

# Advent

December 6, 2015 ♦ Second Sunday of Advent

Bar 5:1-9


Phil 1:4-6, 8-11

Lk 3:1-6

One of the most memorable questions I have ever been asked came out of a conversation with a spiritual director. During my marriage-preparation retreat, he asked about the upcoming wedding. I told him about all the preparations and how I felt like I was on top of things. He gently said, "I know you are prepared, but are you ready?" It was the first time I really thought about the difference. We were certainly prepared. The flowers had been ordered, the ceremony set, and the caterer knew exactly what we wanted. We were in control. But being ready for the great unknown of marriage, a lifelong vocation, was another thing altogether. Being ready suggested that we won't always be in control and that, no matter what happens, we were in it for life and would face whatever comes together.

The prophet Isaiah describes John the Baptist as the one who prepares the way of the Lord. He will do this by preaching to and baptizing those who come to him. The preparation for the coming Messiah is in his hands. He poses the question, "Are you ready for the one who is to come?" Thinking beyond our religious practices and Christmas preparations, what does that really mean for us? Maybe this year it means looking into our own hearts for the longing for Christ. Perhaps we will make a room for him in our busy lives and our busier thoughts. We might even stop our preparations long enough to remember just who is coming and invite him in. Are you ready?

MARY KATHARINE DEELEY  
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Let every heart  
prepare him room...



#### A Word From Pope Francis

*"I have decided to announce an Extraordinary Jubilee which...will be a Holy Year of Mercy."*

—Homily during penitential celebration, March 13, 2015

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 secretary@icbvm.org; ccd@icbvm.org; bulletin@icbvm.org;

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann ..... Pastor  
 Rev. Leo S. Stajkowski.....In Residence  
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi,  
 Deacon Charles A. Giordano  
 Parish Office .....610 582-2411  
 Parish Religious Education/CCD .....610 582-3880  
 Parish Preschool .....610 404-8645  
 Parish Fax.....610 404-2609  
 Parish Website.....www.icbvm.org

Immaculate Conception Academy.....610404-8645  
 Academy Website.....www.icaberks.org  
 Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator:  
 Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC  
**Direct** Telephone 800 791-9209  
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 Sister Meg Cole, S.S.J., M.S., LMFT  
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 Diocese of Allentown.....www.allentowndioocese.org

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 6, 2015

### ★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM	SR. JANINE TORZECKA	WED	7:30 AM	MICHAEL MURTAGH
SUN	7:30 AM	SAL & RUTH MONASTERO - 72 <sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY	THU	7:00 PM	SUSAN PETERSON
	9:00 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS	FRI	7:30 AM	BERNIE RISMILLER
	11:00 AM	RITA KLANG	SAT	5:15 PM	MARY DOLAN
MON	<b>7:00 PM</b>	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS	SUN	7:30 AM	DEC'D MEMBERS OF THE EVANS FAMILY
TUE	7:30 AM	ELEANOR PAINTER		9:00 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS
	9:00 AM	ICA MASS - KEVIN BYRNES		11:00 AM	EVELYN HAIGHT
	7:00 PM	ROBERT MULDOWNNEY			

*The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Ruth & Sal Monastero  
 and In Memory of Jenny Merlino*

### NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

**SCRIP:** Sponsor: Lukes 5:15 McNamara 7:30 Collura 9:00 McCauley 11:00 DeFalco

<u>DAY</u>	<u>MASS</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>COMMENTATOR</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
SAT	5:15pm	Ann Marie Arbo	Mike Austrevich	Adam and Carlina Davis, Veronica McClelland
SUN	7:30am	Dennis Piontek	Sean Werner	Amanda and Lauren Marley, Danielle Walter
	9:00am	Pat Fessler	Brian Hannon	Sean and Stephen Hannon, Kathryn Krueger
	11:00am	Jim Keaveney	Barbara Romig	Anna and Matthew Lambert, Chase Voelker

### **The second collection next week is for the Religious Retirement Fund**

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 Dear Parishioners,  
 As we begin the Holy season of Advent  
 in preparation for Christmas, I invite you  
 to set time aside to celebrate the  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation. Confessions  
 are heard every Saturday from 4:00 to  
 5:00pm.  
 Our Advent Parish Penance Service  
 will be held on Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup>  
 at 7:00pm. On that occasion, visiting  
 priests will be available to hear  
 confessions and impart God's pardon and  
 peace. As always, be assured of my  
 continued prayers for you and your  
 family.  
 .....  
 Monsignor John McCann  
 .....

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Marco Fiato, Bryan  
 Fiato, John & Margaret Kakas, Maryanne Prentice, Tracy Seasholtz,  
 Aaron Gulla, John Iezzi, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Alice Smyk, ,  
 Yolanda Marino, Marie Snyder, Ann Schlott, Maryanna Niemczyk,  
 Kathy Patrick, Doris Slater, Joseph & Susan McCorristin, Mary & Phil  
 Morici, Margaret Maccarone, Father Joseph Campion, Dan Casciano,  
 Linda Ritchie, Paisley Stout, Jake Maccarone, Walter & Marjorie  
 Hansen, Betty Erjavec, Joann Gilbert, Sharon Kirkpatrick, Irene  
 Wade, Linda Rathman, William Janda, Curt Miller, Stephen  
 Thomkins, Carolyn Creech, Frances Bambrick, James Smith, Anthony  
 Boraton, Mike Kovach and Ted Reznick  
 Pray for the recently departed: Robert F. Mariani, Anna Shustack,  
 Elias Kraras, Kathryn Anne Brailer-Goffi  
 HOSPITAL VISITATIONS: Monsignor McCann, Deacon Hiryak,  
 Deacon Bardj and Deacon Giordano visit our parishioners who  
 are hospitalized, in nursing homes or homebound regularly. If  
 you or a member of your family is hospitalized, please call the  
 parish office at 610-582-2411.

## **THIS WEEK AT ICC:**

<b>Sun</b>	<b>12/06</b>	<b>Social Sunday</b> <b>Girl Scouts Bake Sale</b>
<b>Mon</b>	<b>12/07</b>	<b>7:30pm RCIA</b>
<b>Tues</b>	<b>12/08</b>	<b>Holy Day of Obligation</b>
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>12/10</b>	<b>4pm Youth Choir</b> <b>7:30pm Adult Choir</b>
<b>Fri</b>	<b>12/11</b>	<b>7pm Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>Sat</b>	<b>12/12</b>	<b>4-5pm Confession</b> <b>Women's Society Cookie Sale</b>

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING**

*The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation and the Patronal Feast of our parish church is Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered at 7:30am, at 9:00am with the children of Immaculate Conception Academy, and at 7:00pm. The Vigil Mass will be on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.*

### **ICA HSO 12 Days of Christmas Raffle**

- December 7 - \$100 Red Lobster Gift Card**
- December 7 - \$125 Visa Gift Card**
- December 9 - \$150 Giant Gift Card**
- December 10 - \$175 Visa Gift Card**
- December 11 - \$200 Toys-R-Us Gift Card**
- December 14 - \$225 Visa Gift Card**
- December 15 - \$250 Target Gift Card**
- December 16 - \$275 Visa Gift Card**
- December 17 - \$300 Amazon Gift Card**
- December 18 - Grand Prize - \$500 Visa Gift card**

***Tickets \$5 each or \$20 for five.***

**Tickets are available in the church office or by emailing [ica.hso@gmail.com](mailto:ica.hso@gmail.com). Winners are announced at [www.ica.hso.org](http://www.ica.hso.org).**

**Senior High School Youth Group will meet on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-9pm for an evening of fun, food, games, prayer and praise. All of the high school students of our parish are welcome to attend and bring a friend.**

*If you could see the face of God in your life every day, would you want to or would you turn away? If you could hear the voice of God in your heart every day, would you listen? If you could have a taste of the Kingdom of God now, would you want to? If your answer is YES, this seminar is for you. Registration is now open on-line for the "Not Just Running with Jesus" Seminars being held this advent season on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Visit [www.single-hearted.com](http://www.single-hearted.com) or call John Paul Kasperowicz at 215-499-1641 for more information.*

**The Women's Society** will be holding its annual **Christmas Cookie Sale** before and after all Masses December 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>. We will have our beautiful pre-packaged assortments in addition to our bagged cookies to add to your cookie collection. Please consider a donation of a few dozen of the favorite cookies you bake. Cookies should be bagged by the dozen and labeled and may be dropped at our table in the narthex before all Masses. Cookies being donated for the assortments do not need to be bagged by the dozen and should be dropped off December 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am in the social hall where we will be assembling and packaging. Please join in the fun. **We are also accepting donations of festive containers/plates and wrapped candy for the assortments.**

## **CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2015**

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION PENANCE SERVICE**

Monday, December 21 - 7:00pm

### **CHRISTMAS MASSES**

#### **CHRISTMAS EVE**

Thursday, December 24 - 4:00pm, 7:00pm, Midnight

#### **CHRISTMAS DAY**

Friday, December 25 - 9:00am, 11:00am

### **NEW YEAR'S MASSES**

#### **NEW YEARS EVE**

Thursday, December 31 - 5:15pm

#### **NEW YEAR'S DAY - SOLEMNITY OF MARY**

Friday, January 1 - 9:00am, 11:00am

**OPLAKTY, Blessed Christmas Wafers**, are now available in the church narthex. This custom is many centuries old and finds its origins in the countries of Eastern Europe, particularly Slovakia, Poland and Lithuania. The breaking and sharing of the Christmas wafer at the holy supper on Christmas Eve was a sign of friendship, love and forgiveness among family members and friends. At the holy supper an extra place setting was placed on the table symbolizing that Jesus Christ was the unseen Guest in the home. As you prepare to celebrate Christmas this year, be mindful of the many customs and traditions which remind us of the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior.

The Filipino Catholic Community of Berks County will celebrate **Simbang Gabi** (Christmas Novena Masses) at: **Holy Rosary Church, 3<sup>rd</sup> & Franklin Sts., Reading - December 6, 1pm - December 11, 7pm - December 12, 11am - December 13, 1pm**  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

### ***Thinking about becoming a Catholic? Looking for a "Faith Refresher?"***

Join Msgr. McCann, Deacon Paul Hiryak and guest speakers on Monday evenings to learn more about our Catholic faith. **RCIA** isn't just for persons interested in Catholicism, it's for everyone who desires a deeper understanding of what we believe and practice as Catholics. Classes are 7:30-9pm. You are welcome to attend as many sessions as your schedule permits. Call 610.582.2411 for information.

St. Benedict's, 2020 Chestnut Hill Road, Mohnton will conduct its Advent Vespers on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. For questions or directions, call 610-856-1006

*The Polish-American Heritage Association is holding their annual Polish Christmas Eve Wigilia dinner on December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Stirling Guest Hotel, 1120 Centre Avenue, Reading. Doors open at 4:15pm. Members \$50/Non-members \$60. For more information and reservations call Henry Pruski at 610-372-1279 after 7pm. Deadline is December 7.*





December 6, 2015

# dear Padre

**Monday**  
DECEMBER 7

*St. Ambrose, Bishop  
and Doctor of the Church*  
Is 35:1–10  
Lk 5:17–26

**Tuesday**  
DECEMBER 8

*The Immaculate  
Conception of the  
Blessed Virgin Mary*  
Gn 3:9–15, 20  
Eph 1:3–6, 11–12  
Lk 1:26–38

**Wednesday**  
DECEMBER 9

*Advent Weekday*  
Is 40:25–31  
Mt 11:28–30

**Thursday**  
DECEMBER 10

*Advent Weekday*  
Is 41:13–20  
Mt 11:11–15

**Friday**

DECEMBER 11  
*Advent Weekday*  
Is 48:17–19  
Mt 11:16–19

**Saturday**  
DECEMBER 12

*Our Lady of Guadalupe*  
Zec 2:14–17 or  
Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab  
Lk 1:26–38 or Lk 1:39–47

**Sunday**

DECEMBER 13  
*Third Sunday of Advent*  
Zep 3:14–18a  
Phil 4:4–7  
Lk 3:10–18

[Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org)



## Santa Claus: Christian or secular?



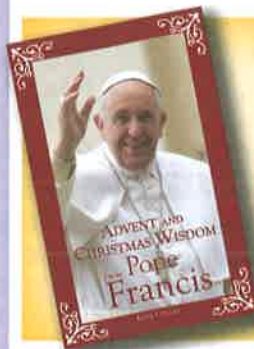
I have two friends—one atheist, the other a Christian fundamentalist. Neither is carrying on the tradition of Santa with their children. The atheist claims he is a Christian symbol; the Christian thinks he's a secular figure. Who's right?

**As strange as it may sound**, both are correct. The myth of Santa Claus is based on the real life of St. Nicholas, a Catholic bishop. Born in the third century, his parents were wealthy but died when Nicholas was very young. His faith led him to dedicate his life to the service of God and others. He gave away his entire inheritance to help the poor and suffering.

Like Christ himself, Nicholas is known as a giver of gifts. Stories of St. Nick's generosity form the basis for some of our current Christmas traditions. According to one story, the bags of gold he tossed through an open window landed in stockings hanging above the fire to dry. Some put food for Nicholas and straw for his donkey outside their homes, hoping he will replace their gifts with his.

**December 6** is now an annual feast commemorating this saint. Most today know Santa as coming from the North Pole with his red-nosed reindeer Rudolph and bringing toys and treats made by elves. This is certainly a secular image, but however we celebrate Advent and Christmas, we must remember and lead others to their true purpose and meaning.

FR. PAUL BOROWSKI, CSSR  
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**During this Advent season, "remember the real gift: God giving himself to us through the Incarnation. Reflect on yourself. In how many ways can you become a gift from God to those you know and to those you do not?"**

—From *Advent and Christmas Wisdom From Pope Francis* by John Cleary

To see sample pages from this book, visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org), type the title or **826467** in the search bar, and click on the book.