

# SECOND SUNDAY *of Advent*



*Saint Philip the Apostle Parish*

CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

Today is the second Sunday of the four Sundays of Advent and only two and a half weeks before Christmas comes, and today we hear the great Advent voice of John the Baptist. You all know John the Baptist. He is the cousin of Jesus. He was born before Jesus, but knew Jesus as a child, for Mother Mary in the Visitation visited Elizabeth when she was pregnant with the child who was to become the precursor, the precursor of the Messiah.

And so now we have skipped from Christmas time to a much later date. In that time in history, it is about time for the Messiah to show himself to the whole world. In today's Gospel, however, we see John the Baptist. John the Baptist grew up and, rather early in his life, he decided and declared himself for a monastic tradition, a tradition of holiness and asceticism that was quite common at that time, because there was a feeling in those days, at that time in history, that something great was coming and would come very soon. And so, he went out into the deserts around the Jordan River, and he mingled with some of the communities. The communities were charismatic communities, and they were longing and hoping for the coming of the Messiah, and he was to come very quickly, and they were expecting him in their own lifetime. And so it was that John the Baptist came out of the desert.

Why the desert?

The desert is the place where you form prophets, holy men of God, single-minded people, totally committed ascetics. And why? Because the desert is a vast wilderness and only the strong of spirit can even survive. And there's no distraction. And a man goes out into the desert, and he is naked before the whole world. There is nothing there. Nothing. The food has to be rooted around for in the roots of very strong trees that dig their roots deep into the desert earth. And it is a very ascetic sort of life. And another reason is there's no distractions there. There's nothing but you and God Himself. And there he is honed and there he heard the word of God calling him to become the one who is going to announce the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish people have been praying for over two thousand years and it is their great hope that God will send the one promised by Moses, the one spoken about by all the prophets, the Holy One of God, the Blessed One of God, the one that was to make Israel free and create a whole new world. And so, it was he came out dressed as Elijah the prophet had dressed many years before him, dressed in camel's hair, existing on locusts and honey. He came with a strong and simple message: "Get ready for the coming of the Lord. Make open your hearts to receive him."

This is the way he preaches:

*"Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight his paths.  
Every valley shall be filled  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low.  
The winding roads shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth,  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."*

The short form of this is: "Hear my voice. It is time to turn your lives around." He came preaching. He came preaching

the gospel of repentance. The word is "metanoia." It means more than just repentance, turning around on your knees and being sorry for your sins. It means a change in your whole life because the Messiah is about to appear.

And all the business about evening out the roads and straightening them, he is saying this is what we must do, it is our roads that are crooked, it is our places where we have created deep holes to hide in. We must attend to making that road clear and straight and direct from God's heart into our own heart. And, of course, that's what we are supposed to do during Advent. It is a time we reshuffle our lives to look at what is important and what is not important, to look at what is perhaps more of a distraction than more of a life, to turn, once again, to becoming the kind of people that Jesus has taught us to become, that God has desired us to become: people who are self-sacrificing, those who reach out to their brothers and sisters.

This is the message of Advent. And what John, when he finishes his preaching, what John will tell us, which is true, that if you prepare your hearts, you straighten the pathways, and make it an easy road and ride for God Himself to embrace your heart, then you will have found the Messiah.

The other thing that this preparation for Christmas calls upon us to do is to remember that Christmas is a gift that is primarily the gift of God.

**It is the gift of God of His Only Begotten Son, a gift given to us, and, in our turn, we are to give this gift, the gift that God has given us, to each other and to all the people in our area of life and prayer and care.**



This is why Christmas is a time for gift giving and we imitate God Himself.

Peace,  
Fr. Monteleone

## PARISH SCHEDULE

### CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday Evening ..... 5:30 PM  
Sunday...8:00 AM, 10:00 AM (Broadcast) and 12:00 PM  
Mondays thru Saturdays.....9:00 AM

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Every Saturday ..... 4:30 to 5:00 PM

Please call the Parish Office  
if you would like a priest to visit you  
or a family member at home or in the hospital.

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## GOD BLESS THE NEWLY BAPTIZED

*Tyler Joseph*



## ADVENT SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### MASSES ON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Tuesday, December 7, 2021, at 7 PM (Vigil) – Fr. Monteleone  
Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 9 AM – Fr. Monteleone  
Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 7 PM – Fr. Nico

### ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 7 PM in the church

### SIMBANG GABI 2021

The Filipino Catholics of our parish invite everyone to join the annual *Simbang Gabi* Novena Mass in preparation for Christmas on Thursday, December 23, 2021, at 6 PM in church to be celebrated by his excellency, Most Reverend Kevin J. Sweeney. Fellowship and reception will immediately follow Mass in the Auditorium.

### CHRISTMAS 2021 SCHEDULE

#### *Christmas Eve Masses*

4 PM – Fr. Nico (Youth Choir)  
7 PM – Fr. Kevin (Handbell Choir)  
10 PM – Fr. Monteleone (Adult Choir)

#### *Christmas Day Masses*

8 AM – Fr. Kevin  
10 AM (Broadcast) – Fr. Monteleone  
12 PM – Fr. Nico

### BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study Sessions are held on Mondays in the Jubilee Wing Room at 11AM

### ANNUAL SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Please join us on **Sunday, December 12, 2021, at 3:00 PM** for a *Service of Lessons and Carols*. Hear readings and beautiful music provided by our **Adult and Youth Choirs** and **Handbells**. Come meditate on the spirit of Christmas with us!



### POLISH OPLATKI

The tradition of the Oplatki originated in Poland. This Christmas custom began with a simple white wafer, baked from flour and water. The wafers are designed to display Christmas images, such as the Nativity. The Oplatki are enjoyed by families, typically right before the Christmas Eve meal. The eldest member of the family will begin the ritual by breaking off a piece of the wafer and passing it to another family member with a blessing.



Packages of Polish Oplatki will be available in the vestibule of the Church **beginning this weekend**.

### ADVENT REFLECTIONS

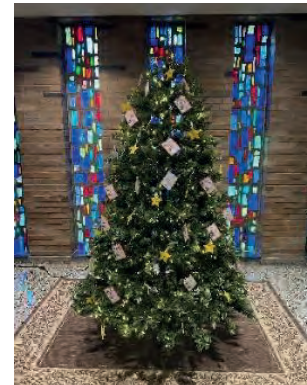
The little blue books that contain daily Advent reflections are available in the back of the church and at all the exits.

## ADVENT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### GIVING TREE

Our **Giving Tree** is ready! Please visit the church vestibule to select a gift tag - or visit our parish website - to help people served by Catholic Family and Community Services (CFCS), St. Martin de Porres Village (MPV), St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly (SJ), and Mercy House (MH).

Please consider sharing your blessings this Christmas season by sharing a gift to help those in need in our local community. In the words of Pope Francis, "*To change the world, we must be good to those who cannot repay us.*" Please return all gifts by the 12:00 PM Mass on December 19, 2021.



## ADVENT SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

### PRIME TIMERS

Our December meeting will be our Christmas Party, which will be held on Wednesday, December 15 at 1 PM in Marian Hall. The cost is \$35 per person and will be catered by Francesco's Restaurant. Payment for the Christmas Party will be made to Stasia Komorowski, who can be reached at (973) 473-2068

### ROSARY SOCIETY

The next meeting of the Rosary Society will be held on Monday, **December 13th in Marian Hall**. The meeting will begin with Mass and the Rosary at 6:30 pm. All are welcome!

## IN OTHER NEWS

### BOY SCOUTS

#### Scout Christmas Wreath and Grave Pillow Sale

Boy Scout Troop 21 will be having their Annual Wreath Sale this weekend. They will be selling fresh wreaths as well as grave pillows/grave blankets. Payment can be made by cash, check, Paypal, or Venmo. Please stop by and support the Boy Scouts.



### ST. PAUL'S ABBEY'S CHRISTMAS TREE PLANTATION

St. Paul's Abbey, on 289 Rt. 206, Newton, NJ 07860 on mile south of Newton, has thousands of Christmas trees ready to choose 'n' cut. Open 7 days a week from November 28<sup>th</sup> to December 20, 10 AM to 3:30 PM. The Abbey Gift Shop is also open with many items that make ideal Christmas gifts, including books, statues, jewelry and more.



## ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Our students attended a beautiful Liturgy of Thanksgiving. The children's choir sang wonderfully, with thankful hearts. Here are some of our Curriculum Highlights.

### Religion



Grade 5 Religion classes are writing Friendly Letters to God, expressing gratitude for Jesus and explaining how our faith has helped us through difficult times in our lives.

### Science and Social Studies Highlights

The 4th Grade Science classes made leaf rubbings as they learned about the parts of a leaf.



Our Intermediate School students, in Grade 4, have just completed a booklet about our great state of New Jersey.

In Grade 5, they are beginning to learn about European explorers and their discoveries in the Americas.

In Grade 7 Social Studies class, the students wrote biographical essays from a soldier's perspective from all of the wars.

### Middle School Spanish Class

Grade 7 is researching and creating brochures of Spanish speaking countries and the 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are discovering the natural and cultural heritage of Machu Picchu, site of ancient Inca ruins.



As Advent begins, we are enthusiastically practicing for our Christmas show.

## DIOCESAN MINISTRIES APPEAL

### 2021 Diocesan Ministries Appeal

*"Let Your Light Shine"*

With the year coming to an end, many people plan to make a final year-end charitable contribution that has the most impact. Please consider the Diocesan Ministries appeal which helps so many of your brothers and sisters in Christ. In fact, tens of thousands of people are supported by the work of our Diocese with assistance from the Appeal. All of us can play a part in the Diocesan Ministries Appeal- as either a contributor to the cause or as a recipient of its mission- and all are blessed as a result. Please make the Diocesan Ministries Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, credit cards, through gifts of securities or online at [www.2021appeal.org](http://www.2021appeal.org). May God bless you for your generosity!

## PRIESTS' SCHEDULE

### DECEMBER 11, 2021

5:30 PM Fr. Jared

### DECEMBER 12, 2021

8:00 AM Fr. Nico

10:00 AM Fr. Kevin

12:00 PM Fr. Monteleone

## WE PRAY FOR...

**THE DECEASED:** Donald C. Lee, Edward J. Wozny, Sr.

**THE SICK:** Luca Ataide, Jennifer Rascher, Mary Grace Henrich, Debbie Werthmann, Susan Stierlen, John Riccardi

## PARISH GIVING

SUNDAY COLLECTION: NOVEMBER 29, 2020	\$ 16,659.00
SUNDAY COLLECTION: NOVEMBER 28, 2021	
Weekly Collection	\$ 7,692.00
Online Giving Donation	\$ 6,238.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 13,975.00</b>
Second Collection- Project Faith	\$ 1,576.00

## MASS INTENTIONS

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021

- 8:00 All the People of the Parish  
10:00 Rosario Llamas  
Joseph Dewland  
Jack McSweeney  
Frances Dodd  
12:00 Ella DeBenedetto  
Christine Hadlinata- 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary  
Shafik and Kwakah Maximos

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021

- 9:00 Robert Quinn  
Bishop Frank J. Rodimer- 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2021

- 9:00 Jack McSweeney  
Rick Scucci  
7:00 (Vigil) Antonino Campanella

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2021

#### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- 9:00 Mary A. Wilson  
Antoinette Sileno- 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary  
7:00 All the People of the Parish

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

- 9:00 Catherine McClane  
John Gallagher

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021

- 9:00 Mary A. Wilson

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2021

- 9:00 Maria Castano  
5:30 All the People of the Parish

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

- 8:00 Eleanor and Hugh DeGhetto  
Edward Ray  
10:00 Paul S. Tyahla  
Garry DeVos- 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary  
Deceased members of the Kerner Family  
Margarte Blanco  
12:00 F. Paul Marschalk- 56 Anniversary  
Susanne Shahin

### CANDLE THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>

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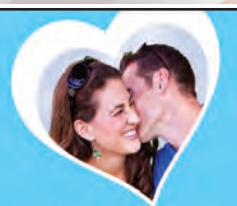
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