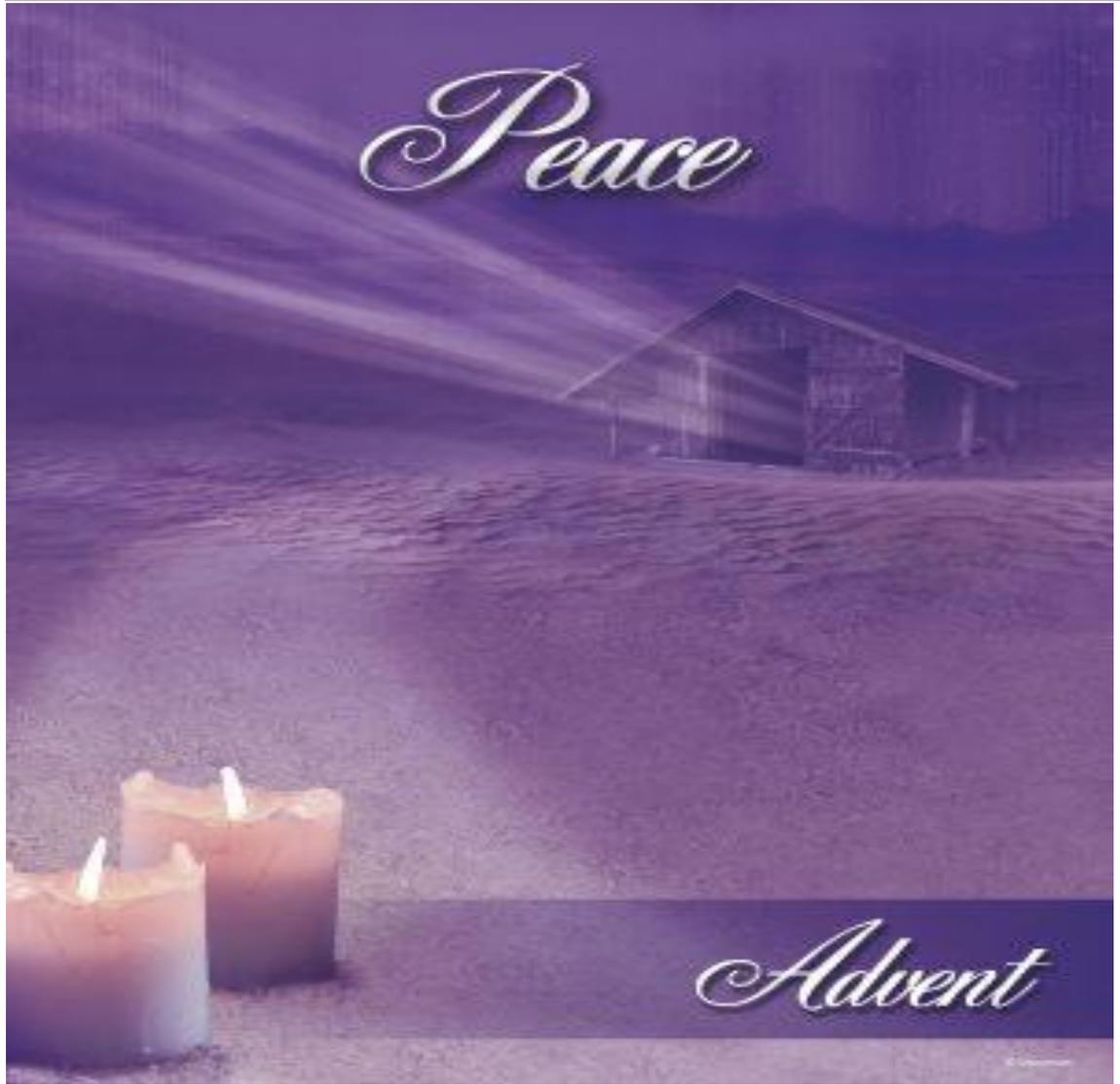




The Parish of Saints Philip and James  
1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780

631-584-5454

December 5th, 2021  
Second Sunday of Advent



*“Prepare the way of the Lord ,  
make straight his paths.”*

*Luke 3: 4*

*“With Philip & James we pray to live lives worthy of the call to be  
Apostles of Hope”*

Daily Mass: 7:30am and 9:15 am  
Saturday 5pm Sunday: 8am 10 am 12noon

## STS. PHILIP & JAMES PASTORAL STAFF

Parish Center Phone: 631-584-5454 Parish Fax: 631-862-9675

Website—www.sspj.org

### PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

Open Monday, Tuesday Wednesday 9am-6pm

Open Thursday 9am-6pm

Closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday

### CLERGY

Father Tom Haggerty, Pastor  
Father Joe Lobo-Associate Pastor  
Deacon Ronald Blasius  
Deacon John Keenan

### PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Sister Theresita Donach, CSFN

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Virginia Portanova

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: 631-584-3204

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 1-3

Charlotte Czujko~cczujko@sspj.org

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 4-6

Barbara Luna~bluna@sspj.org

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 7-8

Dominick Avento~davento@sspj.org

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Margaret Adams

### COORDINATOR OF PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

Lynn Sisti

### DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Dominick Avento

### DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

John Cordes

### SSPJ SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Diane M. Anderson

School Phone-631-584-7896 School Fax: 631-584-3258

### TRUSTEES

Brendan McGovern ~ Tina Cafaro

### PASTORAL COUNCIL

Michael Sharkey, Lou Guerra, Cynthia Lombardi, Paul Damato  
Martin Marut, Maureen Burke, Erin Nicastro

Financial Support Needed weekly to meet Parish budget: \$17,890

Weekly Collection: November 21st, 2021: \$14,716

Collection for Human Development 11/21 Sent to DRVC \$1,328.

Weekly Collection: November 28th, 2021: \$13,567.

Faith Direct : (131 Participants) 3,622

Total Collections: \$17,189.

FAITH DIRECT: VISIT SSPJ.ORG CLICK ON FAITH DIRECT ICON:  
USING SSPJ PARISH CODE: NY232

### Sacraments

**Baptism**— Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to register at the Pastoral Center for Pre-Baptism Program.

**Marriage**—Couples are asked to contact the Pastoral Center before visiting the reception hall. The Marriage Preparation process is nine months before your proposed wedding date.

**Confirmation**—Seventh and Eighth grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. Adults prepare through RCIA.

**Reconciliation**— Available Saturdays from 4:00pm-5:00pm in the Church or by contacting the Parish Center for an appointment.

**Anointing of the Sick**— In case of serious, unexpected illness, please contact the Parish Center office to arrange for a Priest to pray with the person who is ill. Anointing of the Sick is held on the first Sunday of the month following the 8:00am mass please see the Sacristan before mass.

**R.C.I.A.**— Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (non-Catholic adults desiring to become Catholic) are asked to contact the Parish Center Office.

**Eucharistic Adoration In The Church**— Monday 1:30pm -7pm

### PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVE FOR US IN YOUR PRAYERS



LCDR. MEGAN M. SHUTKA-VIK, USN

CAPT. WILSON MARKS- USN

CAPTAIN MICHAEL DOLAN- JR.

LT. COL. JOHN KAIRE

SPC. NICOLE A. CANNON

SGM. MICHAEL P. BORRELLI-US ARMY

CAPT. JOHN TULLY- USN

LT. COL. JAMES TULLY-US ARMY

JOSEPH SAGGIO- USNC

CAPTAIN PAUL WILLMS

STAFF SGT. MICHAEL LONGHENRY

LT. COL. PAUL T. JACKSON-

STAFF SGT ALEXANDER PARRELLA-USAF

RICHARD SOTOMAYER- USAF

SGT. CONNOR F. SCOTT- USMC

SGT. CORY O'HARA -USMC

CDR. ROBERT J. MARSH-USN

PFC. CHARLES CHRISTOPHER HOWELL

STEVEN CAVA-USN

ERIC SEELIN- USMC

CW2 CHRIS MUNZ

CW2 NATASHA WORTMAN

CORPORAL JAMES T. CASEY-USMC

SGT. JOSHUA MAHONEY- US ARMY

KEVIN JONES-USCG

PRIVATE JOSHUA OLSEN-USARNG

GLEN CRIMA-US ARMY

STAFF SGT. ANTHONY SCIAMETTA— US ARMY

MARIO CATANIA-USMC

RYAN ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-USMC

KYLE ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-US ARMY

ENS. RYAN M. SHOWS -USN

STAFF SGT. RYAN REXRODE-USMC

DR. KARA VANDEKIEFT, COL.-USAF

SGT. STEPHEN D. OUTCAULT-USMC

PAUL MUMOLO-USN

VICTORIA ZEMAN, USCG

KYLE J. GRUNER—US ARMY

MARK GIORDANO—US COASTGUARD

KELLI MCLAUGHLIN—LT. US ARMY NATL.GUARD

1 LT MICHAEL J BANG—MILITARY INTELLIGENCE US ARMY

MATTHEW PATRICK GALLAGHER US ARMY

MIDN ERIN NICASTRO, USN.

As you probably know, the Diocese of Rockville Centre has declared Bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy Law.

In order to be as helpful as possible to the parties that may be affected by this bankruptcy, we will be publishing the following note regarding “proof of claim forms” for the next few months:

Information regarding the deadlines for filing proofs of claim in the Diocese’s chapter 11 case and the forms to use can be found by clicking on the following link to the Diocese’s bankruptcy website and scrolling down the page <https://dm.epiq11.com/drvc>

# A Letter From Father Tom

Dear Friends,

Advent is a season of hope - and as Apostles of Hope we are both strengthened and challenged by today's readings. They are rich with words and phrases to remember and to act upon. The prophet Baruch tells us that **we and our children are remembered by God** and that God leads Israel and us with **joy** and with **mercy and justice for company**. In the second reading St. Paul tells us **God who began this good work in you will continue to complete it**. And in the gospel, we meet John the Baptist, a key Advent guide, who will echo words of the prophet Isaiah, reminding us to **prepare the way of the Lord** and that **the rough ways will be made smooth**. So much comfort and encouragement! But these words also call us to action – to really work at preparing, to strive to be people of mercy and justice, to wholeheartedly welcome our loving God into all aspects of our lives. Let's pray in thanksgiving and hope the words of today's psalm response, **The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy**.

Here's a family suggestion for Advent: welcome the Word among you! At dinner time, light an Advent candle and listen to one of the readings for the day. There's a site at Word on Fire. Let one word or one phrase speak to your heart as you listen. Then go around the table and mention that word or phrase. After the last person shares, pray together *Come, Lord Jesus* and then pray grace together.

This weekend we are delighted to welcome all second graders and their families to the Saturday 5pm mass and all first graders and their families to the Sunday 10am mass. It was terrific to resume Children's Liturgy at both the 5 and 10 last weekend! Many thanks to the Apostles of Hope who are providing this ministry to our young ones!

Though more than a little cold, it was great to gather at last Saturday's tree lighting! Many thanks to all the elves who prepared the evening's delights – the hot chocolate, the cookies and the song! Thank you also to Maria Sehne for putting together the Acts of Love Service booklet for students in both Religious Education and SSPJ School to help ready the way of the Lord.

During the week our fourth graders in Religious Education celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation and on Monday were invited to join in Eucharistic Adoration. I encourage all to consider preparing for Christmas by taking advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The sacrament is celebrated Saturdays at 4pm and we will have a Communal Celebration on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm in church. A bulletin insert suggests ways to prepare for the Sacrament.

Eucharistic Adoration is scheduled every Monday from 1:30pm, concluding with Benediction at 7pm. Perhaps spending a few moments in quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament might help us Apostles of Hope to stay rooted in the true gifts and hopes of Advent and Christmas.

And, with out further ado, and with the sincerest of **Thanks** and **Gratitude** held deeply in the hearts of the SSPJ Parish Family, **WE HAVE REACHED OUR CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL GOAL!!!** The lives of so many are so deeply touched by the efforts of the Catholic Ministries Appeal, thank you.

And,

*Before my surgery, my anesthesiologist offered to knock me out with gas or a boat paddle. It was an ether/oar situation.*

*I re-labeled all the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.*

*If you boil a funny bone it becomes a laughing stock. That's humerus!*

Peace,

*Father Tom*

# Mass Intentions, For the week of December 5th, 2021

## Banns of Marriage

~ Third~

**Eric Lewis**

and

**Samantha Donohue ~  
SSPJ Parish**



Eucharistic Adoration  
Monday in the church  
From 1:30pm-7:00pm

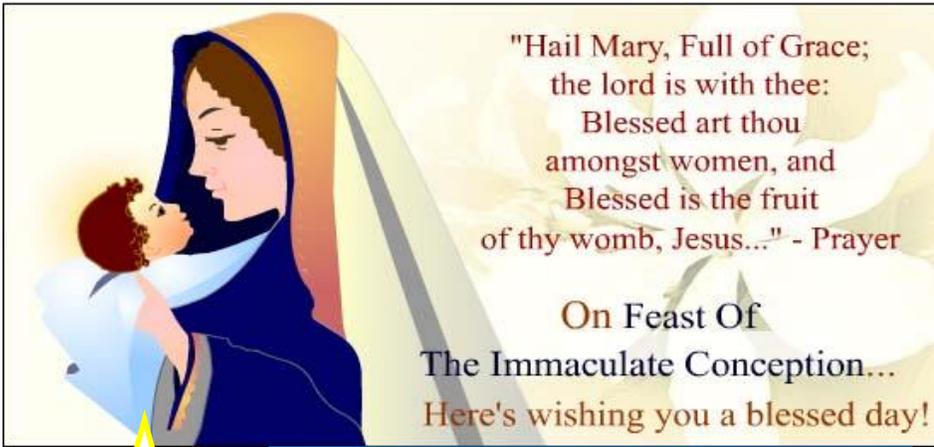
*A thousand years of enjoying  
human glory is not worth even  
an hour spent sweetly  
communing with Jesus in the  
Blessed Sacrament. Padre Pio*

### Remember in our hearts and prayers

Anthony J. Novellino, Sr.  
Antonette Sabatino  
Angie Mingione  
Angela Amoroso  
Anne Pell  
Anna & Harold Clayton  
Arthur Gureck  
Baby Ben  
Baby Penny Grace Candela  
Barbara Bombace  
Barbara Ruland  
Mattia Rose Lubrano  
Belinda Groneman  
Brendan McAlvin  
Cathy McCulloch  
Carol  
Carolyn Nehl  
Charles Figliosi  
Charlie Stangarone  
Claudia Chandler  
Deacon Ron Blasius  
Deirdre W.  
Donna Patrissi  
Dorothy Mitchell  
Elizabeth Martin  
Elizabeth Thorton  
Ellie Walsh  
Esther Styles  
Flo Donohue  
Gerald Maass  
Gloria Montesano  
Grace Bertolone  
Ginny & John Rief  
Gladys Blake  
Gregory Parker  
Helen  
Heidi Ray  
Jack Donohue  
Jamie Geiman  
Jennifer Clark  
Jessica Venditto  
John Cronin  
John DeStefano  
John Scmillio  
Joseph H

Joseph  
James Macchiano  
Judy Rampola  
Joseph Mazelis  
Joseph Costa  
Kenneth Cook  
Kathleen N.  
Kitty Cronin  
Kim Olofson  
Leon Donach  
Lynn McDonnell  
Mark Geld  
Marty Caltabiano  
Mary Ann Cesarski  
Mary Monte  
Mary Fresi  
Maryann Kevlin  
Maria Clark  
Marie del Cielo  
Marilyn Suli  
Matthew Parrrella  
Marie & Frank Fiocco  
Melissa C.  
Michael Fisher  
Michael Viviano  
Mike Lofaro  
Monsignor Iocavacci  
Nancy & Paul Bertran  
Nancy Cuccinotta  
Pasquale Savarese  
Pat LeDoux  
Peter Donach  
P.I.  
Ricardo Buffit  
Riordan Cavooris  
Richard Chiorando  
Robert Koop  
Sara Jean Andersen  
Stephen Dolce  
Suzanne Orlando  
Tara Cesarski  
Vivien Cordes  
Veronica Broderick  
Wayne Hendricks

<b>Saturday December 4th</b>	<b>Presider: Father Tom Lector: Halluska/Student</b>  <i>EM:Anderson/Damato/ Drechsler</i>	<b>9:15am</b>  <b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Bob Remhild &amp; The Hearney Family</b>  <b>Nicholas Gargiulo</b>
<b>Sunday December 5th</b>	<b>Presider: Father Tom Lector:Luna/Cavoorris</b> <i>EM:Koke/Martin/ Portanova</i>	<b>8am</b>	<b>For the People of SSPJ</b>
	<b>Presider: Father Joe Lector: Lombardi/Auletta</b> <i>EM:Orlando/Reichert/ McKie</i>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Deacon Ken Maher</b>
	<b><u>Collective Mass</u></b> <b>Presider: Father Joe</b> <b>Lector: Smith/Wos</b> <i>EM: Consenz/ Napolitano/Samson</i>	<b>12:00pm</b>	<b>Robert Remhild Margaret McLaughlin John Harney</b>
<b>Monday December 6th</b>	<i>Saint Nicholas –Bishop</i>	<b>7:30am</b>  <b>9:15am</b>	<b>Living~Pete Williams</b>  <b>Gertrude Christy</b>
<b>Tuesday December 7th</b>	<i>Saint Ambrose-Bishop</i>	<b>7:30am</b>  <b>9:15am</b> <b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Allen Evans</b>  <b>Living~Bautista Babies Vincent Danese</b>
<b>Wednesday December 8th</b>	<i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	<b>7:30am</b>  <b>9:15am</b> <b>7:00pm</b>	<b>Joseph Galletta</b>  <b>Kay &amp; Jimmy Carr</b>
<b>Thursday December 9th</b>	<i>Saint Juan Diego</i>	<b>7:30am</b>  <b>9:15am</b>	<b>Paul DeWeerd <u>Collective Mass:</u> Jason Monte Edward Mraz Peter Grennan John Rogers</b>
<b>Friday December 10th</b>		<b>7:30am</b>  <b>9:15am</b>	<b>Living~Kathy Gargano</b>  <b>Wallace Lopez</b>
<b>Saturday December 11th</b>	<b>Presider:Father Joe</b> <b>Lectors: Thompson/Student</b> <i>EM: Lombardi/Duffy/Toto</i>	<b>9:15am</b>  <b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Andrea Alfieri</b>  <b>Steven Rannazzisi</b>
<b>Sunday December 12th</b>	<b>Presider: Father Joe</b> <b>Lectors:Kanuiika/Willman</b> <i>EM:Czujko/Ramos/Sehne</i>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>For the People of SSPJ</b>
<b>Third Sunday of Advent</b>			
	<b>Presider: Father Tom</b> <b>Lectors:Donegan/Tobin</b> <i>EM:Sica/Mulhall/ Sotomayer</i>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Living~Karl Walz and Carol Walz</b>
	<b><u>Collective Mass</u></b> <b>Presider: Father Tom</b> <b>Lector:Cashman/Geier</b> <i>EM:Keane/Napolitano/ Samson</i>	<b>12:00pm</b>	<b>Joseph Winters Catherine Grayson John Hearney Philip Spina Kelin Calabria Carmine Lofaso</b>

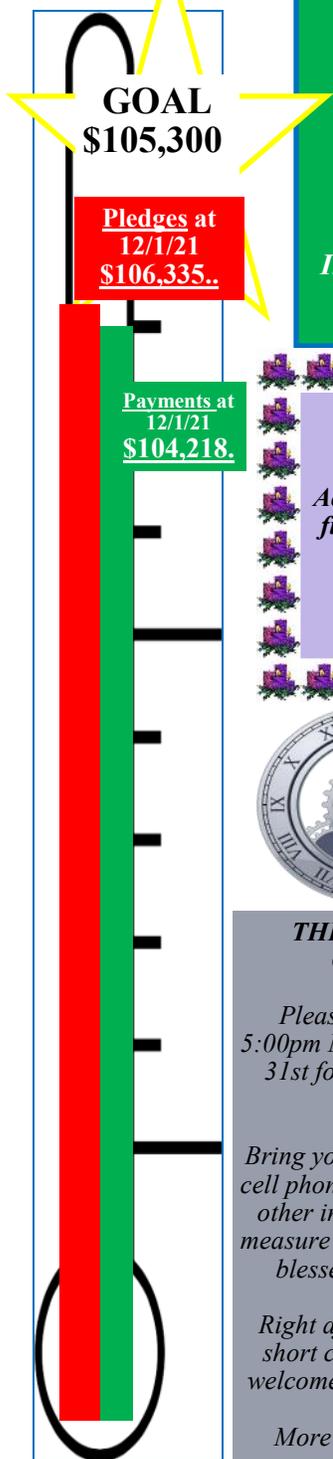


**Masses for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception:**

**Tuesday, December 7th, 2021  
At 5:00pm**

**Wednesday, December 8th, 2021**

**7:30am  
9:15am  
7:00pm**



**CATHOLIC MINISTRIES  
APPEAL  
UPDATE~ AS OF  
DECEMBER 1ST, 2021  
WE HAVE GRATEFULLY  
REACHED OUR GOAL!**

*In this season of thanks and gratitude we remain grateful for all your support.*



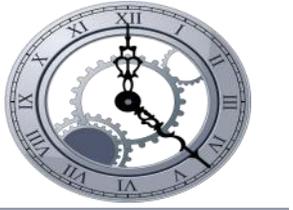
**WE ARE SO PLEASED TO WELCOME CHILDRENS LITURGY OF THE WORD BACK AT THE 5:00 MASS AND AT THE 10:00AM MASS**

**SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND:  
DECEMBER 11TH & 12TH  
FOR RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT FUND**

*Across the United States, hundreds of religious communities lack financial resources sufficient to meet the retirement and health-care needs of aging members.  
Your generosity for those who have dedicated their lives as Apostles of Hope is greatly appreciated.*



*We ask all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to sign up for Christmas and New Years Masses.  
Sign up sheets will be available in the Prayer Room.*



**THE BLESSING OF TIME**

*Please join us at the 5:00pm Mass on December 31st for the Blessing of Time.*

*Bring your watches, clock, cell phone, calendar or any other instrument used to measure or track time to be blessed during mass.*

*Right after, join us for a short celebration as we welcome in the New Year!*

*More info to follow...*

**THE MEN'S FORUM**  
AT THE CHURCH OF SAINTS PHILIP & JAMES  
*A brotherhood of men dedicated to growing in their faith & discipleship in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**EPISODE 4**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021**

**Video Presentation & Discussion: Bishop Robert Barron: "The Creed" Episode 4: "He Suffered Death"**

*What matters most about Jesus? The Creed centers not on his ministry, his teachings, his miracles, or his words, but on the great drama of the Paschal Mystery, which is the Son of God's descent into God-forsakenness with his suffering, death, Resurrection and Ascension. The risen and ascended Christ is the King of the universe, Ruler of the Church and Judge of all. One day, he will come again to fully inaugurate his eternal kingdom.*

*Join us as we watch Bishop Robert Barron's new 6 episode video series "The Creed", a combination of documentary footage and dynamic talks. With Bishop Barron as our guide, we will explore a deeper meaning of the Creed—our profound statement of faith—recited at every Sunday mass.*

6:00 to 7:00pm: Adoration: Main Church  
7:00 to 8:30pm: Video Presentation & Discussion: Bethany Center (Old Church) • Optional Coffee Social (Off Site)  
Come for all, or part of our evening's schedule. No membership required. Open to all men!

*\* Please Note: Due to the threat of COVID face masks must be worn and social distancing maintained in the Bethany Center. Masks are optional in the main Church.*

**Website: [www.sspjmensforum.org](http://www.sspjmensforum.org)**  
Church of Saints Philip & James • 359 Clinton Avenue • St. James, NY 11780 • 631-584-5454

**THANKING GOD THAT WE CAN CELEBRATE IN PERSON  
THE SSPJ MUSIC MINISTRY CHRISTMAS CONCERT!**



**The Parish of  
Saints Philip and James**

*One Carow Place  
Saint James N.Y. 11780*

**Music Ministry  
presents**

**A Christmas Concert  
December 19, 2021**

**6:00pm**

**in the Church**

**Free Admission**

**This is our Christmas gift to you, so  
plan on joining us for a special evening of  
spiritual, seasonal favorites, and  
our annual sing-along.**

**Please make time to join us for an evening  
Of music.**

## The Sacrament of Reconciliation

*Celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation during the season of Advent is a powerful way to prepare for the celebration of Christmas. This sacrament celebrates God's love for us, and God's desire that we relish that love and allow it to overflow into our lives.*

*The sacrament of Reconciliation has a long and varied history. As with all our sacraments, it has a personal and communal dimension. The revision in the ritual following the Second Vatican Council reminds us of the importance of both dimensions.*

*We're called to:*

*Gather-Reflect on God's word-Reflect on our response-Confess our sins, our sorrow, and our desire to respond more generously to God's love-Receive God's mercy and go forth to live that love.*

*On Monday evening, December 13th, 2021  
There will be a Communal Reconciliation Service in  
The Church at 7:00pm.*

*We will gather in song as the candles of the Advent Wreath are lit, reminding us that Christ our Light overcomes any and all darkness.*

*We will listen and respond to the Word of God proclaimed.*

*The homily will invite us to reflect on God's love for us and God's invitation to deepen our experience of God's love, mercy, and forgiveness.*

*As a community, we will be led in a simple examination of conscience, and allowing God to gently reveal to us and sinfulness we need to admit.*

*As a community, will be given an act of penance to help us heal our relationships with God, others and ourselves and will pray an Act of Contrition together.*

*As music plays we are invited to approach on the priests stationed around the church, confessing the sin revealed and receiving individual absolution.*

*We continue on our almost concluded Advent journey, praying that all of us feel and nurture Emmanuel, God-with-us, this Christmas and throughout our lives.*

**Advent**  
Reconciliation



## An Advent Reflection from Sister T~

Dear Friends,

We are certainly in the season of Advent. How do I know? Well, everyone is rushing around trying to get ready for Christmas. It can be a very stressful and intense time. Fr. George Aschenbrenner S.J. once said "we should not confuse intensity with profundity. Just because an experience is intense doesn't mean it is profound."

So then how do we create profound experiences during the intense situations we may find ourselves in? One way that is suggested by Ascension Press in their REJOICE series is to spend some extra time with God and place yourself amid the Advent Story. For if Christmas is meant to change our lives then we need to take the time to enter into the changing.

During this Advent season can I sit patiently with God and share with him who I am with all my heart aches? Can we name the aches in our lives? I think we share some of the same aches - the ache of wanting to be intimate with God and others, the ache of longing to be recognized, known, loved, held. Ah, but can we these aches to ourselves? To do so and name them would make us vulnerable and dependent on God. This is hard for those of us who want to be in control and avoid the aches. We try so hard to avoid being with ourselves and engaging with God in the wait.

Does God want to be with us in our aches, messiness, and brokenness? My answer would be YES! Why else would he have been born in a messy stable instead of a palace? God wants to be born in the messiest places of our lives. Why not open your heart to him and your aches.

During this Advent Season spend time opening your heart to your aches, accepting your brokenness and pay attention to the places you find yourself in. Pray with Psalm 37:3-7 during this week, recognize where you are presently and know that God wants to be with you - brokenness and all!

Till next week,

Sister Theresita

PS While writing this a friend called and we talked about brokenness and how our light can shine through it like light shining through a piece of broken glass. God has created us so our light can shine forth despite our aches.

## RCIA MINISTRY

*"I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, And there will be one flock, one shepherd."*

The RCIA Team Meets Sunday Mornings in the SSPJ Room from 8:45am-9:45am

*The Following topics are open to all:*



12/5	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun Advent	The People of God: Members of the Church
12/12	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun Advent	Faith & Hope; Rite of Acceptance
12/19	4 <sup>th</sup> Sun Advent	Charity

# Religious Education News



*If you are able to lend a helping hand offering time, patience, and love to our wonderful students with special needs, kindly contact the Religious Education office at 631-584-3204.*

*A simple commitment is needed twice a month to spend time and share faith, in person, in the auditorium on Saturday mornings from 9-10am.*

ACTS OF LOVE~A SERVANTS HANDS FOR  
DECEMBER, 2021

PACKETS FOR OUR ADVENT ACTS OF  
LOVE PROJECT ARE AVAILABLE AT THE  
PARISH CENTER OFFICE, FROM 9AM -5PM  
MONDAY—THURSDAY.



## DECEMBER PRAYER OF THE MONTH

*Glory be to the Father  
and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the  
beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.*

### *We Remember with love...SSPJ Lights of Love Christmas Tree*

*Those who wish to remember their loved ones with this special tribute are asked to complete the form below and return it to the Parish center office by the following dates:*

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 6TH**~ *For your loved ones names to be printed in the Christmas bulletin and displayed upon the Christmas Altar*

**\$5.00 donation per each name being memorialized**

### **Annual Tree Lighting Memorial**

*We Remember:*

-----  
-----

*Remembered*

*by:* -----  
-----

*Contact #:* -----

*Amount Paid:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Number of Names:* \_\_\_\_\_ *x\$5.00 per name*  
*= Total Enclosed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Please place this form in an envelope with payment and return to the Parish Center office by:  
Monday December 6th for inclusion in the Christmas bulletin.*

## Our Family Prayer Intentions

Please bring your intention to mass next weekend, December 12th & 13th

We as a Parish Family will be holding you in our prayers

FAMILY/STUDENT NAMES	STUDENT GRADE LEVEL/SSPJ SCHOOL

*Dear Jesus,*

*We thank you for all the blessings we have received by your grace and love. We pray that you will continually remind us that we are never alone, and that you are always by our side.*

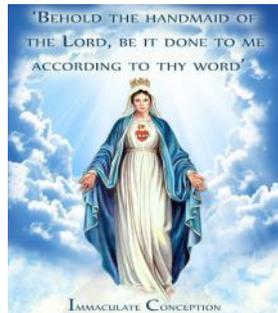
*Jesus, we offer you our hearts, our needs, our intentions, knowing that you hear us. Let your will be done.*

*Amen*

Together as a family we offer our prayers...



## Parish Social Ministry



*We Remember,*

*John J. Dattoma  
Helen Havran  
Harold J. Walsh  
Harvey A. Wenz  
Robert Kay*

*Safely Home In the Loving Arms of the Lord*

*During Eucharistic Adoration on December 8, following the 7 PM Mass, each of us has the opportunity to visit with Jesus, in person, between the hours of 8 and 10 PM. You do not have to stay the whole time, stop in when you can. What better gift to offer Him for Christmas than to spend some time with Him to pray for the most vulnerable in our society!*



**Before it's too late, we need to make courageous choices that will recreate a strong alliance between man and Earth. We need a decisive 'yes' to care for creation and a strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible.**

**Pope Benedict XVI**

### DECEMBER

**December is the month in which all the forces of nature are aligned to help us give birth to the Light within.**

**Winter casts a spell over the land, and all of nature sleeps.**

**We gather by the fire  
To hear stories of the Christ Child,  
A reminder of the hearts' true light...  
Arise now and trim your lamps.**

**It is time to enter the kingdom  
and hear the inner voice that calls  
you**

## *Annual Pick A Star Program*

*Our tree will be located in the front of the church near the statue of St. Joseph.*

*Please choose a star (s) indicating the items you would like to purchase for someone in need.*

*Unwrapped gifts should be placed in gift bags under the tree with the colored star tag securely attached.*

*The color of the ornament determines its destination.*

*Please place **UNWRAPPED** gift cards in the basket near the tree at weekend Masses, OR, put them in the collection basket, OR drop them off at the parish center during the week.*

*All our gifts will be delivered on Thursday, December 18th, 2021 to allow our families and organizations time to sort and determine the distribution*

# Congratulations to SSPJ School November Apostles of HOPE!

## *November Apostles of Hope 2021*

**Rita Byrne** is an Apostle of Hope. Rita shares her time and talent throughout the week preparing our students to be the best lectors they can be. No matter what Rita has on her schedule she always makes time for our students. You will be sure to find Rita at 5 pm Saturday Mass giving last minute words of advice to our lectors. You will then see Rita beaming with pride once the students are finished reading and they remember to book the book away..

### Nursery

**Margot Candela** is an Apostle of Hope. Margot loves to learn and is very proud of all her schoolwork. She is a new big sister and is so happy to share stories about her baby sister! She loves to say prayers and always listens at Mass. Margot is helpful and kind to her friends. She loves to twirl and spread joy to all her classmates.

### Pre-Kindergarten

**Brandon Felicetti** is an Apostle of Hope. Brandon is an excellent role model to his fellow classmates. Brandon is reverent during morning and afternoon prayers and is always eager to share his knowledge of God and his faith with the class. Brandon always puts his best effort forward and tries his best. He is doing a spectacular job building a beautiful city at SSPJ.

### Kindergarten

**Kylah Pearson** is an Apostle of Hope. Kylah comes in each day with a smile on her face and a positive attitude. She is always reverent during morning and afternoon prayers. She is a good friend to her classmates. She is especially helpful to her friends with putting their coats on. Kylah strives to be like Jesus by keeping her friends safe and warm.

### Grade 1

**Connor Regan** is an Apostle of Hope. Connor is eager to learn all about Jesus and participates in Mass weekly. Connor is very kind and thoughtful with his peers. One of the students was unable to reach to hang her bag and without being asked, Connor reached and helped her hang it up. This is just one example of the kindness that Connor shows to the people around him. He is always spreading smiles and is excited to learn. Connor is a wonderful follower of Jesus.

### Grade 2

**Gabriella Scott** is an Apostle of Hope. Gabriella comes to school with a smile on her face and works hard everyday in class and is a good friend to her classmates. She always has a kind word to say and is eager to help. Gabriella takes good care of her sister at dismissal time. Gabriella is attentive at Mass each week and is learning all the responses that are said during Mass. She is getting ready to receive Jesus at her First Holy Communion.

### Grade 3

**Sebastian Martinez** is an Apostle of Hope. He is a kind and considerate student who always tries his best in class. He is a helper during Sunday Mass and is reverent when he prays. He is respectful to all his peers and is a good friend to all. He is a great example of an Apostle of Hope.



### Grade 4

**Capri Lisa** is an Apostle of Hope. Capri is kind and friendly to everyone. She enjoys attending Church and listening to the word of God. Capri also acts on Jesus' calling by being an Usher at weekend Masses. At recess, Capri took notice of a student sitting alone on our school "Buddy Bench." She acknowledged the student and invited the student to play with her. Capri is welcoming and she enjoys being a light for others, just like Jesus taught us.

### Grade 5

**Connor Cassidy** has been a great example of what it means to be an Apostle of Hope. Connor was recently installed as an altar server at his home parish, and serves and participates well in both his parish and school Masses. Connor thoughtfully completes his weekly bulletin reflections and asks excellent questions during religion class. He is a student and friend who can always be counted on!

### Grade 6

**Benjamin Wos** is an Apostle of Hope. Ben is an altar server for Mass and loves to volunteer to serve at daily Mass. He also goes to Sunday Mass with his family. He goes out of his way to be kind to other students. He loves coming to school and is always ready to learn. Ben also did an excellent job with his Saints Presentation! His kindness, humor, and joy makes him an excellent disciple of Jesus.

### Grade 7

**Alexandra Paredes** is an Apostle of Hope. Inside the classroom, Alex strives to do her best work and sets an example as to what an engaged, thoughtful learner looks like. Alex brightens any room she walks into with her positive, boisterous energy and attitude. Alex's responses are always thought through in all subjects, but especially religion. Alex models what it means to be a Catholic when she plays with her pre-k buddy and helps her to participate in school Mass. Alex hands in her weekly reflections on time and has even volunteered to be a lector at Mass. Alex has a beautiful spirit.

### Grade 8

**Nicole LoCastro** is an Apostle of Hope. Nicole is an active participant in the Sts. Philip and James community. Nicole attends Mass regularly and completes her reflections each week. Nicole is a cantor at Mass on Saturday evenings as well as for school Masses. Nicole is a member of the senior choir, drama club and the school band. In addition to these activities, Nicole excels in the classroom and always gives 100% when it comes to her school work.

# Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Cycle C

Zephaniah 3:14-18a  
Isaiah 12:2-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:10-18

**Monday December 13**  
**St. Lucy**  
Numbers 24:2-7,15-17a  
Ps 25:4-9  
Matthew 21:23-27

**Tuesday December 14**  
**St. John of the Cross**  
Zep 3:1-2,9-13  
Ps 34:2-3,6-7,17-19,23  
Matthew 21:28-32

**Wednesday December 15**  
Isaiah 45:8c-8,18,21c-25  
Ps 85:9ab-14  
Luke 7:18b-23

**Thursday December 16**  
Isaiah 54:1-10  
Ps 30:2,4-6,11-13  
Luke 7:24-30

**Friday December 17**  
Genesis 49:2,8-10  
Ps 72:1-4,7-8,17  
Matthew 1:1-17

**Saturday December 18**  
Jeremiah 23:5-8  
Ps 72:1-2,12-13,18-19  
Matthew 1:18-25

The Third Sunday of Advent focuses our attention on the spirit of joyfulness, because this is an essential mark of true faith. All the readings are full of joy and the thrill of happy expectation.

In the Gospel reading, John the Baptizer preaches good news to the people, and they are filled with joyful anticipation for whatever God is about to do.

Do you know that joy is a ministry? It's an important way to share the faith. We all have a calling to do this ministry wherever there is misery and hopelessness.

Let's look at how John fulfilled this ministry of joy. We might think he was anything but joyful in his robe of scratchy camels hair and his fiery sermons about repenting from sin. But look closer. His ministry prepared people's hearts to receive Jesus.

Having faith means trusting God which means resting in

hope which produces joy. When you or someone you know is lacking joy, it's because Jesus has not yet been invited fully into the situation that's been stealing the joy. It might be too early in the grieving process, which is healthy and normal, or it might a lack of faith, which needs nurturing.

The ability to experience the joy of faith comes from turning to the love of God and receiving his comfort in the midst of hardships. It also arises from getting to

know the joyful side of Jesus and the joyful purposes behind all of his teachings.

Jesus preached going the extra mile, loving our enemies, and doing good to those who cause us hardships, none of which is fun. What we need to discover and then share with others is that holy living, although not always fun, is what unites us to the joyful love of Jesus and the joyful purposes of everything he preached.

Remember, even going to the cross produces joyful results.

The good news is: Jesus didn't just tell us how to be holy, he gave us the power to be holy: He gave us his Holy Spirit.

And when others see the Holy Spirit's activity in us, if they know that Jesus is the reason for our joy, they are evangelized by our faith!

### Reflect & Discuss:

1. Think of a recent sin you've committed. How did it prevent you from experiencing joy?
2. The next time, how will you rely on the Holy Spirit to help you turn temptation into joy?
3. Name some of the special joys you experience during Advent and Christmas; how do they help you grow stronger in holiness?
4. Describe a time when you helped someone else become joyful; how did Jesus reveal himself in that?

## LEAVING CHURCH

Why are so many people leaving their churches? There is no one answer to that question. People are complex. Faith is complex. The issues are complex.

Looking at the question, it can be helpful to distinguish among a number of groups. The *Nones*, the *Dones*, the *Spiritual-but-not-Religious*, the *Indifferent*, the *Angry*, and the *Marginalized*. While there is some overlap among these groups, each has its own set of issues with the church.

The *Nones* are those who refuse to identify with any religion or faith. Asked on a census form, what is your faith or religion? they answer "none". Theirs is an agnostic stance. They are not necessarily atheistic or hostile to faith, religion, and the churches. Rather, it's that at this time in their lives they refuse to identify themselves with any explicit faith or church. Some are humble about it, others arrogant; in the end, the stance is the same, an agnosticism about religion and faith.

The *Dones* are those who, in their own words, are done with religion and often with explicit faith as well. *Done with it!* They can consider themselves done for any number of reasons, from having had a bad experience with religion growing up, to anger at the church, to the intoxicating power of a culture that can seemingly offer itself as a sufficient substitute for religion. They have been there, considered religion, and moved on.

The *Spiritual-but-not-Religious* are those who believe in the value of spirituality but not of any church. They have chosen to pursue a spiritual path outside of any ecclesial community, believing that (at least for them) the spiritual journey is best done outside of organized religion. There can be many reasons for this kind of attitude, not least the overpowering ethos of individuality and personal freedom pervading our culture. In one's faith journey today, people prefer to trust only their own search and experience.

The *Indifferent* are just that, indifferent to religion (while perhaps still nursing some faith). There can be a myriad of reasons why these folks feel indifferent to religion and perhaps also to faith. Our culture, for all its goodness, is also a powerful narcotic that can, for most of the years of our lives, swallow us whole in terms of anesthetizing our religious instincts and having us believe in what Charles Taylor calls a *self-sufficient humanism*. For long periods of our lives, our world can *seem* enough for us and while this is the case, indifference to religion can be a real option.

The *Angry* are those who for reasons they can name, no longer go church. Any number of causes can be at play here – clerical sexual abuse, the church's treatment of women, racism, the church's failure to live out the gospels credibly, their own church's involvement or non-involvement in politics, a bad history with their church, a bad pastor, or personal mistreatment in a pastoral situation. Persons inside this group sometimes end up seeking a new ecclesial home inside another denomination, but many just stay at home on a Sunday morning.

The *Marginalized* are those who feel themselves outside the understanding, empathy, and spiritual scope of the churches. This includes everyone from many inside the LGBTQ community, to the homeless on our streets, to countless thousands who feel (consciously or unconsciously) that the messiness of their lives somehow excludes them from ecclesial community. They feel like outcasts to religion and our churches.

People are leaving their churches for a multitude of reasons and this begs some further questions. When people are leaving their churches, what actually are they leaving? And, where are they going, if anywhere?

In a recent book, *After Evangelicalism, The Path to a New Christianity*, David Gushee asks this question about those leaving their churches. Are they clear on what they are actually leaving? *Do they know whether they are leaving church, leaving their denominations, leaving the faith, leaving Jesus, or just leaving?*

More importantly, he asks, what will be their endgame? Will they end up in another denomination, or as *Spiritual-but-not-Religious*, or as agnostic, or just as disillusioned?

Perhaps that question is not so important for the *Nones*, the *Dones*, the *Spiritual-but-not-Religious*, the *Indifferent*, and for many of the *Marginalized* – but it is for the *Angry*, for those who feel alienated from their churches. Where do you go when anger keeps you away from your family table? Do you search for a more like-minded family? Do you give up on finding a family table? Do you just stay home on a Sunday morning? Are you okay to go to your deathbed still angry? Are you content to remain disillusioned?

Leaving church: two questions stare us in the face. Why are more and more people leaving their churches or simply not going to them? And, what's the religious future of those who no longer go to church? The former is a question for the churches themselves, the latter a question to ponder for those no longer going to church.