

# PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

FEBRUARY 2, 2025



## THIS WEEKEND'S READINGS

**First Reading:** Malachi 3:1 – 4

**Second Reading:** Hebrews 2:14 – 18

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 2:22 – 40

**Focus:** *Let us persevere and trust in God.*

We can imagine that Simeon and Anna might have been tempted to give up hope that the Lord would fulfill his promise. But they persevered and continued to trust in God – continued to listen to the promptings of the Spirit – until the day finally came when Mary and Joseph brought the child Jesus, and they recognized him as the Christ. Let us follow their example and trust in God on our own faith journey.

### **Liturgy of the Word:**

Malachi prophesies about the coming of the Lord's messenger and his mission to purify the Lord's people. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews explains that



Jesus shared in our humanity in order to free us from the power of death and intercede for us as high priest before God. In the Gospel, Mary and Joseph bring the child Jesus to present him to the Lord in obedience to Mosaic Law.

## MASS INTENTIONS

**5 p.m.:** Annemarie Williard, Maria Gaspar and Richard Mercado

**10 a.m.:** Jessica Lancellotti, Deacon John and Nicolette Irwin

## FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS

Imagine that! Yes, our God desires to communicate with us always.

So we say, "Yes" ... but how? Come and see!

Participate in this presentation by Pat Davies and be introduced to the ancient prayer method called Lectio Divina - or more simply "The 4 Rs" – after the 10 a.m. Mass on **Sunday, February 23.**

For planning purposes, please sign up on the website, by calling the office or on the sheets in the vestibules.

*"Follow not the well-worn path.  
Go instead where there is no path  
and blaze a trail."*

*- August Tolton, a/k/a "Good Fr. Gus"  
First Black Catholic Priest*

## MARIA GASPAR'S FUNERAL

Longtime parishioner Maria Gaspar passed away last month in Maryland. She is being brought home to St. Paul's for a funeral Mass at **11 a.m. this Saturday, February 8.**

Along with Maria, an avid cook who was passionate about the family meals she loved to prepare, you might also recall her daughter, Arlette, who sang in the choir at 11 on Sunday mornings or daughter-in-law Janet, a catechist and then a Saturday evening lector.

There will also be a wake from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, February 7, at William M. Gagan Funeral Home in Pine Bush.

## ADULT ALTAR SERVERS?

Parishioner Pat Davies has noticed the decline in altar servers. She is also familiar with a couple of churches who have adults serving in that capacity.

She wondered: Could adults serve at St. Paul's when youth are not available? She then brought this suggestion before the Parish Council and agreed to coordinate the ministry.

She was given the green light to proceed.

Interested? Call Pat at 704-726-1082 or email [patdavies2@gmail.com](mailto:patdavies2@gmail.com).

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Regular Sunday Collection

**January 20-26: \$ 4,960.11**

Envelopes: \$ 1,981.00 – Online: \$ 2,979.11

## LAST WEEK'S MASS ATTENDANCE

5 p.m. – 71

10 a.m. – 193



## **“EVERY SINGLE PERSON WHO IS HELPED MATTERS”**

Last Friday evening, the nine youth participants were somber as they tried to wrap their heads around these sobering statistics: In November of 2024, there were an estimated 350,000 people who were homeless, 44,541 of whom were children. Thousands of kids their own age don't know where their next meal is coming from or where they will sleep that night.

“New York has the second highest homelessness rate in the country, second to California,” says Chris.

But rather than being overwhelmed and feeling hopeless because of statistics, Chris Worthington and Deb Harrison, our youth ministers, encouraged the group, which also included another five adults, to be educated by the numbers and then take action.

“Think about how cold it was that week, zero degrees and lower,” says Deb. “A hat and gloves made a huge difference ... Every single person who is helped matters.”

And because of the generosity that defines St. Paul's, not only were **120 bags assembled** but there were four huge boxes of extra socks and other items that will be divided between the Middletown Warming Station (and brought along with the bags) and Fearless (formerly known as Safe Homes).

No wonder this endeavor is so meaningful to them!



## **AARP'S TAX-AIDE**

Free tax-preparation assistance is available through the **AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide** program. For an appointment, call 2-1-1 (the United Way's Help Line) between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. Be prepared to spend some time on hold.

After making an appointment, the next step is to obtain a pre-appointment packet. A parishioner who volunteers with the program has made some available through the church office to save you a trip into Middletown. Just call first.

The forms in the packet need to be completed prior to the appointment, and filers need to come to the appointment with all required tax documents in a printed (not digital) format. Filers are then required to be present while the return is being prepared.

## **FOOD PANTRY UPDATE**

This Sunday, the first of the month, is known as **Food Pantry Sunday**, a way to heighten awareness about all those facing food insecurity in our community.

But regardless of the day or week, your contributions of unexpired and nonperishable pantry staples are always welcome. Even though we partner with the Regional Food Bank and your cash donations are used to purchase items (on sale!) d needed, it seems that no sooner are the shelves filled than they're empty again.

Last month, about 120 people from 37 families were served, and we are on track to do the same or more in February.

Right now, instant oatmeal, soup, mac & cheese, pasta and pasta sauce are particularly low. Thank you.

