

St. Joseph Parish Force, PA Bringing Eucharistic Life to Bennetts Valley since 1872

4th

Sunday
OF ADVENT



Parish Stewardship for 2022-2023

Weekly amount budgeted for 2022-2023 \$3,365.00
 Offertory collection 12/18/2023 thru 12/24/2023 . not available
 CSA 2023 Campaign Parish Goal \$31,773.00
 Thank you for supporting St. Joseph Church!

Pope's Intention for December

For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

"Pray the Rosary everyday to obtain peace for the world."
 Join us at St. Joseph Church each Tuesday at 6 p.m.

The Church office will be closed this week (Dec. 25 thru Jan. 1).
 We will open again on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 9 am.

**Christmas Mass Times**

Sunday, Dec. 24	4:30 pm	Christmas Eve Vigil
Sunday, Dec. 24	10:00 pm	Christmas (during the night)
Monday, Dec. 25	9:15 am	Christmas Day
Saturday, Dec. 30	5:30 pm	Vigil of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
Sunday, Dec. 31	9:15 am	Feast of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
Monday, Jan. 1	9:15 am	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (not of obligation this year)

There will be NO Faith Formation classes on December 24th and December 31st. Classes will resume January 7, 2024.
 Confirmation classes will resume on January 14, 2024.

Giving Tree This year, the Guardian Angel Center in Kersey has expressed a need for bed sheets. Our Confirmation class will be collecting new bed sheets in sizes TWIN and/or FULL. You can place your unwrapped gifts under the tree in the social hall or you can bring them to the office M-Th 9am-4pm. Items will be delivered to the Guardian Angel Center in January.

Sacred Heart Parish Center Super Bingo

Friday, Jan. 5, 2024 Doors open @4pm FREE lunch served @ 5:30pm. Early Bird games @6:30pm Games @6:45pm
 Jackpot \$2500 in 52#'s—Guaranteed \$1000
 Benefits Sacred Heart Parish St. Marys, PA

St. Boniface Knights of Columbus will be having a Breakfast Buffet on Sunday, January 7th, 2024 from 8:00 am - 11:30 am (or until sold out). \$10 for adults/\$5 kids
 Saint Boniface Social Hall Cafeteria, Kersey, PA



Christ's Birth is the Answer What's the Question?

My friends, as we take a few moments to ponder the meaning of Christ's Birth for you and us personally during this Christmas Season, let us reflect on what Isaiah the Prophet wrote, centuries before Christ, about the Messiah King to come, and that He would be the fulfillment of a long awaited promise from God and the ANSWER for peace in the world.

In the midst at times, when Israel was sinful and unfaithful to God, and other times when they were weak people, frightened of their own shadow, so to speak, their questions were: "Will the Lord reject forever and nevermore be favorable? Will His Kindness utterly cease, His Promises fail for all generations? Has God forgotten pity?" (Psalm 77: 8-10a) These were Israel's QUESTIONS.

Isaiah's following words bring a consoling **answer** to these doubts and trials God's people endured: "In the days to come, the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it; many people shall come and say: "Come, let us climb the Lord's Mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may instruct us in His Ways and we may walk in His Paths. For from Zion shall go forth instruction and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plow shares and their spears into pruning hooks. One nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. O House of Jacob come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!" (Isaiah 2: 2-5)

Isaiah goes on to say that the Messiah comes to bring peace and healing to people personally: "say to those whose hearts are frightened, be strong, fear not! Here is your God. He comes with vindication; with divine recompense He comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared. Then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the dumb will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will become pools and the thirsty ground springs of water." (Isaiah 35: 4-7)

My friends, reflecting on these Scripture passages, we may first ask the question: how will the meaning of Christ's Birth bring peace in the midst of an angry, fighting, sinful world? The answer is to pray each day for peace. The question for each of us personally can be: will Christ's Birth 2000 years ago have a significant impact and change in my life here and now? The answer is YES—Christ's Birth will have a profound positive impact on your life here and now by praying for the **grace** to believe that hearts full of fear, hopelessness, or insecurity would be made strong. Choose to pray for the grace that Jesus' rebirth in our lives can bring physical and spiritual healing to all of us where we need it the most.

As we celebrate the birthday of our Messiah and Lord, Jesus Christ, let's CHOOSE to activate our prayers most fervently, believing that Christ's rebirth in our lives will make all the difference to us and will bring LASTING JOY!
 God Bless!

We Celebrate, We Listen, We Pray

Date	Intention	Requested by	Celebration	Scriptures
Monday, December 25, 2023 8:30 a.m. Mass	Deceased Pastors of St. Joseph Church	Father Mark	The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)	Is 52: 7-10 / Heb 1: 1-6 Jn 1: 1-18 or 1: 1-5, 9-14 (16)
Tuesday, December 26, 2023 No Mass			Saint Stephen, The First Martyr	Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59 Mt 10: 17-22 (696)
Wednesday, December 27, 2023 No Mass			Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist	1 Jn 1: 1-4 Jn 20: 1a, 2-8 (697)
Thursday, December 28, 2023 No Mass			The Holy Innocents, Martyrs	1 Jn 1: 5—2: 2 Mt 2: 13-18 (698)
Friday, December 29, 2023 No Mass			Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord	1 Jn 2: 3-11 Lk 2: 22-35 (202)
Saturday, December 30, 2023 No Mass			Sixth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord	1 Jn 2: 12-17 Lk 2: 36-40 (203)
Saturday, December 30, 2023 5:30 p.m. Mass	Living and Deceased Parishioners		Vigil of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph	(see below)
Sunday, December 31, 2023 9:15 a.m. Mass	Francis J. Coccimiglio	Family	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph	Gn 15: 1-6; 21: 1-3 Heb 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19 Lk 2: 22-40 or 2: 22, 39-40 (17)

St. Joseph Church

17764 Bennetts Valley Hwy., P. O. Box 124, Force, PA 15841
Ph. 814-787-4151

Rev. Mark J. Mastrian..... **Pastor**

Domestic Administrator: Miriam Pane **Secretary:** Barb Allegretto **Faith Formation:** Mary Ann Toney

Church Hours: St. Joseph Church: Sun. 7:30 am — 4 pm; Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 8 am—4 pm Sat. 9:00 am —7:00 pm

Pastoral Council President: Bryan Chiappelli **Finance Council Moderator:** Leon Calliari

OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Thursday 9a.m.—4 p.m.

Office Email: stjosephforce@windstream.net **Website:** www.stjosephforce.org **Faith Formation Email:** stjosephforceff@windstream.net

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 p.m.; **Sunday:** 9:15 a.m.; **Holy Days:** 9:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.; **Daily:** Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri. 8:30 a.m., No Mass on Wednesday

BULLETIN INFORMATION

Groups or individuals wishing to have information published in the bulletin are asked to submit the information in writing, by email or by phone by **Monday at 10:00 a.m.**

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Baptism – A baptism preparation session is required of all parents wishing to have their child(ren) baptized. Parents must be registered parishioners. Sessions are held periodically at parishes throughout the Deanery. It is always preferred that baptisms be celebrated during a regular Sunday Liturgy. Call the Parish office for more information.

Eucharist – Children preparing for Eucharist (Gr. 3) and who are active in the Faith Formation process (including Catholic School children) are eligible to enter the sacramental preparation sessions.

Confirmation – High School youth who are entering the 9th grade and who are active in the Faith Formation process or attend a Catholic High School are eligible to enter the Confirmation preparation sessions.

R.C.I.A. – Rite of Christian Initiation for adults are initiated into the Church through this process. Any individual who may be interested in becoming a member of the Catholic Church is invited. Please call the Church office.

SACRAMENTS OF VOCATION

Priesthood/Permanent Diaconate – Men who feel that they may be being called to the vocational life of Priesthood or Diaconate can contact the pastor at any time or call the Diocesan Vocation Office at 814-824-1111.

Matrimony – There is a required preparation process which normally includes 3 sessions with the pastor and an Engagement Encounter or Nova experience. Please notify the pastor at least 6 months prior to the anticipated date of marriage.

SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick—Celebrated for all who are seriously ill. The Sacrament is also available upon request.

Reconciliation – Children preparing for Reconciliation (Gr. 2) and who are active in the Faith Formation process (including Catholic School children) are eligible to enter the sacramental preparation sessions.

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St. Joseph Church

PARISHIONER INFORMATION

All practicing Catholics living in the Bennetts Valley Area who consider themselves members of St. Joseph Parish should be registered in the parish. All registered members of St. Joseph receive envelopes and receive periodic parish mailings. St. Joseph Parish is a Sacrificial Giving Parish, committed to serving the Lord with God-given time, talents and treasures. All registered members should be using their envelopes regularly. Parish membership is required to be a sponsor, to be married in the parish, to have a child baptized or to be registered in our Faith Formation program. Please call the church office to arrange a meeting to register in our parish.



For ad info. call 1-800-477-4574 • www.4lpi.com

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