *Word* and in listening, to carry out God's will. Like Mary, Joseph never saw the whole picture. He was never sure where it was that God was leading him. Nevertheless, he chose to put his hand to the plough and permitted faith to be his guide.

Engagement, Betrothal, Nuptials

Plans that Joseph and Mary must have made with regard to life as a married couple took an unintended turn when at the announcement of the angel, Mary was told that she would conceive and give birth to the Son of God. This was a confusing and bewildering beginning to a courtship that initially must have been a clear-cut and happy anticipation for marriage.

Matthew indicates that Joseph was *betrothed* to Mary and then he is said to be in the process of *divorcing* Mary as a result of this unexpected pregnancy about which he knew nothing. Yet, prior to the actual nuptials, Mary is referred to as being the *wife* of Joseph. The relationship about which Matthew describes was actually the normal procedure in which there were three steps that eventually led up to the actual marriage ceremony.

Step One: The Engagement

The engagement was often made by the two sets of parents. This usually took place when the individuals were still children. Therefore, the future spouses neither participated nor consented. It was often the case that they did not know one another.

For the Jews, marriage was a serious and sacred commitment. It was not to be left to the whims of young adolescent hearts. Rather, it was the responsibility of adults to make wise choices in selecting the mates for their children.

Step Two: The Betrothal

The betrothal was understood as the confirmation and approval of the engagement. It was during this year-long period of betrothal that the engagement could be dissolved if either party did not choose to go forward with the nuptials.



During the year of betrothal, the couple was referred to as husband and wife (actually man and wife), without the rights and privileges that come with the married state. It was during this period that the union could not be broken without an actual written statement of divorce, referred to as a *writ of divorce*.

Step Three: Nuptials

The marriage ceremony concluded the year-long betrothal. It was at this stage that Matthew indicates Joseph's intention to divorce Mary as a result of her pregnancy about which he had no claim.



"This is how the birth of Jesus came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly" (1:18-19).

Matthew refers to Joseph as a "*righteous man*," which for the Jews meant that he was a devout observer of the Mosaic Law. Joseph wanted to dissolve his union with Mary because of his belief that she had violated the Law. And the Law in fact actually required that Joseph act in such a manner. Matthew also indicates that Joseph was, "*unwilling to expose her to shame*." The penalty for proven adultery was death by stoning according to the Mosaic Law as it is described in The Book of Deuteronomy.



"But if this charge is true [adultery] and the evidence of the girl's virginity is not found, they shall bring the girl to the entrance of her father's house and there her townsmen shall stone her to death, because she committed a crime against Israel by her unchasteness in her father's house. Thus, shall you purge the evil from your midst" (Deuteronomy 22:20-21).

This is the reason for Matthew's description of Joseph not only as a righteous man, but also as a faithful, gentle soul. Joseph wanted to prevent the horrific shame and scandal that such an infraction of the Law would bring to the house of Joachim and Ann, the parents of Mary. This righteous behavior and reverence for God are contrasted in this week's readings with the unrighteousness and irreverence of Ahaz, the king of Judah.

Ahaz: The Historical Setting

Ahaz was the king of Judah and not a reputable one at that. He lacked honesty, integrity and respect for God and God's Law. At age nineteen, for example, Ahaz killed his only son and heir to the throne by making his son an offering to the pagan gods. Moreover, Ahaz had little or no regard for the *Word* of God in his life. The background for Isaiah's message in this week's first reading focuses on Ahaz's refusal to seek out the providence and mercy of God. Instead he seeks an alliance with the world. As is the case even in our twenty-first century, the world inevitably betrays Ahaz leaving him with neither power nor dignity.

The kings of Syria and Israel are banding together against Judah and are in the process of overthrowing Judah in order to reduce it to rubble. Syria was intent on creating an empire. Isaiah predicted the eventual destruction of Syria, which would give way to the emergence of another powerful kingdom. A child would be born precisely for this new kingdom and he would reign forever on the throne of David.

"The Spirit of the Lord would dwell on him and he would rule the world with justice" (Isaiah 11:1-6, [Second week of Advent]).

In killing his son, Ahaz is left with no possible heir from the line of David. Ahaz knows that he will be the last king to rule Judah from the line of David. Isaiah tells Ahaz to turn to God for direction.

"The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, 'Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God; let it be deep as the nether world, or high as the sky'" (Isaiah 7: 10-11).

Ahaz refuses to implore the mercy of God and instead he turns to Syria, which was getting ready to attack Judah. Thus, in order to become an ally with Syria, Ahaz agrees to erect pagan temples for the worship of pagan gods. This of course did not help Judah.

Ahaz gives a lame excuse for not imploring the mercy of God, which while it appears to be a pious gesture on the part of Ahaz, it is actually more characteristic of Ahaz's indifference and arrogance.

"But Ahaz answered, 'I will not tempt the Lord!' Then Isaiah said: 'Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God?'" (Isaiah 7:12-13).



Isaiah persists, telling Ahaz to trust in the Lord and to beseech the Lord who will grant him anything he asks for despite his lack of faith. God will show His mercy and in addition He will prove to Ahaz that He is the one true God.

Ahaz refuses. He chooses not to trust in God. Isaiah is not very pleased with Ahaz's stubbornness and his lack of reverence for the Lord. Yet despite the fact that Ahaz will not budge, God will nevertheless give a sign to Ahaz whether he wants one or not. This will be a sign that will perpetuate and at the same time protect the throne of David. The sign is to be an heir for Ahaz, a son who will succeed Ahaz and will restore hope for a weary nation.

"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).



The above passage is not a prophecy of Mary and the birth of Jesus. The Hebrew word (*almah*), used to describe the wife of Ahaz does not describe a virgin *per se*, but depicts a young woman, a mature woman who is approaching marriage. The word (*almah*) does not convey the meaning of unspotted virginity as does the Hebrew word, *bethulah*, which also carries with it the notion of a young woman who still lives with her parents as is the situation with Mary.

The reference to Emmanuel is also not a reference to Christ but rather, a John the Baptist figure. This Emmanuel will be a precursor for Christ. His name will be Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, who will succeed his father and begin to restore Judah with religious reform.

Unfortunately, it would be too late for Judah to realize any type of reform. Ahaz failed to recognize the fact that Syria was the real enemy; thus, while Ahaz spent time courting the king of Syria, Syria betrayed Ahaz and eventually left Judah a ruined mess.

The real hope not only for Judah but for all the nations of the world would be the coming of the *Second David*, the *Branch*. He will be the Ideal King because he will be *Shepherd (Kalos)*; the *Ideal Shepherd* about whom Isaiah wrote in Chapter 11.

The Messiah when he comes will not need weapons or armies because his sword will be his words and his armor will consist of justice given to all equally. The Messiah of God will be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies as the *Lord of Lords*, the *King of Kings* and the *Prince of Peace*, once and for all times. **JNM**





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

New Year's Resolutions 2023

It is the time of the year to begin thinking about some New Year's resolutions. With the start of each new year, most of us begin to think of ways to improve ourselves and thus, to begin to set goals for which to strive. Sadly, most of these well-intentioned resolutions are quickly forgotten. In order to make positive and impactful changes in your life when setting resolutions, be sure to keep them realistic.



Personal Goals

Reflect on those aspects of your life that would benefit from some kind of change, and then decide how much *meaning* this alteration might make in your life. One of the most popular resolutions each year is to lose weight; yet, this too, is often times very hard to commit to. Why? Too often, people want a quick-fix to losing weight; consequently, they adopt one of the several *fad diets* such as *Keto* or *South Beach* that seemly do help people lose weight, initially, but often fail long term because old habits are hard to break.



Losing weight is not about following a diet; Rather, it is about making lifestyle changes. To successfully lose weight, it takes time, effort and in additional, both emotional and spiritual drive.

The Plan

Making a *vague* plan to “lose weight” or “exercise more” are goals that lack substance; thus, such vague plans are easily unattainable. A better plan is to set a specific goal, which includes the following:

- Exercise 30 minutes, 4 times per week or to lose 10 pounds in one month.

Having a plan and a clear goal can help in the visualizing of the targeted progress. Change can be difficult; thus, it is important to stick to a program that is both realistic and challenging. However, this takes effort.



Maintaining the mindset that a positive change is part of the goal requires a commitment until that change becomes part of your lifestyle. Individuals who can maintain or engage in efforts to change behavior and do it for 6 to 8 weeks are most likely able to support that effort long term.

Realistic Resolutions

Some suggestions for attainable and healthy New Year's resolutions worthy of consideration include the following:

- ♦**Eat whole foods**, including vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grains and fish.

The above foods contain a plethora of nutrients that the body needs to function at an optimal level. The data has proven that eating whole foods decreases the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

- ♦**Improve sleep** habits. In other words, get more quality sleep.

Sleep is essential to maintain good health. Poor quality sleep can increase the risk for weight gain, heart disease and depression. It is important to decrease screen time before bed, limit caffeine and alcohol, and get into bed at the same time each night. The body needs quality rest and sleep. Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep most days of the week.

- ♦**Cook more meals at home**. Research shows people who cook more at home have better quality and less body fat than people who eat more meals on the go.

Eating out in restaurants, the food tends to be higher in sodium and fat, which increases the risk for high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes.

♦**Spend more time out-of-doors.** Outdoor activities can improve mental health by reducing stress, elevating mood and lowering blood pressure.

Making a New Year's resolution to spend more time in the fresh air every day is a sustainable and healthy goal that can be achievable for everyone. Take daily short walks, whether it be around the block or to the mailbox. Reflect on the beauty of the sun and incorporate nature into your daily routine.

♦**Limit screen time.** Turn off cell phones and computers.

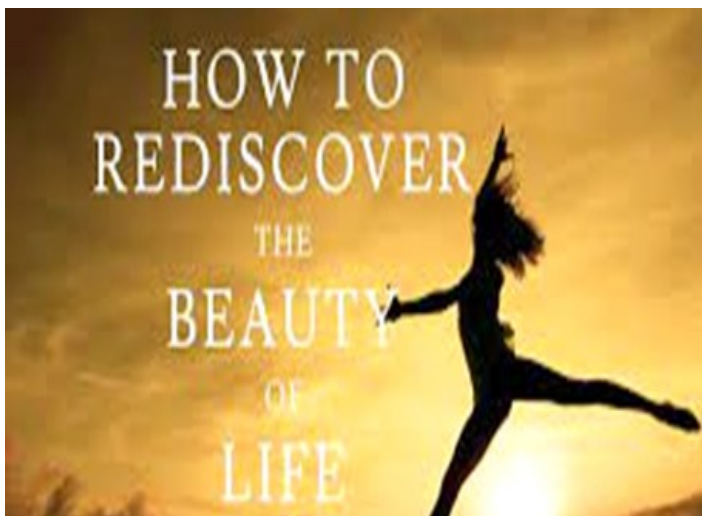
Spending too much time on electric devices in particular, social media has been associated with anxiety, depression and loneliness. Set a resolution to reduce the amount of time watching TV, scrolling through social media or surfing the internet.

♦**Try meditation.** Meditating can improve mental health and wellbeing. It has been proven to reduce stress and anxiety.

It is easy to find books, podcasts or apps that teach one how to mediate. Meditation can also improve sleep patterns if practiced on a regular basis.

♦**Be more present.** Research has shown that being more present can and does improve life satisfaction by decreasing negative thoughts, which can improve psychological health.

Implementing a New Year's resolution to be more present may also increase happiness in everyday life. Spending *less* time on the phone, texting, or on social media allows more time to listen intently to others. Making human connections is important to keep the spirit vibrant and necessary for emotional wellbeing.



Rediscover the beauty that you possess both on the outside and inside. Believe in yourself! Have no regrets! The past is the past, learn from it! Live your life as you want to, not as what others expect of you. Be true to yourself!

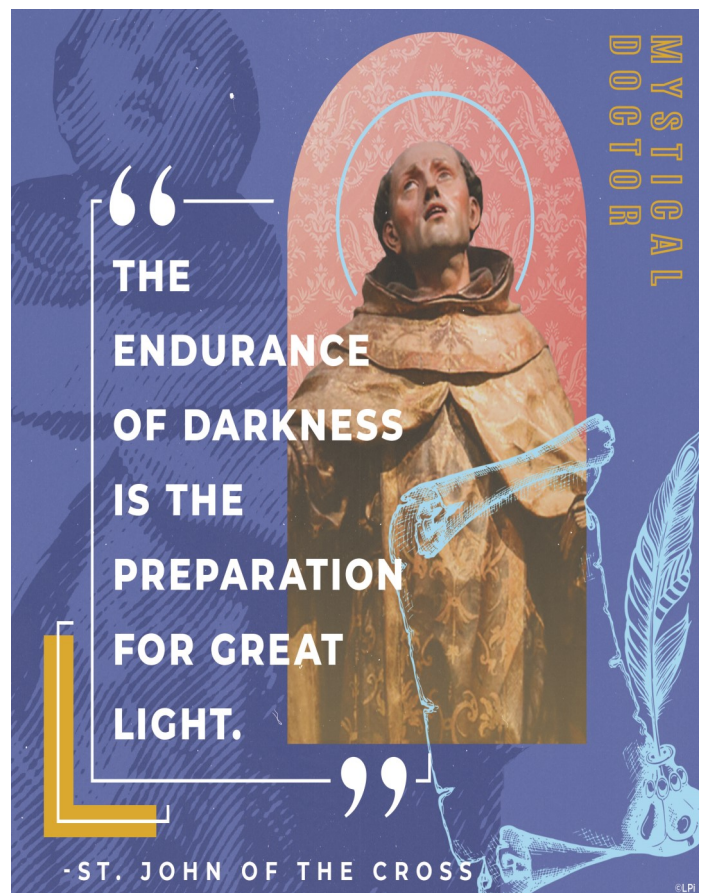
Optimum Resolution

The best New Year's resolution for 2023 should be to create and maintain good health for the body, mind and soul; finding true meaning and purpose for life should be rooted in fostering authentic relationships that fill the heart with joy and lasting peace. Joy that leads to the peace of mind, body and spirit is what will sustain your life and thus, provide meaning, long after the holiday season is gone.



Find time to pray and be grateful; *Jesus is the reason for the season.* **KP**

Parish nurse can be contacted via email kimp51@comcast.net or mobile 203-980-0931.



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.



VISIT THE HOLY LAND WITH FR. MURASSO



VIST THE HOLY LAND AND WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS

Visiting: Caesarea, Haifa, Tiberias, Mount of Beatitudes Golan Heights, Samaria & Jacob's Well, Sea of Galilee, Cana, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem.

The Holy Land, Jesus's land is a unique and beautiful land. It is rich in history as the faithful follow in the actual footsteps of Jesus. The scriptures refer to many of the sites that are visited on this incredible journey.

You will neither read nor listen to the scriptures in the same way upon your return. You will come away renewed in your faith as you will embrace God's Word in a way that you never did before.

Is Jesus calling you to walk in his footsteps?

THIS 10-DAY PILGRIMAGE IS BEING PLANNED FOR THE END OF MAY, BEGINNING OF JUNE, 2023. DETAILS WILL FOLLOW.

Walk in the footsteps of Jesus, his mother Mary, the disciples, Martha and Mary, and John the Baptist.

♦ See where Mary received the angel Gabriel's message that she would become the Mother of God.

♦ Visit the site where the Wedding at Cana took place and see the actual jugs in which Jesus changed the water into wine.

♦ Pray as Jesus did at the Mount of Olives.

♦ Visit the room where Jesus ate the Last Supper with his disciples.

♦ Walk the *Via Dolorosa*, i.e., the way of the cross and end your journey as Jesus did at Calvary.

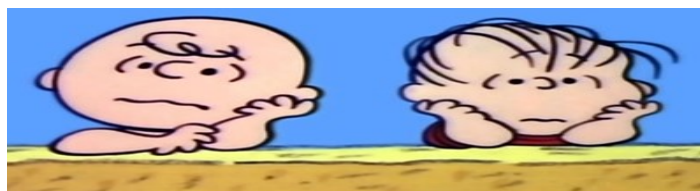
ABC'S OF CHRISTMAS



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 Christmas (anonymous).



THANK YOU, to the Porto Funeral Home & the DeLucia Family for their generous donation of poinsettias that were donated to St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish at Our Lady of Pompeii & St. Vincent de Paul, which were locally grown by the Vaiuso family at the Vaiuso Nursery in Branford, CT.



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.



Inclement Weather

As we approach the winter months ahead, we know how quickly our New England weather can change. The cancellation of morning Mass will be on Channel 8 news. Look to the bottom of your screen under "closings" and look for *St. Pio of Pietrelcina*.

FR. MURASSO'S MESSAGE BOARD



MANY THANKS to Marie Celso and the members of the parish choir for their presentation of a beautiful *Lessons & Carols*. **MANY THANKS**, also, to those who read the *Lessons* and for those parishioners who were in attendance. Another truly memorial and moving performance as we usher in the Christmas Season. Thank you! *JNM*



Knights of Columbus Rodrigo Council 44 of St. Pio Pietrelcina Parish (St. Bernadette Church Campus) is now selling tickets for our 300 club

Dear Rodrigo Council 44 Members, St. Pio Pietrelcina, and Friends,

Knights of Columbus Rodrigo Council 44 is offering an opportunity to join our annual 300 Club. The Club will run from January 2023 through December 2023.

Four winning numbers will be drawn each month for twelve (12) months.

EACH ENTRY HAS
49
CHANCES TO WIN

FIRST NUMBER wins \$150.00
SECOND NUMBER wins \$100.00
THIRD NUMBER wins \$75.00
FOURTH NUMBER wins \$50.00

One Grand Prize of \$1,000.00 will be drawn in December of 2023.

Numbers will be drawn the second Saturday of each month at our Council meeting. All winners will be notified by phone or e-mail. Names will also be placed in Church Parish bulletin.

All WINNING NUMBERS will be returned for the following month's drawing.

Tickets for Membership is limited to 300.
YOU MUST BE IN IT TO WIN IT!
The cost for memberships is \$50.00

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS RODRIGO COUNCIL 44 PROCEEDS

FROM THIS PROGRAM WILL BENEFIT OUR COUNCIL'S CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO
ST. PIO OF PIETRELCA PARISH COMMUNITY, OUR COMMUNITY IN GENERAL AND THOSE IN NEED.



Should you wish to reserve a specific number please select a number from 1-300
Please indicate you preferred numbers. First, Second or Third Choice.
Numbers will be assigned on a first come first served basis.
If numbers are not available the next available number will be assigned.
Payment must be made at time of number selection. Only 1 entry per form

1st Choice: _____ 2nd Choice: _____ 3rd Choice: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Cash: _____ Check: _____

Call Mike Fimiani 203.627.9216

Deadline to enter
will be Jan. 8th
THESE MAKE
GREAT GIFTS.

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF ST. PIO OF PIETRELCA

Our Lady of Pompeii, St. Vincent de Paul & St. Bernadette Church

St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish is proud to partner with
Ferraro's Market for our **Ferraro's Gift Card
Fundraiser Program**

Ferraro Gift Cards may be purchased or ordered in the
following denominations:

\$25.00
\$50.00
\$100.00

Other denominations may be purchased by order only.

Help our parish earn 10% commission on every gift card
purchased..

Are you or someone you know shopping FERRARO'S North
Haven for your Thanksgiving & Christmas meal ingredients, why
not use a Ferraro gift card purchased from our parish and help us
earn a commission for our parish needs.

For Further Info Contact Mike Fimiani at 203.627.9216

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Card Amount:

\$25.00 - Number of Cards: _____

\$50.00 - Number of Cards: _____

\$100.00 - Number of Cards: _____

Other Amount: _____

Number of Cards: _____

Total Purchase: _____



Pray the *Divine Mercy* with Us
Every Saturday at 11:00am
Our Lady of Pompeii Chapel
For the Sake of His Sorrowful Passion
Have Mercy on us and on the whole world
Now is the Time for Mercy



Every Thursday 6:00 PM
Our Lady of Pompeii Chapel
Evenings 8:00 PM on ZOOM
Contact: Sally Mucka @ 203-415-2710

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



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 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. Charman

4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick

11:00pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick



Christmas Day

8:00am OLOP: Fr. Murasso

9:00am SB: Fr. Borino

10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly

11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

December 31, 2022 & January 1, 2023

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Murasso

4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick

8:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly

9:00am SB: Fr. Murasso

10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly

11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

January 7 & 8, 2023

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Patrick

4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Murasso

8:00am OLOP: Murasso

9:00am SB: Fr. Patrick

10:00am OLOP: Fr. Kelly

11:15am SVDP: Fr. Patrick

January 14 & 15, 2022

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Murasso

4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick

8:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick

9:00am SB: Fr. Kelly

10:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick

11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso