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# NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER

# 2018



I PRESS ON TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD  
CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

I wonder if the translators got it wrong? I wonder if I can say "got" in that sentence?

Paul, writing to the Philippians, says he is moving toward the goal. A grammar study would tell us that "to" and "toward" are two different things. There is a key distinction. As we enter into Advent and soon the Christmas season, this is a vital distinction. Are we moving toward or **to** Jesus?

In any sentence, "towards" means "in the direction of that person or thing". When we use "toward," we are not describing a destination; the destination is without certainty. Toward only describes a general direction.

However, when to say "**to**" we have defined the destination of our journey. While our exact way of getting to that destination remains un-described, we have set our goal with certainty. We work to get to it. We focus on it. We say with confidence, that is exactly where I am going.

Advent is a call to prepare for the journey **to** the returning and victorious Christ. We are to spend this time getting ready, fortifying ourselves for His return so we can meet Him "*standing erect with our heads held high.*"

We are called to set our destination, and retranslate Paul's words - I am moving **to** the goal, **to** the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. That is where I want to be.

We may feel fine walking toward Jesus. We might get lucky and trip into the manger at Christmas. The problem with a lack of certainty on our part is that we may miss the mark and end up separated, unable to get **to** our goal. Getting close, being in the neighborhood, is not enough for Jesus. He wants more.

The four weeks of Advent lead to the forty days of Christmas. time is short. Let us then set the goal, let us be dedicated and focused on the place we need to get **to**. Let us walk straight **to** a kingdom defined life. That is the goal, the prize.

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## Church Fathers on Advent

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•The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry;  
•the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of him who

is naked;

- the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot;
- the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor;
- the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit."

—St. Basil the Great

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## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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As we gather in churches throughout the world, I cannot help but reflect on the many ways we offer our love and dedication to the Christ child. We come in humility, hearts filled with expectant hope. We offer a silent prayer before the manger knowing that He will hear us and will respond. In darkness, broken by candlelight, we watch as a woman approaches the stable to place the Holy Infant. We hear the great proclamation. Then we worship.

I offer my prayer at the manger, and at the Holy Altar for you, your families, our humble parish. May the irresistible love of God speak to you that night and throughout the year ahead. May your expectations and prayers rise before the heavenly Throne, and may you draw closer each day to

completion in Jesus Christ who is hope fulfilled.

— Fr. Jim

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## 4TH ANNIVERSARY - ORDINATION TO THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD

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I was ordained to the Holy Priesthood four years ago on December 6th (the Commemoration of St. Nicholas). This year has flown by as have the past three, and has been marked once again by joys, challenges - the stuff of life. Through it all, the greatest joy comes as I stand before the altar and offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for each and every one of you, for the good and increase of our parish, and for the needs of the whole Church. Thank you for inviting me into your parish family and for the opportunity to serve you. — Fr. Jim

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## New Liturgical Year

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Readings from Scripture are part of every Holy Mass and hold a very special place of prominence in our Holy Church – for through the proclamation and teaching of the Word we receive sacramental grace.

The Sunday cycle of readings is divided into three years, labeled A, B, and C. A new cycle begins every First Sunday of Advent. On December 2nd we entered Year C. In Year C, we read mostly from the Gospel of St. Luke.

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## **Advent Charity - food gathering**

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We began collecting dry and canned goods in November for Schenectady Community Ministries. We will continue collecting donations throughout Advent, ending on December 23rd. Please join in making a joyful and prayerful donation in thankfulness for the bounty God has provided in our lives. Please place your donation by the Mary altar in the church. God bless you for your generosity and sacrifice in preparation for Jesus' coming.

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## **Blessing of Oplátky and the Advent Wreath**

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On the First Sunday of Advent we blessed our Advent wreath and the "Bread of Angels," the oplátky that we will share with each other on Christmas Eve. Oplátky will be available for you to take home throughout Advent and the Christmas Vigil.

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## **Vigil pot-luck, musical, and student Christmas presentation - December 16th**

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Our annual Christmas Vigil / Wigilia pot-luck will be held on Sunday, December 16th following Holy Mass. There will only be **one Holy Mass that day at 10:30am**. The parish is providing the main fish course for you. Please join us, and if you are able, bring a meatless side-dish to share. Our SOCL students will present a short musical presentation

for your reflection and enjoyment. Come see and support them.

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## **Greening of the Church - December 23rd**

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Please join in and lend a hand on Sunday, December 23rd between Holy Masses to decorate the Church, beautifying it for the arrival of our newborn King.

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# **Memory Crosses**

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Holy Name of Jesus is continuing a tradition begun at Good Shepherd Parish in Amsterdam. Every year the people of Good Shepherd parish



would offer memory crosses during the Advent season. These hand crocheted memory crosses, in honor of dearly departed loved ones, are hung on the

parish Christmas trees throughout the Christmas season. Then in January a special Holy Mass is held in memory of those entrusted to our prayers.

Memory Crosses are a beautiful tribute of memory and a gift of loving prayer. If you wish to remember someone special during the upcoming Christmas season please send the names of those you wish remembered, one name per memory cross, to the parish. You may offer a free will donation in honor of your loved ones. A donation of \$2 per memory cross is

suggested.

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### **Outrageous Valentine's Raffle**

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We have sent out tickets for next February's Outrageous Valentine's raffle. Prizes total \$1,180. Each entry provides multiple chances to win. Every time someone wins, their ticket is placed 'back in the bucket.' Daily prizes are \$40 and the Valentine's Day prize is \$100.

This effort is so very important this year so that we - as a family - may send our youth to all of the Church's Summer 2018 programs and save for CONVO 2020.

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### **Gift of Holy Mass Intentions**

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At this time of the year we try to think of what we can give to our loved ones for Christmas. Want to offer the best gift? Request Holy Mass be celebrated in their honor, for health and healing, for blessings. Be also a voice for the dearly departed who no longer sit at table with us. Have Holy Mass offered for them too - a perfect gift. There is no better gift. See Fr. Jim to schedule a time.

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### **With Thanks**

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To all parents and grandparents who have included their beautiful children in our parish community.

To all who continue to pray, sacrifice, and serve in Christian love

and charity on behalf of our parish.

To the members of our Parish Committee for their hard work and sacrifice!!!!

To our wonderful altar servers, lectors, our organist and choir director Liz Battaglia, and to all who provide for our ministry of hospitality.

To every parishioner, visitor, and member -- you are a blessing and a treasure.

God bless you and reward you! Bóg zapłać! Grazie mille! Thank you!!!

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### **Epiphany Home Visits**

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We continue the wonderful tradition of offering home visits and blessings for those who would like them.

It is an ancient custom for Christians to have their homes blessed in relation to the feast of the Epiphany, which commemorates the coming of the Wisemen to the house of the Holy Family.

*"and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."* (Matthew 2:11)

The Magi came to the house of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and filled it with blessings. The home blessing sets apart your home as a place of

Christian Hospitality and blessing for your family and all those who visit in the New Year. By such an action you are saying, "May those who visit our home, also find Christ here in our midst." Please see Fr. Jim to set aside a time. Blessings may take place between January 7th and March 5th.

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### **Coffee Hour/Breakfasts**

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Coffee hours continue after services each week. Come and share worship and wonderful treats with fellowship every week. Please volunteer to sponsor a week. Remember that nothing special is necessary - simple is better.

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### **Planning For:**

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Holy Mass on Sunday at 9:30 and 11:30am unless otherwise indicated

- December 2: 1st Sunday of Advent.
- December 6: Commemoration of St. Nicholas of Myra.
- December 8: Solemnity - Conception of the B.V.M.
- December 9: 2nd Sunday of Advent.
- December 12: Solemnity - Our Lady of Guadalupe
- December 16: 3rd Sunday of Advent. **Holy Mass with Advent Penitential Service at 10:30am.** Youth Christmas and Musical Performances and Parish Vigil Pot-luck follows.

- December 17: Holy Mass and Anointing of the Sick, 6:15pm.
- December 21: Feast – St. Thomas the Apostle.
- December 23: 4th Sunday of Advent. Greening of the church.
- December 24: **Vigil of the Nativity.** Vigil Holy Mass at 4pm.
- December 25: **Nativity of the Lord, Holy Mass at Midnight and 10am.**
- December 26: Feast – St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr.
- December 27: Feast – St. John, Apostle & Evangelist. Holy Mass at 7pm with Blessing of Wine (**bring a bottle or two to be blessed**).
- December 29: Feast of the Holy Family.
- December 30: Sunday - Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds.
- January 1: Solemnity of the Circumcision. Holy Mass at 10am. Happy 2019!
- January 2: **Solemnity of the Holy Name of Jesus – Holy Mass at 7pm.**
- January 6: Solemnity of the Epiphany of our Lord. Holy Mass includes blessing of chalk, charcoal, and incense.
- January 13: Sunday - Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord.

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### **Milestones to Celebrate:**

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#### Birthdays

2 Christina Supinski, Dorothy

Morrison, Lisa Houser  
3 Claudia Bertasso  
4 Mikayla Jakubiak  
5 Stephen Martin  
6 Justin Weglinski  
7 Helen & Paul Zebrowski  
9 Christine Rager  
10 Andrew Zostant  
13 Justin Kimball, Aleksandra  
Wheelock, Karina Weglinski  
14 Susan Dantz, Verilyn Vroman  
15 Nancy Fredenburg  
16 Bethany Victoria Normandin  
19 Carol Kupiec, Frances Liska,  
Darian DePasquale  
23 Michael Mazzone  
24 Edward Jakubiak  
25 Jesus, Matthew Seidel  
28 Denise Meyers

#### Anniversaries

19 Bob & Cyndie Williams

Wishing you all many years! Sto  
Lat!

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### **Postures, Gestures, Words, Deeds in Church**

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There are various general postures and gestures that are used in church. For instance, kneeling is a sign of reverence, devotion, and worshipful surrender. For instance, we kneel during the Penitential Rite, the Canon/Eucharistic Prayer, when receiving communion and when privately praying after Holy Communion. Standing is the posture of prayer. For instance, when we hear 'Let us pray...' we should stand. Sitting is the posture of learning, like being in school. We sit to listen

and learn from the readings and during the Sacrament of the Word.

There are other actions typically performed in church which are of great merit.

**The bow:** Whenever we hear Jesus' name and title proclaimed, or the invocation of the Holy Trinity as in: the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ; Father, Son and Holy Spirit; etc. we should bow our heads or even bow from the waist, which is a more profound sign of devotion and respect. We also bow when the crucifix, a visible symbol of Christ's sacrifice, passes in procession.

**Sign of the Cross:** We make the Sign of the Cross with holy water when we enter church. This action recalls our baptism and puts us into a state of prayerfulness.

Interestingly, we need not do the same when we leave for we were just given a blessing by the presiding clergy. The Sign of the Cross is made when blessed with holy water and at the start of prayer, and most especially at the beginning of the most excellent form of prayer, the Holy Mass. The Sign of the Cross is also made when, during the invitation to prayer, the words: *Our Help is in the Name of the Lord, Who Made Heaven and Earth* are said. The Sign is made when indicated in the Pew Missal during the Gloria, the Creed, and the Sanctus (Holy, holy, holy). The Sign can be made anytime one feels the need to, for instance after receiving Holy Communion and at other special

moments.

**Genuflection:** We genuflect toward the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament before entering the pew and when leaving at the end of Holy Mass or other services in the church. The genuflection is always on the right knee. we genuflect during the Creed where indicated, always acknowledging the gift of the Lord's incarnation. We also genuflect whenever the Blessed Sacrament passes us in procession.

**Striking our breast.** This is done in the Sacrament of Penance during the Confiteor as a sign of fault and a desire to change. It is also done during the Lamb of God where we strike our breast at the words "Have mercy upon us."

**The Triple Sign of the Cross:** When the priest or deacon announces the Gospel, we trace a cross with our thumb on our head, over our lips, and over our heart. This gesture is a special form of prayer asking the Lord to bless our minds and our hearts so that they may be open to hear and receive the Gospel, and our lips so we might proclaim the Gospel.

**Longer kneeling and the double genuflection:** We kneel for longer periods in the Penitential Rite, during the Canon/Eucharistic Prayer, and whenever the Blessed Sacrament in the Monstrance or in the Ciborium is out of the tabernacle or on display at the altar. If we attend a Holy Hour or other devotion with the Blessed

Sacrament on display, a very worthy thing to do is to genuflect on both knees before getting into or on going out of the Pew.

**Receiving Holy Communion:** Kneel at the Communion rail if you are able. If you cannot kneel for physical reasons, standing is perfectly acceptable. The Body and Blood of Jesus is received via intinction (the Consecrated Host is dipped into the Precious Blood) and it is placed on the tongue. Holy Communion is never received in the hand. Open your mouth and extend your tongue, so the priest or deacon can place the intincted Host properly.

**The Final Blessing:** As noted earlier, at the conclusion of most services, and particularly the Holy Mass, a final blessing is offered. The faithful should kneel for the final blessing.

**Holy Silence:** The time prior to the beginning of Holy Mass is intended for the examination of one's conscience. The faithful should be considerate of each other and spend this time in worthy endeavor. Please, therefore, observe a 15 minute 'business free zone' prior to Holy Mass. Use at least page 8 of the Pew Missal for spiritual preparation (the other introductory pages are great as well). Let us prepare properly for the wonderful gifts of Christ in the Eucharist and the hearing of God's Word during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

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# Annual dues

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What do you think about Church dues? Do you think they are something priests and bishops impose? Do you think it is too much of a burden?

**We set the dues:** Dues are established at Holy Synod by our peers, our elected representatives. Dues are never imposed by the clergy. The people of the Church, in accordance with our democratic tradition, establish the dues necessary to keep the Church and diocese running and solvent.

## **What happens without dues?**

The Church would go bankrupt and would dissolve. It could not operate at the most basic level.

**Well, my parish will stay open, won't it?** No! Without the Church and diocese there can be no parish. We would be without bishops, priests, and all the basics needed to carry on worship. We would no longer have a mandate nor legal authority to exist.

**Well, it is soooo much!** Not really. Dues amount to \$2.88 per week per member. Is the Church worth that much? Not only did many fight, even face prison, for our Holy Church, many also double or tripled mortgaged their homes for the purpose of building up the Church. They were courageous vanguards who were willing to sacrifice all for Jesus' Kingdom. Dues are part of

giving generously from our plenty - those who first established dues gave that and more from their want.



The benefits of church membership, including burial in parish cemeteries, requires the payment of annual dues which support the larger

Church, our Diocese, and our Parish.

**Dues are now \$150 per year for each adult member, \$125 for each senior 65 and over.**

Pay your dues with joy and thank God that we have our Church. If anyone faces such severe financial difficulties that \$2.88 per person per week is unaffordable, please see Fr. Jim privately.

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## **Nominations/Annual Meeting**

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Our annual congregation meeting will be held in early February 2019 along with the election of a new Parish Committee.

**New members of the Committee are needed so we may prepare for the future.** If you or someone you know would like to be part of the leadership team, please write your name, theirs, or better yet, both of yours down along with the office (Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Secretary, Trustee) you would like to run for and drop them in the collection basket in an envelope marked nominations.

# December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2 1st Sunday of Advent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Joe Kaczynski, Claudia Bertasso	3	4	5	6 Commemoration – St. Nicholas of Myra	7	8 Solemnity – Conception of the B.V.M.
9 2nd Sunday of Advent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Larry Panfil, Claudia Bertasso.	10	11	12 Solemnity – Our Lady of Guadalupe	13	14	15
16 3rd Sunday of Advent Holy Mass and Advent Penitential Service at 10:30am. Lector: Marilyn Hietala.  <b>Vigil Pot Luck</b> , Youth Christmas and Musical Presentations,	17 Holy Mass and Anointing for Healing at 6:15pm	18	19	20	21 Feast – St. Thomas the Apostle	22
23 <b>4th Sunday of Advent.</b> Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Joe Kaczynski, Claudia Bertasso. Greening of the Church	24 <b>Vigil of the Nativity</b> Vigil Holy Mass for Children & Youth at 4pm	25 Solemnity of the Nativity <b>Holy Mass at Midnight</b> Lector: Larry Panfil <b>Holy Mass, 10am</b>	26 Feast – St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr	27 Feast – St. John, Apostle & Evangelist. Holy Mass at 7pm with Blessing of Wine.	28 Commemoration – Holy Innocents	29 Feast of the Holy Family.
30 Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Marilyn Hietala, Claudia Bertasso	31					

## Events

### January 2019 Upcoming

- 1st - Solemnity of the Circumcision, Holy Mass at 10am/Happy 2019!
- 2nd – Solemnity of the Holy Name, Holy Mass at 7pm.
- 6th - Epiphany of our Lord. Regular Sunday Holy Mass schedule with blessing of chalk, charcoal, and incense.