

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 3, 2023



THIS WEEKEND'S READINGS

First: Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7:17

Second: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37

FOCUS: *We must be active in our hope for Christ's return.*

Hope is a theological virtue: "We desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit" (CCC 1817). Hope is an active state of being, not passive. During this Advent season, we must be fully alive and fully engaged. We must be committed in our pursuit of the Lord. We must be people of hope!

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Isaiah laments that the people have wandered from the ways of the Lord and pleads that God rend the heavens and come down. Paul gives thanks for the gifts Christ has bestowed, while the Corinthians wait

for the revelation of Jesus. In the Gospel, Jesus exhorts his disciples to be watchful like servants waiting for the return of the lord of the house.



MASS INTENTIONS

5 p.m.: The Faleni Family, Francis Stein and Patrick O'Neil

10 a.m.: John Ribas, Asumpta Clara Vulaj, Vito DiGirolamo and Clare Costello

ADVENT EVENTS

- **December 3:** Pageant role selection followed by rehearsal after Mass
- **December 4:** Men's Faith Sharing at 6:45 p.m. on Zoom
- **December 10:** Angel gifts due; Pageant, Youth Choir rehearsals
- **December 15:** Advent Service, 7 p.m.
- **December 17:** Assemble Christmas baskets; Pageant, Youth Choir rehearsals
- **December 18:** Reconciliation Monday, OLMC; Distribute holiday baskets
- **December 21:** Decorate the church, 11 a.m.
- **December 23:** Confession 3:30-4:30 p.m., here
- **December 24:** Sunday Mass at 10 a.m. Christmas Eve Mass with Pageant at 5 p.m. (There will be no 8 p.m. Mass this year.)
- **December 25:** Christmas Day Mass at 10 a.m.

RECONCILIATION MONDAY

Reconciliation Monday is **December 18**. There will be priests available at **Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church** in Middletown from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. There will be **NO** confessions heard that day at St. Paul's.

However, confessions will be heard here at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 23.

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

This Friday, **December 8**, is the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** and a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. at St. Paul's. There will be no vigil Mass.

MEN'S ADVENT FAITH SHARING

The gospel story about the two disciples who meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus reveals to us not only something about who we are, but how Jesus opens our eyes to see him for who he is and about how we can come to know him.

Join us this Advent online beginning this **Monday, December 4**, from 6:45-8 p.m. with other men of the parish to journey together and encounter Christ through prayer, Scripture and reflection.

To register, please email Deacon Carl at carlloc@yahoo.com or call the office at 845-361-3107.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Regular Sunday Collection

November 19-26: \$ 4,694.05

Envelopes: \$ 1,980.00 – Online: \$ 2,714.05

THANK YOU!

LAST WEEK'S MASS ATTENDANCE

Saturday – 66

Sunday – 163

PAGEANT PRACTICE ...

Traditions add warmth to Christmas celebrations, evoking smiles and sweet memories.

A St. Paul's tradition is the annual **Christmas Eve Pageant**, preparation for which is already in the works. Role selection and the first practice will take place after the 10 a.m. Mass this Sunday,

December 3. There will be another practice on December 10 and a dress rehearsal on December 17, leading up to the actual pageant during the 5 o'clock Mass on Christmas Eve.

Remember, the greater the participation the grander the pageantry!



... AND THE CHOIR, TOO

The tradition continues with a call to those in Grades 3-12 to lend their voices to the **Youth Choir** on Christmas Eve. Rehearsals take place in the church after Mass next **Sunday, December 10**, and then again on December 17, with a possible rehearsal on Thursday evening, December 21.

JUMP AHEAD TO JANUARY

Listen – and hear God speak

Do you desire a closer relationship with God? Would you like to experience more deeply God's unconditional love?

A **Faith Sharing Group** is coming together for just that purpose, based on the book, "Love: A Guide for Prayer" by Bergan and Schwan, which is available on Amazon for \$14.99. The sessions will run from 9-10:30 a.m. for six consecutive Saturdays, beginning **January 6**.

The book sets forth daily scriptural passages with commentary, followed by a suggested prayer method. Participants will pray at home and then come together weekly to share – NOT discuss – using guidelines for listening. It is through listening that one becomes open to God as God continues to reveal God's self in the church community represented in the small group. The underlying message is God's unfailing love for us.

Enrollment is limited. For further information, contact Pat Davies, who will be leading the group, at patdavies2@gmail.com or call the office at 845-361-3107 to register.

Come Uno, come all to Game Night!

Roll the dice. Move ahead enough calendar spaces to land on Friday, **January 12**. Circle the date.

Here's the deal: Rebecca Suchy has proposed, and offered to run, a fun monthly **Game Night** for anyone drawn to some friendly competition. Bring yourself, a favorite game and a snack – and be prepared for the domino effect in the form of a chain reaction of laughter and levity from 7-9 p.m.

Are you game?

IN THE HOLIDAY LOOP

More than 90 people were greeted with programs and smiles last Monday from five Youth Ministry members as they entered the church to attend Pine Bush Community Band's concert.

The audience was treated to an hour of musical selections that not only incorporated some of the sounds of the season, but showcased sections of the band and several soloists. What talent!

Lesser-known pieces such as "We Are Lights" and "The Old Grumbly Bear" were enjoyed as much as the more familiar "Jingle Bells" and "Sleigh Ride" – as illustrated by bobbing heads and tapping feet.



Thanks to your generosity, a little more than \$600 was raised and sent to the American Heart Association from the sale of Christmas wreaths. Decorating does a heart good!



The **Warwick Valley Chorale** will perform at 7 p.m. next Friday, **December 8**, at Goshen Christian Reformed Church, Goshen, and at 3 p.m. Sunday, **December 10**, at St. Stephen's Church in Warwick. The first half of the program will be Rutter's Magnificat, which was composed in 1991. The second half will feature familiar and festive holiday songs. Visit www.warwickvalleychorale.org for more info.



Parishioners are invited to remember deceased loved ones with a donation toward the **Christmas flowers** and decorations. Please submit the names by **December 15**. There are envelopes in the church vestibules, and the usual donation is \$10 per name.



Anne Savastano could use a hand **decorating the church**. If you have some spare time, plan to meet her at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, **December 21**. If you know you're available, email her at anya1321@gmail.com. If you're not certain of your schedule yet, feel free to just show up.



We could use the following items for our **Christmas Baskets**: Cocoa, baked beans, pasta and sauce, instant mashed potatoes, canned fruit, apple juice and cookies. Thank you.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

