

THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT DECEMBER 2, 2018



The St. Ann “APP”: Associate Pastor’s Perspective – One question that I often ask engaged couples who come seeking marriage preparation is this: What scares you most about beginning your new life together?

The replies are interesting, to say the least, but often quite honest: “I’m scared I’ll mess-up this love I’ve been given,” says one groom. “I am afraid that I will forget to share everything with him,” says a bride-to-be. One young man jokingly offered: “I am afraid I’ll forget to put the toilet seat down.”

All legitimate marriage fears, to be sure. And yet, with any new beginnings in life, the new doors that open offer opportunities for growth and for becoming the authentic, selfless person each of us is called by God to be.

That is why the season of Advent, which we begin today, is truly a gift for us as Christian disciples. It is a time leading-up to the celebration of Christmas in which we examine our hearts and lives, asking the big questions that must be asked if we want to have a genuine encounter with Christ on this journey of faith and be prepared for his coming in glory. Thus, we must ask ourselves: Are we truly doing our best to live the Gospel message of mercy and forgiveness? Are we truly loving as God calls us to love others?

New beginnings can indeed be frightening, but Advent’s beginning week reminds us that we do not walk alone, and that Love awaits us at every turn ... even when we slip-up along the way. Let us strive to make these next four weeks a time of increased prayer and virtuous living as we prepare to celebrate the reason why we do all that we do in the first place: because “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

From the Pastor’s Desk.....To Jesus through Mary: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - December 8th feast day focuses on how Mary is different from us, immaculately conceived, something that’s hard for us to wrap our human minds around. We tend to put all our focus on how Jesus was conceived, and the fact that today’s gospel focuses on the annunciation doesn’t help matters. But this day is about what sets our Blessed Mother apart. She was highly “favored” by God, set apart, the new Eve, and through her fiat, her “yes” to God’s will, she begins the course correction for our first parents’ mistakes.

The only danger, however is that this special status tends to keep Mary upon a pedestal, bound to the title Queen of Heaven, when what makes her so important and special is the way she acted in the ordinariness of her extraordinary life. She was a young girl given a monumental responsibility that she didn’t fully understand. She was a mother whose life was fraught with the worries and fears of any other mother – about her child’s wellbeing and safety, caring for her home, practicing her faith. Her life had to be difficult and scary, confusing and demanding, which many of us experience in our own day to day lives.

That’s what makes Mary so special. We can go to her and to her Son through her, because she has been where we are. She has seen it all; despite the extraordinary way her life began. She will walk with us and be a mother to us just as she was a mother to Jesus. As we read on the miraculous medal and pray now, “O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.”

St. Ann’s Christmas Choir Concert –The St. Ann Christmas Concert featuring the St. Ann Adult Choir and School Children’s Choir, and the Elkton High School Women’s Ensemble will take place in the church on Sunday December 9th at 2pm. A reception will follow in the social hall immediately following the concert. The concert is free and all are welcome.

New To Our Parish and Need to Register? Visit our website www.stannwilmington.com and select the parish registration button. You can print the form and drop it in the collection basket, return it to the rectory or email it back! We would love to have you join our parish community!

Mass Intentions

Saturday December 1

8:00 A.M. Jerry Fleming

5:00 P.M. Mary & Stanley Gorzek

Sunday December 2

7:30 A.M. Parishioners

9:30 A.M. Lynn Allen Spayd

11:30 A.M. Georgina Sheing & Henry Salacki

Monday December 3 St. Francis Xavier

6:30 A.M. Walter Zelenski

8:00 A.M. John J. Tosi

Tuesday December 4 St. John Damascene

6:30 A.M. James P. Garofalo

8:00 P.M. Mary Pupillo

Wednesday December 5

6:30 A.M. Cornelius J. Reardon

8:00 A.M. Alice McGonigle

Thursday December 6 St. Nicholas

6:30 A.M. Charles E. Morrison

8:00 A.M. Dolores Morole

Friday December 7 St. Ambrose

6:30 A.M. Alice McGonigle

8:00 A.M. Bruce Thomas

5:30 P.M. Angela Lucia Diaz Pena (**Vigil**)

Saturday December 8 Immaculate Conception

8:00 A.M. Mary Cunningham & Deceased members of the Cunningham family

5:00 P.M. Joseph & Evelyn Dorris

Sunday December 9

7:30 A.M. Parishioners

9:30 A.M. Kimberly O'Donnell

11:30 A.M. Timothy Ryan

Pray for the sick, shut-ins and elderly of our Parish.

St. Ann's School Choir participates in the Annual Philadelphia Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade - A Big THANK YOU to Andrea Arena and all the children representing St. Ann's this Thanksgiving in the annual parade! We are proud of you for your stellar performance! Kudos!

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE- Please return the wrapped gift NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16th. Make sure you ATTACH THE TAG TO THE OUTSIDE OF THE GIFT AND LEAVE IT UNDER THE TREE OR INSIDE THE RECTORY. For more info contact Katie O'Connor at madello@msn.com. THANK YOU!

The 2nd Collection next weekend is for Religious Retirement.

St. Ann's Christmas Caroling Night - Bring your family and join us for an evening of old-fashioned Christmas Caroling! We'll gather in the social hall before singing throughout the surrounding neighborhood. All children must be chaperoned. Hot cocoa and holiday treats to follow in the social hall.

When: Sunday, Dec. 16th

Time: 6pm to 8pm

Location: Meet in St. Ann's Social Hall

The Mustang Mini (Pre-K 3) class - has been learning about nursery rhymes. Some of their favorite activities they did were acting out Little Miss Muffet, sheering sheep (by using tweezers to pull cotton balls out of the sheep), and playing Nursery Rhyme Bingo. This week we welcomed our Grandparents and Specials and we shared with them our Preschool Prayer we pray daily as well as a few songs: *A Gift to You* and *If I Were a Butterfly*. Both of these songs were about thanking god for all that he has given us.

"Breakfast With Santa" - is back on Saturday December 15th from 9am-11am. To register, email the number of attendees to stannschurch@stannwilmington.com and to pay, go through Parish Giving (online) Adults are \$10.00 each, children 5-12 are \$5.00 each and 4 or under free. **The deadline to sign-up is December 7th. For questions, please call the rectory at 654-5519.**

Father Jasper's multi-media Advent series on WDEL and Catholic Forum: Beginning this weekend, tune in each Saturday evening/Sunday morning during the season of Advent for short presentations on how to make the weeks ahead more spiritually-enriching as we make our way to Christmas. Father Jasper has video-recorded the sessions to be aired on the diocesan YouTube channel ([YouTube.com/DioceseofWilm](https://www.youtube.com/DioceseofWilm)), which will be made available each Saturday at 5 p.m. The audio portion will also be aired Sunday morning at 6:06 a.m. on WDEL 101.7 FM/1150 AM as part of the "Catholic Forum" radio program. Immediately following the WDEL broadcast, the program will be podcast at cdow.org/CatholicForum, and also available on Apple, Spotify and iHeart Radio podcasts.

Offertory for the weekend of November 11th was \$11,047. As always – thank you for your kind and generous support to St. Ann's.

2018 Annual Appeal Update – We wish to thank our St. Ann’s Parishioners for pledging \$155,000, (\$13,000 over our goal) to the Annual Appeal. Please fulfill your commitment by Dec 31 if possible – there is \$5500 outstanding. If we surpass our collection and hit our pledge target, 100% of the overage is returned to us for our school. If you are new to the parish and would like to make a yearend gift to the Appeal, email the Rectory at stannschurch@stannwilmington.com or call 302-654-5519. Thank you again for your kindness!

The Chapel of Divine Mercy is open with the Blessed Sacrament exposed the following hours: **6am to 10pm Monday through Friday & Sunday, 6am to 9pm Saturday.** Email www.adorationchapel.org or call Chris at 584-1422 or Nan at 656-8438 to offer an hour of time.

ST. ANN’S PRAYER LINE – to place a name or special request on the prayer line call Joe or Shirley Ackerman at 384-7513 or email joeshirl7@comcast.net.

GIVE THE GIFT OF A MALVERN RETREAT FOR CHRISTMAS – The annual Archbishop Fitzmaurice Group weekend retreat for the men of the Diocese of Wilmington is May 3rd to 5th, 2019 at beautiful St. Joseph’s-in- the-Hills, Malvern, PA. In these times of frantic activity, when the pace of life can be almost too much to bear, a quiet, peaceful and spiritually fulfilling retreat could make a wonderful Christmas gift for a father, husband, brother or son. For more information, please visit our website at www.malvernretreat.com or call Paul Smith Jr at (302) 777-2408.

Two history books to celebrate the diocesan 150th anniversary are now available through St. Ann’s - “Rejoicing in the Lord,” for \$40 and “Family of Faith” for \$18 have been published to help commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington. To purchase, fill out an order form and return with payment to the rectory. For info, call 654-5519 or email jmatyger@stannwilmington.com

Boy Scout Religious Awards - Any scout who is interested in earning their Catholic religious award should contact the Diocese of Wilmington’s Catholic Committee on Scouting. For info please contact either Bob Murray, Committee Chair at (302) 993-6290 or Deacon Tommy Watts, Boy Scout Chaplain (302) 218-1415.

St. Peter Cathedral School Christmas Fundraising Event – Saturday December 8th from 11am to 3pm in the school auditorium. Come take chances on elegant baskets and a variety of raffles. Refreshments are available!

BULLETIN ADVERTISERS – *Have you taken a look at the patrons listed on the back on the bulletin? It’s because of their support that we can provide this bulletin at no cost to our parish. Please visit these businesses and don’t forget to tell them where you saw their ad!*

Cathedral, All Saints and Gate of Heaven Cemeteries - are offering families the option of purchasing Christmas decorations directly from our cemeteries. These decorations are individually crafted by a local vendor. Cemetery personnel will place these decorations on the graves/crypts of your loved ones beginning in early December. The deadline for ordering is December 6, 2018. Your purchase helps support the ministry of our cemeteries. For more information and an on line order form log on to cdow.org/order-decorations or call the cemetery office at (302) 656 – 3323. Cathedral Cemetery will also be processing orders for Gate of Heaven Cemetery. Thank you for your support.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

12/2	1pm-4pm	Musical Auditions
12/3	7pm	Athletic Assn. Mtg.
12/4	1pm	School confessions
12/5	6:30pm	RCIA
12/5	7pm	Choir

Advent Prayer

Light of the world, enter the darkness of our hearts and renew us in faith, hope and love. As we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of the Incarnation, help us to see your presence in our world, especially in the needs of the poor. Strengthen us to become true peacemakers able to love our enemies and forgive those who have offended us. Lead us to acknowledge our own sinfulness, accept your mercy and extend your healing love to those around us. Amen...

