



ST. MARY OUR MOTHER CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Our Mother is a Catholic community committed to the spiritual growth of all people as we share our faith and serve our community.



816 West Broad Street, Horseheads, New York
(607) 739-3817

December 13, 2020

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 13, 2020

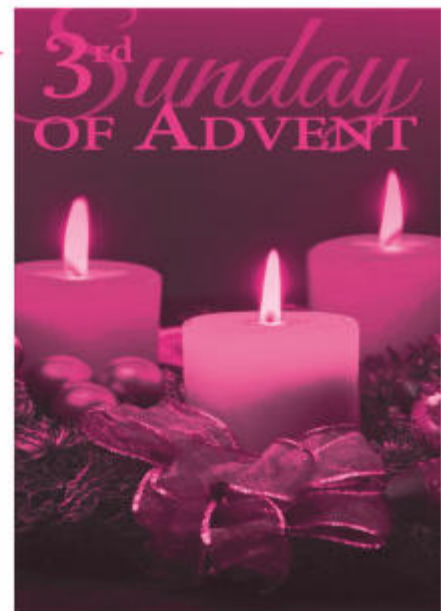
- SUN 12/13** Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 51-54 [Is 61:10b]/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28
- MON 12/14** Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9 [4]/Mt 21:23-27
- TUE 12/15** Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23 [7a]/Mt 21:28-32
- WED 12/16** Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [Is 45:8]/Lk 7:18b-23
- THR 12/17** Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:1-17
- FRI 12/18** Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25
- SAT 12/19** Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 [cf. 8]/Lk 1:5-25
- SUN 12/20** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 [2a]/Rom 16:25-27/Lk 1:26-38

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 13, 2020

- Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Advent
- Monday:** St. John the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Next Sunday:** 4th Sunday of Advent

LIVE THE LITURGY Inspiration for the week

What gives you joy? Joy is discovered when we connect with something or someone very deeply and experience a dimension of ourselves that material or secular possessions cannot bring. Joy is stumbled upon when we see our newly born child for the first time, get caught up in the vastness of a mountain landscape, and are led out into infinity gazing at an ocean's horizon, or being lovingly present with someone when they are vulnerable and in need. Joy is a profound experience that in its uniqueness grounds us in ultimate truth. Did you know that all authentic, profound, and memorable moments of joy mirror the eternal joy we desire from God? We can have glimpses of this eternal Divine joy as we embark upon our earthly journey, mirrored in our human connections with joy, but experienced directly during moments of deep prayer. God is the joy of my soul. Ponder those intense words! You will know moments of true and real joy by paying attention to your response to the experience. You will find yourself rejoicing and saying thank you.



*The desire
for God
is written
in the
human
heart.*

IN THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Karin Bola
Carolyn Conwell

Rev. Michael Conboy

MEMORIALS**Eucharistic Hosts:**

In memory of Henry & Josephine Ryan - Mary & Jim Carr & family

SCRIPTURE READINGS

SUNDAY - December 20, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

IN OUR PARISH**Christmas Mass Schedule**

Presuming that our area and county will not be experiencing a major increase in Covid-19 infection rates which would mandate another suspension of Masses with reduced attendees, the following will be the schedule for Masses for Christmas:

CHRISTMAS EVE

3:00 p.m. - Christmas Mass

5:00 p.m. - Christmas Mass

11:00 p.m. - Christmas Mass during the Night

CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 a.m. - Christmas Mass

Following are the procedures and protocols for attending Mass for Christmas:

Reservations are required and can be made by calling the parish office at 607-739-3817, **beginning Monday, December 14th through Tuesday, December 21st**; each Mass will be limited to 150 people; your reservation will be held until Mass begins, but please plan on arriving early; those who come to Mass without a reservation will be asked to wait to see if the church has filled by the time Mass begins.

Social Ministry Christmas Baskets

Due to the covid-19 pandemic, there are many issues that the Social Ministry Committee needed to address with regard to our Christmas Basket event. We work with the Horseheads Food Pantry to meet with families and St. Mary Our Mother School to sort, pack and distribute the food and gifts. For various reasons neither of these locations were viable options this year. Also, the health and safety of our members and the many wonderful volunteers are upmost in our minds. What we have knowledge of at this time and not knowing what is ahead of us, we feel our customary plan for this event is not possible. Please consider making a donation to a charitable organization in our area to help them in their efforts this holiday season.

Oplatki

Oplatki (Christmas waters) are available at the parish office. Please stop by at your convenience for your Christmas tradition!

Advent/Christmas Booklets

As we are all aware, the parish is unable to have printed materials available in the church during these months of a pandemic.

"Today's Missal" and the "Little Blue Book" for Advent and Christmas 2020 have arrived at the parish office along with the 2021 parish calendar.

If you would like to have these items, please call the office at 739-3817 or stop by...remembering that masks are required.

Parish Calendars

The parish of St. Mary Our Mother is sincerely grateful to the Lynch Funeral Home for their donation of our 2021 parish calendars. THANK YOU! (At this time, our parish calendars are available at the parish office.)

Christmas on Our Website

Many of you many feel hesitant about coming to Christmas Mass during the pandemic. As at least one of our Christmas Masses will be recorded. We invite you to gather and celebrate this Christmas through our website.

Sacrament of Penance

The Sacrament of Penance (individual Confessions) will be offered this Saturday, December 19th beginning at 11:00 a.m. in the church building, not in the confessionals due to air circulation problems. While waiting, please observe safe distancing guidelines, 6 feet apart, and wear a mask. You are also asked to maintain a spirit of prayerful silence during this time.

Hands of Christ Award 2021

The **Hands of Christ** is a recognition program to assist parishes in affirming their high school seniors who have been the "Hands of Christ" in their church, home, school, and greater community. You are invited to nominate a high school senior of the class of 2021 for the Hands of Christ recognition.

A nominated high school senior must meet the following criteria:

Consistently demonstrates a Christian attitude by word and example;

is actively involved in their parish as well as their school community;

is a positive role model for peers and younger children;

is a participating member of St. Mary Our Mother parish.

To nominate a senior, please stop at the parish office for a registration form. Complete the registration form including the nominee's name, address, telephone number, and high school. These registration forms will be reviewed by Father Linsler for approval as pastor and then the nominee will be contacted for further information. The nominations are due in the parish office by December 18, 2020.

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Today we arrive at the **Third Sunday of Advent**, oftentimes referred to as Gaudete Sunday or "**Rejoice Sunday.**" Arriving at this mid-point of the Advent season serves as a reminder of the two-fold nature of Advent as a season of the already experienced and the yet to be experience of God among us.

Late in the afternoon on Thursday, December 3rd, we received official notification from the Diocese of Rochester, allowing those parishes who were within the "**orange zone**" for the covid-19 virus, permission to re-open their doors for Masses with maximum seating capacity limitations of 33% of maximum capacity. The fact that we received this information so late in the week, we posted this news on our parish website on Friday, and were able to open for in person Masses last weekend with very few in attendance. It is our hope that local infection rates will continue to decline so that we won't have to suspend Sunday Masses again. **Once again, we remind you that the obligation to attend Sunday and all holy day Masses has been suspended until further notice.** Each of us must take the necessary precautions to remain safe. If you have been exposed to the coronavirus, if you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the virus or if you are ill, please stay home. Remember you can view Sunday and holy day Masses, including Christmas Mass, through our parish website.

On to another topic. Sacred scripture teaches us that the prophet Isaiah was filled with God's spirit when he proclaimed in today's first reading for the Third Sunday of Advent, that the Lord had sent him "...to bring glad tidings to the poor..." (**Isaiah 61:1**) It is that same spirit that keeps us mindful of the poor and suffering among us, particularly during the time of Advent, with many of our Advent/Christmas outreach programs curtailed or even eliminated due to the pandemic, as was the case of our parish's Social Ministry Christmas Basket program this year.

This month's International Stewardship Council offers some suggestions of projects we can do to bring glad tidings to the poor in our community. Where you can safely volunteer individually during this time of pandemic, as a family or as part of a group, the possibilities for serving the poor do exist. Consider one or more of the seven suggestions:

1. *Pray for the poor, and ask God to transform your own attitudes about those in need, realizing that all of us are poor in some way before God's grace.*
2. *Ask members of your family and parish to pray for the poor, opening their hearts to the less fortunate.*
3. *Collect food items for a food pantry in the community.*
4. *When it can be safely accomplished, volunteer to assist a pantry for a day of sorting, bagging, and distributing.*

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

Monday, December 14 - St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor

6:45 AM Orpha Flick - the Matterazzo's

Tuesday, December 15 - Advent Weekday

6:45 AM Catherine Kole - the Corcoran's

Wednesday, December 16 - Advent Weekday

6:45 AM Jenny Joy - husband, Roger

Thursday, December 17 - Late Advent Weekday

6:45 AM Angeline Rossi Kerwan - Carnegie family

Friday, December 18 - Late Advent Weekday

6:45 AM No Mass

Saturday, December 19 - Late Advent Weekday

5:00 PM Eddie Jadoski - his family

Sunday, December 20 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 AM Teri Guardi - her family

10:30 AM Phillip Amisano - Mom & Dad

5. *Prayerfully consider your participation, if only virtually, in the Homeless Persons' Memorial Day events on December 20, sponsored by the National Health Care for the Homeless Council.*
6. *Make a generous financial gift to an organization that serves the poor.*
7. *Think about ways to use your professional skills in a volunteer capacity at your chosen anti-hunger organization. There are many programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance screening and application centers, food banks, and other anti-hunger organizations, that can use your help to make sure that all eligible people have access to nutritional assistance and anti-hunger programs.*

These are just a few examples of the ways you can reach out to the less fortunate among us, if you haven't already!

Have a great Advent week. Continue to take care of yourself and each other.

Fr. L.

IN OUR PARISH CONTINUED...

Tax Advantaged Donation Strategies

In addition to donating with cash or checks, there are other tax beneficial ways that you can donate to St. Mary Our Mother:

If you are over age 72 and you have an IRA retirement account, you may be eligible for a tax benefit called a **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)**. This provision in the tax law allows you to make a distribution from your IRA directly to St. Mary Our Mother. Using the QCD option, you can transfer up to \$100,000 per year to charity and exclude the entire distribution from your gross income for tax purposes. This is a nice tax benefit that allows you to reduce your taxable income for charitable giving, regardless of whether you are otherwise eligible to deduct charitable contributions on your tax return. To use the QCD election, you will need to sign a form provided by your IRA account custodian. On the form you will elect to make the payment payable directly to "St. Mary Our Mother" and you will enter the address as: 816 West Broad Street, Horseheads, NY 14845.

If you have appreciated securities, you may be able to save money on capital gains taxes by donating shares to St. Mary Our Mother. You can transfer stocks, bonds, mutual funds or exchange traded funds (ETF) positions that have appreciated in value directly to our investment account. We can sell the positions for you and use the proceeds. We do not owe capital gains tax on the sale, since we are a qualified non-profit organization. In addition to avoiding capital gains tax on selling the position, you may also be able to deduct the value of the security that you donate, as a charitable contribution. If you hold the appreciated security in a brokerage account, your custodian can provide you with the forms to sign to make the transfer.

If you have any questions, or need any clarification, please let us know. We will do everything we can to accommodate and make the donation as easy as possible. Thank you for your gifts and for all your contributions to St. Mary Our Mother!

Catholic Ministries Appeal

The Catholic Ministries Appeal provides funding for important programs, services, and ministries that strengthen our entire Church. In order to reach our parish goal of \$112,209.00, we need the support of all. In the spirit of generosity, please prayerfully consider your gift to this year's Catholic Ministries Appeal. We would like to thank the 138 parishioners from St. Mary Our Mother who have responded to this drive. Their pledges and contributions of \$40,801.00 have enabled us to achieve 36.36% of our goal. If it is easier, you can make your gift by going to www.dor.org. Additional pledge forms are available in the vestibule, and can be returned in the collection or mailed directly to the diocese.

REGIONAL EVENTS

Stand For Life

Stand up for Life! Plan now to "STAND FOR LIFE" in an hour of prayer and witness on January 24th from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., in downtown Elmira at church and Water Street. Bring pro-life signs and banners or we will have ones you can use. Don't miss a chance to participate in democracy in action. Call Steve at 739-9282 for information.



MINISTERIAL STAFF

- Rev. Christopher E. Linsler**, Pastor
- Rev. Richard F. Kajiru**, In Residence
- Mrs. Barbara Matterazzo**, Coordinator of Faith Formation
- Mrs. Cathy Peckham**, Director of Music
- Mrs. Jean Yorio**, School Principal
- Mr. Richard O'Lenick**, Business Manager
- Mrs. Elizabeth Berliner**, RCIA Coordinator
- Mrs. Joyce Pirozzolo**, Parish Secretary
- Mrs. Jeanne Carney**, Facilities Coordinator
- Mrs. Maribeth Leipold**, Faith Formation Secretary
- Mrs. Amy Barr**, Faith Formation Associate
- Mrs. Sue Wood**, Bulletin Editor
- Mr. Doug Johnson**, Cemetery Manager
- Mrs. Kim Roemmelt**, School Secretary
- Ms. Jenna Crandall**, Maintenance
- Mr. Roger Williams**, Maintenance

PASTORAL COUNCIL

- Mr. Vincent Moschetti**, Chairperson
- Mrs. Richelle Riina**, Recording Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Parish Office**
- 816 West Broad Street..... (607)-739-3817
- Fax..... (607)-739-5628
- E-mail..... smomc@stny.rr.com
- Parish Web Site..... www.StMaryOurMother.com
- St. Mary Our Mother School**
- 811 Westlake Street..... (607)-739-9157
- E-mail..... smoms@dor.org
- School Web Site..... www.stmaryourmother.school
- Religious Education Office**
- 816 West Broad Street..... (607)-739-8214
- E-mail..... smomfaithformation@gmail.com

3rd Sunday of Advent

Did you ever stop and realize that there is no earthly gain that can ever really satisfy us? Think of winning the Lotto. On this side of the winning ticket, it's all about the money, the new car, house, vacations, bank accounts, and infinite pleasures. The possibility of acquiring all of these earthly securities brings us back again and again to the purchase of a ticket. Then, one day we win! Our dreams are fulfilled, and happiness is on the horizon. Then one day, we wake up and realize that nothing has really changed, and I am not as satisfied as I thought I was or would be. I find myself living in my incompleteness and with my profound sorrow and grief. I did not find joy.

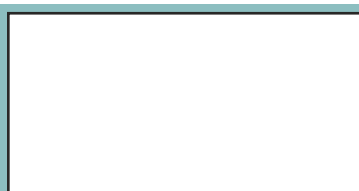
Glimpses of joy are possible but not by material means. They are brought to us through incredible experiences of connection that bring us face to face with real and authentic faith, hope, and love. And, they are glimpses and do not last. The moment we find ourselves looking back at them, they are gone, and we find ourselves remembering the moment in memory. To carry joy within us is to realize that it is not something I create, manufacture or even acquire. It is not able to be purchased. It is a gift. My need for joy mirrors my need for eternity, for a Creator who has a claim on the very essence of who I am and desires a home within me. As C. S. Lewis discovered, joy is a surprise that speaks to my very soul and is given as gift by the God who loves me.

The beauty of Advent is found in discovering the beauty of the gift of joy. God has visited his people for no other reason than to show them where and how to find joy! All of our human and earthly joy experiences are always only glimpses. They never satisfy us, sustain us or fulfill us. It is only God who is the joy of my soul. Real, Divine experiences of joy catch us off guard, make us stop and become aware, bring a feeling of awe and rightness and have an eternal otherness about them. Nothing created by humans can ever come close to this. We probably will not fully realize the truth of all of this until we actually meet God face to face in heaven one day. Then, in that sacred moment when our hearts leap for joy we will understand what we have been tirelessly searching for all along. Intense gratitude will most surely follow.

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