



# St. Mary, Mother of God Church

A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg  
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust  
Roman Catholic Church  
608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229



*Established 1826*



## December 24th, 2017 Fourth Sunday of Advent

**Father Ronald Maquiñana—Pastor**  
[rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org](mailto:rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org)

### Parish Staff

William Girardi, *Pastoral Associate—412-719-7085*  
Claudia Vertosick, *Business Manager/Parish Secretary*  
Helen James, *Religious Education Director*  
Thomas Koharchik, *Choir Director*  
William Girardi, *Social Hall Coordinator—412-719-7085*  
David Valencic, *Parish Custodian*  
Richard Bertino, *Cemetery Caretaker*

### Ministries

Kristen Marhefka/Julie Polana Gardone—*Teen Ministry*  
Melissa Kristine/Beth Macurdy—*Evangelization*  
John Nemcek—*Homebound Ministry*

### Organizations

Diane Grant—*Christian Mothers*  
Ray Smetana/Mary Ellen Gray—*St. Vincent de Paul Society*

### Office Information

**Administrative Center Numbers & Hours :**  
724-295-2281 (Office) 724-295-3090 (Fax)  
Monday through Thursday - 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.  
Friday - 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

**Parish Website:** [www.stmaryfreeport.com](http://www.stmaryfreeport.com)

**Parish Email Address:** [thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com](mailto:thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com)

### Parish Information

**Saturday (Vigil):** 4:00 P.M.

**Sunday:** 8:30 & 11:00 A.M.

**Weekday Masses:** Monday through Friday—8:00 A.M.

**Holy Day of Obligation:** 8:00 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.

**Reconciliation:** Saturday - 3:00—3:45 P.M.

**Baptism:** Sundays within the 11:00 A.M. Mass (by appointment)

**Marriage:** Contact the Parish nine months in advance.

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults:** RCIA helps you to learn more about the Catholic faith. Pre-registration is required. Contact Fr. Ron or William Girardi at 724-295-2281.

**Hospital or Home Visit:** If you would like to receive Holy Communion or if you know someone who would like to have the priest visit, please call Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Contact Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

**Holy Communion:** Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are available to bring the Eucharist to the sick and homebound. If you know of someone, please call the Administrative Center at 724-295-2281.

**Baptism:** To understand the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. To register for one of these classes, please call the Administrative Center at 724-295-2281.

## From the Pastor's Desk



Our Advent season ends this week with the short observance of the fourth Sunday of Advent because in less than a day, we will be celebrating Christmas Eve and enter into another liturgical season, *the Christmas Season*. This rarely happens - about every five years. And as we are presented with this situation, maybe we are entertaining the thought of whether we should attend mass once or twice this Sunday. This can be a valid thought but I think what is important to consider is *am I giving what is due to God and not being legalistic*.

Yes, we may go to mass twice this Sunday in observance of the fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve later in the day, but it will make a difference if we are attending mass out of love for God. If God has been so good to us in so many ways, can we not reciprocate His goodness by also being good and showing our appreciation and gratitude towards Him in return? And I believe that the best way to express our gratitude and appreciation to God is by attending Church, being one with the celebration of the mass, and participating with the community of believers.

Therefore, our attending Mass becomes meaningful because we do not see it just as part of an obligation that we need to fulfill, but also a way to express our love and thanks to God with our family and loved ones together with the community gathered.

This Sunday, though we have a short celebration of the fourth Sunday of Advent, we can still observe it in a more solemn way by doing the traditional lighting of the candles in our advent wreath and remembering its message. We relight the candles of hope, faith and joy. And we light the fourth candle that is purple to symbolize peace and to remind us of the message of the angels: ***“Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men”***.

Finally, as we come to celebrate Christmas, may we see the love of God to us through His Son being born for us. His birth certainly gives joy to us and strengthens our faith because we have a God who became one with us, assuming our human nature. We can hope that this baby Jesus will bring light and meaning into our life once we welcome Him and have Him become part of our life.

This Christmas, let us join the choirs of angels, singing in exultation.

***Glory to God, all glory in the highest. O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!***



FORMED PICK OF THE WEEK

### The Mystery of Christmas

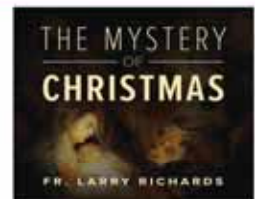
By Fr. Larry Richards

Unwrap the Greatest Gift Ever Given with Fr. Larry Richards

With humor, compassion, and clarity, Fr. Larry illuminates the true joy of Christmas and inspires us to better recognize, receive and respond to God's immense love for us.

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*"Fr. Richards challenged me to enter into the Christmas story with my eyes opened ... not just by celebrating Jesus' birth, but by participating in his life!"*

—Maureen, Spencer, NY

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Congratulations to Jackson John Ringler  
Rite of Acceptance



We would like to thank Dennis J. Daugherty Funeral Home for the beautiful Catholic Calendars. Once again, your generous gift is very much appreciated! *When you see Dennis, please remember to thank him.*

Decorating the Church



Over the course of the past several months, we have undertaken several major projects that have enhanced the beauty of our worship space within the church and sanctuary. These efforts would not be possible if it were not for the gifts of the following families and individuals.

**Interior Painting of the Church**

*Bequest of the Estate of Mr. Philip Fuhrman*

**New Crucifix**

*In Memory of Charles and Mary Young, by Children*

**The Wooden Cross**

*Hand made by Mr. Richard DeFelice*

**The Marble Sanctuary Floor**

*Macurdy Family Trust*

*Robert and Andrea Camerlo*

*Freeport Beverage—Jeff and Donna Smith*

*Memory of Charles and Mary Young*

*William Girardi*

*Tim and Bridget Fogarty*

*Renshaw Farms—Jason and Jamie Renshaw*

*Memory of Aldo Conti*

*Memory of Wilma Kelly*

*Memory of Kenneth Hughes*

*David and Cleatus Burk*

*Polana Family*

We are grateful for the treasures that are given for the Glory of God.

# DEDICATION

The dedication of the refurbishing of our church sanctuary (including the painting of the church) will be held at the 11:00 A.M. mass on Sunday, December 31st. The Very Reverend Kenneth Zaccagnini, Dean, will be the main celebrant for this special occasion. Light snacks and refreshments will be served in our Fellowship Hall immediately following mass. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending. Bring your family as we continue to celebrate the many blessings our parish has been given.



**Christmas Eve**  
5:00 & 10:00 P.M.  
**Christmas Day**  
10:00 A.M.



**Mardi Gras Wine Tasting Festival** will be held on Saturday, February 10th, 6:00—10:00 P.M., in our Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$30.00 each and includes wine tasting and a lite fare. For tickets, please call Bridget at 724-294-0089, Marianne at 724-295-9568 or Jeff at 724-596-0503 for tickets. Event sponsored by our Parish Council. Proceeds will benefit our Fellowship Hall Maintenance Projects.



**Holy Day of Obligation**  
*January 1st, 2018*  
**Blessed Virgin Mary,**  
**Mother of God**

Mass Schedule is as follows:

**Sunday, December 31st**  
4:00 P.M.

**Monday, January 1st**  
10:00 A.M.



*Thank you to all the food donors for our annual "Blessing Bag Campaign". 190 filled bags of groceries were received and taken to our Freeport Food Bank. Thank you, also, to Giant Eagle for their support by donating the brown paper bags for this collection. A big thank you to the volunteers who loaded up all the bags and transported them to the Food Bank. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is greatly appreciated!*

Religious Education Christmas Party—December 17th



*Calendar of Events*

**December 24th** No Religious Education Classes; No Choir Practice - 11:00 A.M. Mass; Baptism—12:15 P.M. - “Polliard” Christmas Eve—5:00 P.M. (Children’s Mass); 10:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Mass  
**December 25th** Christmas Day—10:00 A.M. Mass; Parish Office Closed  
**December 26th** Parish Office Closed  
**December 28th** Wedding Rehearsal (Polana/Wrazen) - 6:00 P.M.  
**December 29th** Wedding (Polana/Wrazen)—4:30 P.M.; Wedding Rehearsal (Kolish/Linden) - 6:00 P.M.  
**December 30th** Wedding (Kolish/Linden ) - 2:00 P.M.  
**December 31st** No Religious Education Classes; No Choir Practice - 11:00 A.M. Mass; Dedication—11:00 A.M. Mass Vigil Mass for the Holy Day of Obligation - Solemnity of Mary—4:00 P.M.  
**January 1st** Holy Day of Obligation - Solemnity of Mary—10:00 A.M. Mass; Parish Office Closed



Does your marriage need a re-birth? Begin the New Year by making a new effort to renew your marriage. Retrouvaille has helped 10's of 1,000's of couples experiencing marital difficulty at all levels including disillusionment and deep misery. For confidential information about or to register for the upcoming program beginning with a weekend on January 19th, 2018, please contact Retrouvaille at 412-277-3434. Please visit: <http://www.retrouvailleofpittsburghinc.org/> if you would like additional information.



At all of the Christmas Masses, we will have the “Children and Family Services Appeal”. On the coming Christmas Feast, which reminds us of the gift of God’s own Son, Jesus Christ given to each of us without question of our merit or eligibility, we ask you to support this appeal and make your contribution toward changing the future of an individual, a family or a child through the good work of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Greensburg.



The Bishop Morrow Personal Care Home (located in Leechburg) now has a vacancy. If you are interested or you know of someone that is, please call them at 724-845-2828.

Office for Clergy  
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**HIGH SCHOOL DISCERNMENT EVENING**  
 GRADES 9-12  
 An evening of prayer, fellowship, a meal, and talk on discernment.

Join us if you are seeking to know the Lords' will for your life and are open to discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

Friday, December 29, 2017  
 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Bishop Connare Center  
 2900 Seminary Drive  
 Greensburg, PA 15601

**DISCERNING GOD'S WILL**

For more information or to make a reservation send your request to [vocations@dioceseofgreensburg.org](mailto:vocations@dioceseofgreensburg.org)



## MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 24TH, 25TH, 30TH, 31ST, 2017 & January 1st, 2018

<i>Altar Servers</i>	<i>Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion</i>	<i>Lector</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Organist</i>	<i>Cantor</i>
Christmas Eve—5:00 P.M. TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Tom Koharchik	Jamie Phillips
Christmas Eve—10:00 P.M. TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Dave Wesolosky	Choir
Christmas Day—10:00 A.M. TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Greg Fuhrman	Alex Smith
Saturday—4:00 P.M.					
Bill Girardi Madison & Dawson Gaillot Zach Showers	Dave Brestensky Andrea Camerlo Fred Walker	Jackie DeFelice	Doug & Mary Scholl	Verne Bergstrom	Alex Smith
Sunday—8:30 A.M.					
Samuel & Jacob Kristine David Kristine Ali & Ben Brestensky	Laura Huth; Kim Holbein Rose Check	Laura Huth	Karen Nigra	Tom Koharchik	Tom Koharchik
Sunday—11:00 A.M.					
Celeste Beacom Jacob & Erin Schaeffer Victor & Olivia Svitek	Helen James Marushka Steele Bill Cogley	Rob Svitek	Jill Zalewski	Dave Wesolosky	Choir
New Year's Eve—4:00 P.M. TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Sue Myford	TBA
New Year's Day—10:00 A.M. TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Dave Wesolosky	Choir

### Mass Intentions

#### MASSES FOR THE 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT


<b>SATURDAY:</b> 4:00 P.M.	December 23rd ✦ James Negley (Jeff & Donna Smith)
<b>SUNDAY:</b> 8:30 A.M. 11:00 A.M. 5:00 P.M. 10:00 P.M.	December 24th ✦ Kenneth Hughes (Bob & Judy Bergstrom) St. Mary Parishioners St. Mary Parishioners St. Mary Parishioners
<b>MONDAY:</b> 10:00 A.M.	December 25th St. Mary Parishioners
<b>TUESDAY:</b> 8:00 A.M.	December 26th ✦ Elva Berry (Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren)
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b> 8:00 A.M.	December 27th ✦ Rose Aiello (Nieces/Nephews)
<b>THURSDAY:</b> 8:00 A.M.	December 28th ✦ Edith Pesci (Estate)
<b>FRIDAY:</b> 8:00 A.M.	December 29th ✦ Edna Barr (The Policicchio's)

#### MASSES FOR THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

<b>SATURDAY:</b> 4:00 P.M.	December 30th ✦ Special Intention (Mike Huth)
<b>SUNDAY:</b> 8:30 A.M. 11:00 A.M.	December 31st ✦ Charles Huth (Ellen Huth & Family) St. Mary Parishioners



The Altar Bread and Wine were donated for this week in loving memory of  
**JOHN COSTANTINO**  
By  
*Wife & Daughters*




In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ, The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn this week in loving memory of  
**JOHN BONO**  
By  
*Lola Bono*



**Offertory Collection for December 17th, 2017**  
No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 593  
No. of Envelopes Received: 229  
Collection: Offertory - \$4,398.00  
Electronic Payments (12) - \$735.00  
Loose - \$298.00; Children - \$51.25  
Feast of the Immaculate Conception - \$5.00  
**Total Collection - \$5,487.25**  
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**Saturday, December 30th, 2017**  
*Charlene Becker*

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