



ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS: Sundays 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM High, 11:30 AM, 5:45 PM

Most Rev. Charles J. McGuire, *Pastor* • Rev. Stephen McKenna
Rev. Vili Lehtoranta • Rev. Thomas Simpson • Rev. Anthony Brueggemann

December 8, 2024 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ADVENT II



¶ IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Legion of Decency Pledge is renewed today, and we also continue our Immaculate Conception Novena. **St. Nicholas** will be visiting the children after the morning Masses. Sunday Classes are at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction are at 4:45 PM.



¶ FUNERAL FOR †FR. THIELEN

Please pray for the repose of the soul of †Fr. **James Thielen**, who died this past Tuesday, December 3, the feast of the great missionary priest St. Francis Xavier. His funeral arrangements are as follows.

Wednesday, December 11th:

4-8 PM Visitation in church
5:00 PM Vespers of the Dead
7:30 PM Rosary

Thursday, December 12th:

8:00 AM Matins & Lauds for the Dead
10:00 AM Pontifical Requiem Mass, followed by the Burial at Gate of Heaven Cemetery. Luncheon follows at church.



¶ UPCOMING

Church Decorating: December 23



¶ NEXT SUNDAY: ADVENT III



Next Sunday is Gaudete Sunday. The **St. Lucia Procession** will take place before

the High Mass. The Blessing of Expectant Mothers will be available at the Communion Rail. Don't miss the **Christmas Bake Sale!** Catechism Classes will be at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction will be at 4:45 PM.



📖 **Set Your Missal:** Advent III, commemoration of the Immaculate Conception. Trinity Preface.

¶ RORATE MASSES

A special Advent observance features the short votive Mass of Our Lady, sung in the early morning by candlelight as we await the coming of Christ, the Light of the World. Rorate Masses this week are on Tuesday at 7 AM, and Saturday at 7:30 AM.

¶ CHRISTMAS ENVELOPES

Envelopes are in the vestibule for Poinsettia Memorial Offerings (to be turned in to the office *no later* than December 19th) and for the Christmas Novena of Masses.



¶ CALENDARS ARE IN!

Our Calendar for 2025 has arrived. Pick up your copy today in the bookstore. Grab your collection envelopes as well.

Collection Report

Sunday, December 1st.....\$7,191.00
Second Collection.....\$2,870.00
Alter Christus.....\$353.00

NATURE'S SOLITARY BOAST
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

When Pius IX solemnly proclaimed the Immaculate Conception in 1854, he affirmed that the Virgin Mother of God possesses a "plenitude of innocence and sanctity." The Church somehow always knew that Mary's holiness surpassed that of other saints. What required clarification was the truth that this grace flows from a special divine prerogative accorded only to Mary. From the first moment of her conception, Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin. As the poet exclaims, "Tainted Nature's solitary boast!" Among men, one woman alone remains "Full of Grace." Why did the Church wait until the nineteenth century to confirm the unique holiness that belongs to the Mother of the Redeemer? The typically modern fascination for progress reached new heights during this period. The modern world, preoccupied as it is with evolutions, requires reminding of the permanent character of God's gifts. So do we. What better way to announce the durable, abiding character of divine grace than to hold up Mary's Immaculate Conception? In 1858, Our Lady confirmed the Church's wisdom. When she appeared to St. Bernadette at Lourdes, Mary said simply, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Deo gratias!

— *The Magnificat*



A PRAYER TO MARY IMMACULATE

O Virgin Immaculate, thou who by a singular privilege of grace wast preserved from original sin, look in pity upon our separated brethren, who are nevertheless thy children, and call them back to the center of unity. Not a few of them, although separated from the Church, have kept a certain veneration for thee; and do thou, generous as thou art, reward them for it, by obtaining for them the grace of conversion.

Thou wert conqueror of the infernal serpent from the first instant of thy existence; renew even now, for it is now more necessary than ever before, thine ancient triumphs; glorify thy divine Son, bring back to Him the sheep that have strayed from the one fold and place them once more under the guidance of the Church; let it be thy glory, O Virgin who destroyest all heresies, to restore unity and peace to all Christian people. Amen.



NOVENA PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment in which the Son of God was born of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. At that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my petitions through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.

(Traditionally said 15 times a day from St. Andrew's Day until Christmas.)

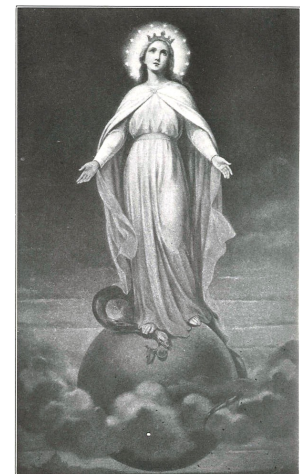
MARY IMMACULATE

Pure are the soft and wintry snows
That lie on hill and lea,
And pure the breeze that freshly blows
Across the deep blue sea;
And pure the fragrant lilies are
Amid their cool green leaves,
And pure the light of moon and star
That shines on frosty eves.
But purer far the angel train
That ever sweetly sing
In glorious and glad refrain
The praise of God, their King.

Oh, free from any stain of wrong
Are all the saints that hear
With joy untold the angels' song
Rise ever soft and clear;
And far more radiant than the gems
Won from some deep-delved mine
Are all the saintly diadems
In Paradise that shine.
But brighter diadem wears she
Who sits in royal state
By Him who died on Calvary,
Mary Immaculate!

For her radiant angel choir
Pours forth a ceaseless song,
On her the saints with souls afire
Gaze rapturously and long.
No rose or lily, howe'er fair,
No dewdrop on the sward,
For purity may once compare
With her who bore Our Lord.
How pure she is no pen can tell
No tongue her praise relate;
Beloved in heaven, feared in hell,
Mary Immaculate!

— M. R.



✠ THE BISHOP'S NOTE ✠

Someone once recently wrote: "It is easy to shine when the ones before you laid the foundations." I couldn't agree more! This is the whole story of the Catholic Church. Our Lord laid the foundation, or rather, He IS the foundation, but it is the Apostles who reaped the fruit of Our Lord's labor and sacrifice. This is the story of our church here in West Chester as well. The growth of our parish and of the missions is, ultimately, God's doing. However, God's normal way of acting is to do so through instruments of His choosing. Right now, we are reaping the fruits of Bishop Dolan and Fr. Cekada's labors and sacrifices. Some days, our prayer is simply not to ruin the work of God and of our predecessors, since we are simply instruments that God can use or not use as He chooses. Our job is simply to keep ourselves prepared to be used by God at any time, or to be satisfied to be left in a corner and hidden away when we are not being used—like a broom after we are done sweeping the floors.

It is easy to see the results of the work of such public and well known figures as Bishop Dolan and Fr. Cekada, but it has been amazing to see and to hear the fruits of the years of labor of priests who have had a behind-the-scenes sort of apostolate, such as can be said of †Fr. James Thielen. As one man recently said of him, "Everywhere you go you find his fingerprints." Do you remember how Bishop Dolan had a reputation of being the best at preaching, teaching the lives of the saints, or the carrying out of liturgical functions? Do you remember how we would go to Fr. Cekada for deep questions on the Church, Canon Law, and such things because we knew that he was one of the best? Well, you wouldn't necessarily know it unless you were among the clergy, but Fr. Thielen was unanimously thought of as the one who was the best at taking care of the sick. That was his special grace, given to him by the Sacred Heart of Jesus. No one was better at it than him. Ask any priest from my generation or the previous generation and you will get the same answer.

God certainly took care of Fr. Thielen during his last illness. Blessed be God for having sent Fr. Brueggemann to give him the Last Rites late on Saturday night, and for having allowed a priest and parishioners to be with him as he drew his last breath. Yes, yes, blessed be God forever. God truly loves His priest and took such tender care of him.

Don't make him a saint yet though. It is possible that he is in Purgatory and it is our duty to not abandon this priest by assuming him to be in Heaven unless it has been revealed by God that this is true. Pray

for him, especially if you have benefited at all from his apostolate.

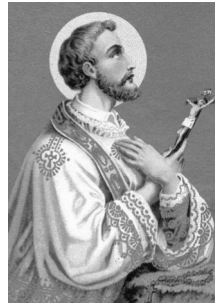
We are all very busy preparing for this week's funeral. Several priests will be staying with us this week. I thank you in advance for your help and your prayers during this time. In turn, you will be remembered in ours!

In the Sacred Heart,

Bishop McGuire



A GOOD DAILY PRAYER FOR ADVENT



O my God! Mighty and merciful Father, Creator of all things of the world! Without the possibility of doubt, I firmly believe in Thee, my God and Lord, since Thou art my entire good. I believe that I shall be saved through the infinite merits of the sufferings and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord, even though my sins from the time of my childhood, and those which I have committed up to this present hour, are very great, for Thy mercy is greater than the malice of my sins. Thou, Lord, hast created me...and Thou hast given me a body and soul and all that I have. And Thou, my God, have made me to Thy likeness...

O Christians, let us give praise and thanks to God, Three and One, for having revealed to us the true Faith and law of His Son Jesus Christ. O Lady Saint Mary, Hope of Christians, Queen of Angels and of all the saints who are in heaven! I commend myself to thee, my Lady, and to all the saints, now and for the hour of my death, so that thou mayest protect me from the world, the flesh, and the devil, my enemies, who are eager to draw my soul down into hell. O Lord Saint Michael, protect me from the devil in the hour of my death, when I shall be about to render an account to God of my past life.

Weigh, Lord, my sins with the merits of the Passion and Death of my Lord Jesus Christ and not with my few deserts. I shall thus be free from the power of my enemy and shall go to enjoy an eternal and everlasting bliss.

— St. Francis Xavier



✠ CALENDAR

MON	12/9/24	RESUMED MASS OF SUNDAY 8:00 AM Low Mass Holy Souls (<i>Arlinghaus Family</i>) 11:25 AM Low Mass Mark & Annie Fischer – Happy Anniversary (<i>Mom & Pop</i>)
TUE	12/10/24	WITHIN THE OCTAVE • ST. MELCHIADES, PM <i>OUR LADY OF LORETTO</i> 7:00 AM Rorate Mass †Repose of the soul of †Rev. James Thielen (<i>C. Simpson family</i>) 8:00 AM Low Mass Special Intention Deceased (<i>Mr. & Mrs. Mark Lotarski</i>) 11:25 AM High Mass Fr. Simpson – Thank you! (<i>Sr. Eulalia</i>) 5:00 PM Low Mass †Mrs. Alexa Martin – Month’s Mind (<i>C. Simpson family</i>)
WED	12/11/24	ST. DAMASUS I, PC • WITHIN THE OCTAVE 7:00 AM Low Mass Special Intention – D.A. (<i>C. Simpson family</i>) 8:00 AM Low Mass Happy Birthday Aunt Julie (<i>Stafford family</i>) (from 12/12) 11:25 AM High Mass †Fr. James Thielen (<i>Christopher Browne</i>) 4:00-8:00 PM Visitation for †Fr. Thielen 5:00 PM Vespers of the Dead 7:30 PM Rosary
THU	12/12/24	WITHIN THE OCTAVE • OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE 7:00 AM Low Mass †H.J. Druecker (Father) (<i>Joe Druecker</i>) 8:00 AM Matins & Lauds for the Dead 10:00 AM Pontifical Requiem †Fr. James Thielen Burial at Gate of Heaven Cemetery Luncheon in Helfta Hall
FRI	12/13/24	ST. LUCY, VM • WITHIN THE OCTAVE 8:00 AM Low Mass †Elizabeth Smith – 9 th Anniversary (<i>Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Prell</i>) (from 12/12) 11:00 AM Confessions 11:25 AM High Mass In thanksgiving to the Infant of Prague (<i>Bob & Becky Uhlenbrock</i>) 5:15 PM Confessions & Rosary 5:45 PM Low Mass †Fr. James Thielen – Rest in peace (<i>Sr. Eulalia</i>) 6:30 PM Sacred Heart Novena, Benediction
SAT	12/14/24	WITHIN THE OCTAVE 7:05 AM Confessions 7:30 AM Rorate Mass For †Fr. James Thielen (<i>Erika McKnight</i>) 8:10 AM Alma Redemptoris 8:30 AM Low Mass †Alexa Martin, Rest in peace (<i>Sodality of Charity</i>) Sodality of Charity Meeting
SUN	12/15/24	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ☉☉☉ GAUDETE SUNDAY • CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE! OCTAVE DAY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 7:05 AM Rosary 7:30 AM Low Mass †John Schmidt (<i>Mary Kunkel</i>) 9:00 AM St. Lucia Procession, High Mass In profound thanksgiving for deliverance (<i>Joe Druecker</i>) 10:40 AM Catechism Classes

ADVENT PRAYER FOR CONVERSIONS AND RETURN OF FALLEN AWAY

To thee, O Queen of Prophets, Mother of God and of His people, to thee we have recourse in our necessities, confident that as thou thyself art the fulfillment of prophecy, so thou wilt desire the fulfillment of thy own words, bringing, out of all generations, N.N., to call thee blessed. Say to all the erring for whom we beseech thee, and especially to N.N., “Thy light has come.” Say but one word to thy Son, and the glory of the Lord shall rise upon them, and the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and so they, wondering at the star, will follow into the House of Bread, where, finding thy Child with thee, they will eat of the true Bread and live forever, possessing joy and gladness, while sorrow and sadness will disappear. O thou who art omnipotent in prayer, at whose request thy Son worked His first miracle, beg Him to say: “I the Lord will do this suddenly in its time,” and grant to those for whom we pray, that they may draw water with joy at the fountains of the Savior. May it be granted to us all to be united with thee, O Mother, in singing thy Magnificat to Him.

(Indulgence of 100 Days, once a day. Leo XIII, January 24, 1901)

COLLECT OF THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Incline Thine ear to our prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord; and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation: Who livest and reignest, God, forever and ever. Amen. (Say this prayer Saturday evening, as you light two purple candles and one rose on your Advent wreath, and frequently throughout the week.)



SERVERS

WED 12/11	4:00 PM RECEPTION OF THE BODY: MC: T. Lawrence CROSS: F. Caggese ACS: D. Simpson, M. Caggese
THU 12/12	10:00 AM PONT. REQUIEM: MCS: C. Richesson, M. Simpson, T. Lawrence TH: N. McClorey ACS: A. McClorey, S. Richesson CROSS: J. Rabjohns BOOK: D. Simpson BUGIA: M. Caggese MITRE: I. Smith GREMIALE: J. Smith TBS: D. & C. Wright, T. Stanislawski, W. Young, L. Rabjohns, M. Schneider, Ma. Caggese, J. Smith SIDE ALTAR MASSES: F. & P. Caggese BURIAL: MC: C. Richesson TH: M. Simpson CROSS: D. Simpson ACS: A. McClorey, S. Richesson
FRI 12/13	5:45 PM LOW: M. Simpson, A. Constantino BENEDICTION: MC: D. Simpson TH: M. Caggese TBS: A. Constantino, J. Smith
SAT 12/14	7:30 AM HIGH: D. Simpson, P. Caggese, I. Smith 8:30 AM LOW: J. & L. Rabjohns
SUN 12/15	7:30 AM LOW: M. McConnell, Brueggemann 9:00 AM HIGH: MCS: N. McClorey, D. Simpson TH: C. Arlinghaus ACS: F. Caggese, J. Stewart TBS: J. Smith, A. Constantino, N. & J. Hudson, Ma. Caggese, L. Rabjohns 11:30 AM LOW: Kolenichs 4:45 PM VESPERS & BENEDICTION: D. Simpson, I. Smith 5:45 PM LOW: Volunteer

11:05 AM	Rosary
11:30 AM	Low Mass In honor of St. Gertrude for special intention (<i>LF</i>)
4:45 PM	Vespers & Benediction
5:45 PM	Low Mass For the people of St. Gertrude the Great