

MARY IMMACULATE PATRONESS OF THE UNITED STATES A patron is like a sponsor, someone who takes responsibility for another, who protects another. Catholics rely on our patron saints not only to inspire our lives by their example but also to pray for us and protect us in our life of grace. A patron looks out for us, sometimes in ways we do not always recognize. Mary Immaculate was officially declared the patroness of the United States in 1847. She speaks to us of God's initiative in her life and ours; she witnesses to the primacy of grace in her life and ours. She tells us, proud of our own initiatives, to do it God's way. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8th – our Mass schedule is Wednesday, December 7th at 5:15pm, Thursday, December 8th at 7:30, 9:00, 12:15 and 5:15pm.



THE HISTORY OF THE CANDY CANE A candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a candy that would be a witness, so he made the Christmas Candy Cane. He incorporated several symbols from the birth, ministry and death of Jesus Christ. He began with a stick of pure white, hard candy. White to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and hard to symbolize the Solid Rock, the foundation of the Church, and firmness of the promises of God. The candy maker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the precious name of Jesus who came to earth as our Savior. It could also represent the staff of the "Good Shepherd" with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray. Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candy maker stained it with red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Christ on the cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life. Unfortunately, the candy became known as a Candy Cane – a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time. But the meaning is still there for those who "have eyes to see and ears to hear." Every time you see a Candy Cane, remember the Wonder of Jesus and His Great Love that came down at Christmas, and that His Love remains the ultimate and dominant force in the universe today.

2006 CALENDARS a 13-month Catholic appointment calendar for your home is available in the lobby of Church today. Thanks to Mark Kloecker of the Francis V. Kloecker Funeral Home for his sponsorship of the calendars.

ADVENT PENANCE CELEBRATIONS Confession of sins is good for the soul. Prepare for Christ's coming in your life – your heart – your home this Advent Season. Experience the forgiveness of our God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, you will be glad you did. Advent is a time for new beginnings, so take time out of your busy schedule to attend one of the following Penance Celebrations:

*Sunday, December 18th - St. Jude
Monday, December 19th - Our Lady of Peace
Tuesday, December 20th - Blessed Sacrament
All celebrations will be held at 7pm*

PASTORAL COUNCIL will meet on Thursday, December 8th following the 5:15pm Mass at the priest residence.

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE Because it is difficult to forgive and easy to be angry, today's gospel encourages us to "repent and forgive." This Christmas give a gift that makes a difference; repent from anger that prevents forgiveness.

THANK YOU On behalf of the parish food pantry families we wish to thank all of our parishioners and friends for all the food staples and monetary donations made at Thanksgiving. We also send a BIG THANK YOU to our Pre-School, 4th graders and their teachers for their help, too.

SECOND COLLECTION next weekend is for the Retirement Fund for Religious. The name is a bit misleading – you probably know that religious men and women don't actually retire. Like you, they reach a certain age and their compensation ends – the compensation that was paid directly to the religious community in support of the whole rather than to individual religious. Religious communities are responsible for their financial health and retirement; but eighteen years ago, the U.S. bishops and religious leaders established an annual national appeal to help make up for the unfunded retirement liability in religious communities. In our society we believe that no one who has dedicated their life to the service of God and others should be left vulnerable as many of our religious are. With the money they earned, they re-invest in ministry rather than in their own retirement. They could not apply for Social Security until the early 1970's. Today, more than one hundred communities can cover less than twenty percent of their retirement costs. During the life of this appeal, religious communities have learned how to plan better for aging and how to cut the costs of assisted living and skilled care. They have sold their properties and consulted with experts in elder care, property renovations, and strategic planning. They have done all of this while maintaining the mission for which they were founded – whether it was teaching, nursing, pastoral care or another form of outreach to the uneducated, the poor, the frail, the imprisoned, the immigrant, the alienated. There can be no simple accounting of the contribution that religious women and men have made and continue to make in the lives of individuals and institutions. We can not pay them back. But we can contribute in some small measure to their well being as they age. Please give generously for the Religious Retirement Fund.

CALLING ALL FIRST GRADERS AND PARENTS An informational meeting will be held on Monday, December 5th at 7pm in the church for all children in first grade who are interested in being a part of the Christmas Eve story which is a part of the 5:15pm Christmas Eve Mass. Sign up sheets will be available for the children who would like to portray, Joseph, Mary, Three Kings, sheep, etc. and costumes will be discussed. The meeting should last approximately 45 minutes. If you are not able to attend the meeting and want to participate, please call Maggi at 454-0171.

MONTHLY HEALTH TIP Caught up in the hectic modern day pace of holiday celebrations? Take a moment to regroup. Focus on what is important to you and your family. Share the workload by breaking up big projects. Don't forget to eat healthy, get moderate exercise and adequate rest. Smile, remember it is Christ's birth we are preparing to celebrate.

REMINDER There is **NO** hospitality or blood pressure checks today due to Breakfast with Santa.

WORLD WAR II AND KOREA VETERANS State Representative Matthew Good is looking for information on World War II and Korea Veterans living in his district so he can honor them and their service to our country. If you know of someone, please contact his office at 868-5489. Mr. Good represents the 3rd legislative District which includes Millcreek Twp., Fairview Twp., Franklin Twp., McKean Borough and Twp., Waterford Borough and Twp.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MASSES Sign up sheets for all Christmas Masses and New Year Masses will be in the Sacristy after Mass this weekend. This includes Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors & Altar Servers.

GIVING TREE Please take a name off the tree, purchase a gift for the person and return it UNWRAPPED with the name tag attached. Gift recipients are from our Parish Food Bank and Emmaus Soup Kitchen. Our Confirmation class will be wrapping the gifts as part of their Advent service project. Besides the generous donations of gifts, we will be collecting wrapping paper, ribbon and tape for the project. The Blessed Sacrament Community has always been overwhelmingly generous with this project – let's continue this wonderful tradition of giving! All gifts are due to the Parish Office by Friday, December 16th.

The Second Sunday of Advent

OUR PARISH FAMILY

Please pray for all of the sick and shut-in of our Parish Family.

Baptized into the Christian Community
through the waters of Baptism

MADDOX RAYMOND BRZUZ

Son of David and Amy [Elkin] Brzuz

HILARY ANN SISSEM

Daughter of Howard and Amanda [Brown] Sisssem

JENNA GRACE HENDRICKSON

Daughter of Scott and Yvonne [Franz] Hendrickson

Mass of Christian Burial was given to
Florence Lariccia and Charles Christoph.

The prayers and sympathy of the Parish Family were extended to their
families. May they rest in peace.

31 CLUB VOCATIONS – MASS REMINDERS

Monday 12/5 Marianne Zimmerman, Kathleen Green
Tuesday 12/6 Mary Lou Peterson
Wednesday 12/7 Peggy Lavosky, Henry Zaremba, Bruna Mehall, Cynthia Barcio, Kirsten Beall
Thursday 12/8 Jack Hoffman
Friday 12/9 Jack Hoffman
Saturday 12/10 Mary Zbach, Patty Palermo
Sunday 12/11 Carrie Sciamanda

CAFETERIA VOLUNTEERS

Monday 12/5 Janet Rosenthal, Judy Rosatti, Marge Wiertel, Jack & Shirley Kenehan
Tuesday 12/6 Marie Elsesser, Eileen Widomski, Mary Fiske, Gina Lintelman, Bill Schriefer
Wednesday 12/7 Bonnie Abramczyk, Cindi Orlando, Margaret DeSantis, Matt Milano, Cheryl Mele
Thursday 12/8 Marianne Zimmerman, Barb Sala, Lisa Jones, Mary Juchno
Friday 12/9 Janet Fisher, Heather-Renee Rinderle, Lori Howland, Jack Kohler

“RAISE THE ROOF LOTTERY”

Tickets are \$5...get yours now!!
You can't win if you don't have a ticket!!

Our winners for this past week:

11/18 unsold ticket #593...unsold ticket #594...unsold ticket #592...**11/19** unsold ticket #573...Scott & Kathy Oldach #574 \$10...unsold ticket #572...**11/20** unsold ticket #436...unsold ticket #437...unsold ticket #435...**11/21** Robert Haibach #377 \$50...unsold ticket #378...unsold ticket #376...**11/22** Theresa Lynch #796 \$50...Kay Ingladi #797 \$10...Martin Senger #795 \$10...**11/23** unsold ticket #281...unsold ticket #282...unsold ticket #280...**11/24** Diane Jackson #520 \$50...Romona Tirpak #521 \$10...Mary Pope #519 \$10...**11/25** unsold ticket #853...unsold ticket #854...Dorothy Corman #852 \$10...**11/26** Hazel Zimmer #251 \$50...E Weber #252 \$10...Brian Edwards #250 \$10...**11/27** unsold ticket #151...unsold ticket #152...unsold ticket #150

LOTTERY TICKETS December and January tickets are now available in the Parish Office and after Mass. These make nice stocking stuffers, St. Nicholas Day gifts or that last minute gift exchange for your Kris Kringle!! Where else can you buy a \$5 ticket and have 3 chances to win every day for a month? Get your tickets today!!



SANCTUARY CANDLE will burn this week before the Blessed Sacrament in Memory of Shirley Avril from Helen Wronek.

*For Masses
For The Week*

Monday, December 5 – Advent Weekday

7:00 +Theodore Niebauer, Sr. / T. Niebauer, Jr.
8:00 +Dolores Haise / Family & Friends [anniversary]

Tuesday, December 6 – St. Nicholas

7:00 +Shirley Avril / Earl & Arlene Fisher, Jr. [anniversary]
8:00 +Rose Kulich / Anne & Joe Chetoni [birthday]

Wednesday, December 7 – St. Ambrose

7:00 +No Mass
8:00 +Francis V. Kloecker, Jr. / Son
5:15 *People of the Parish

Thursday, December 8 – Immaculate Conception

7:30 +Dorothy & Leonard Bierzonski / Family
9:00 +Concetta Coy / Family [birthday]
12:15 +Richard Grumblatt / Family
5:15 +Daniel Tessauro / Family [birthday]

Friday, December 9 – Blessed Juan Diego

7:00 +Josephine Turos / Family & Friends
8:00 +Ernie Baker / James & Laurie Canella

Saturday, December 10 Vigil: 3rd Sunday of Advent

5:15 +John Marcoline / Pete Bucarelli [birthday]

Sunday, December 11 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

7:30 *People of the Parish
9:00 +Frank A. Leone / Wife – Mary Leone
11:00 +Tom Gorny / Richard & Cynthia Walczak
7:30 +Robert Peitzak / Mr & Mrs Larry Moroksky

SACRIFICIAL GIVING REPORT

	11/20/05	11/27/05
Weekly Need:	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 9,200.00
Adult Offering:	\$ 6,778.50	\$ 6,157.04
Loose Collection:	\$ 698.06	\$ 807.04
Youth:	\$ 40.39	\$ 30.46
Young Adults:	\$ 39.50	\$ 16.50
Total	\$ 7,556.45	\$ 7,011.04
Human Development	\$ 1,945.41	
Thanksgiving	\$ 495.00	

SINCE JULY 1, 2005 (START OF FISCAL YEAR)

Offertory Budget YTD:	\$202,400.00
Offertory Received YTD:	\$183,486.75
Surplus/Deficit	\$ -18,913.25

2005 ANNUAL CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

Assessment:	\$ 55,629.00
Total Pledged to Date:	\$ 65,741.00
Paid to Date:	\$ 60,948.00
# of Pledges:	450
Our Roof Goal:	\$100,000.00
Overage from CSA:	\$ 10,112.00
Gifts towards the Roof:	\$ 2,970.00
Gift from PTC	\$ 1,000.00
YTD Profit from	
“Raise the Roof” Lottery	\$ 10,600.00
Parish Capital Improvements (gold envelope)	\$ 7,039.50
Balance to reach goal:	\$ 68,278.50