

PARISH ADVENT PROGRAM WRAP YOUR GIFTS IN PRAYER

Unwrap the gift of God in Prayer. In the midst of Advent and Christmas busyness, we offer you a way to pray and to discover our God who is with us. Each season the preparation for gift giving can be a source of stress. This year can be different. Our Christmas practice of gift giving is intended to be a visible symbol of love and Christian service in action. Why not use our gift giving as a form of prayer? Wrapping your gift in prayer can add a spiritual dimension to an ordinary task.

Wrap Your Gift in Prayer

As you choose your gift, ask for God's guidance and bring a prayerful awareness to the exchange. When you actually wrap your gift, whether in wrapping paper or in a gift bag, pray for the recipient. Ask God to fill them with light, love and the peace of Christmas. Cards and electronic greetings may also be wrapped in prayer.

Prayer Method Choices

- **Imagine** - visualize the person for whom you pray. Picture the Lord blessing them.
- **Speak** - pray out loud, "Lord surround (name) with your light; fill him/her with your peace."
- **Sing** - a Christmas carol.
- **Gesture** - dedicate the use of your hand motions in wrapping as your prayer.
- **Hear** - simply repeat the person's name knowing that the Lord hears our every word.
- **Recite** - a pre-written prayer, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Rosary . . .
- **Act** - reach out to someone in need of the gift of your care.
- **Bless** - For difficult relationships pray: *Lord bless (name) and transform me to set me free.*

Sharing your Prayer with a Gift Tag



After wrapping your gift in prayer attach a gift tag that will be provided for you.

Witnessing to your prayer by means of a **Gift Tag** is like giving an additional gift because it may lead the receiver to become more aware of God's presence in her or his own life.

This weekend **Gift Prayer Tags** will be available at the doors of the church. Attach the **Gift Prayer Tag** to a gift, group of gifts or gift bag. You may also wish to duplicate the gift tag sheets on your own computer by visiting our website www.stphilip.org.

Reflection On Prayer

God desires to be in a close and personal relationship with us. Prayer unwraps God who is always with us. Prayer directs our attention to God who can be found in all things. The Spirit of God dwells within us; prayer is the inner journey to discover the gift of God within. St. Paul challenges us to rejoice in God's presence in all circumstances, (1Thessalonians5:16). William S. Barry S. J. in his book *Praying the Truth* (2012) gives a simple definition of prayer:

"By prayer I mean what occurs when I am conscious in some way of God's presence. Ignatius of Loyola is known for wanting to find God in all things – that is, to be able to do all things while, at the same time, being conscious of God's presence. In other words, he wanted to be prayerful at all times. A tall order, you might say, but Ignatius believe that a person could come close to this with the help of God and by the regular practice of paying attention to what happens in daily life. He could hope for such a state because of his Christian belief that God, the Creator of the universe, is never absent from any part of this universe. Hence, whether we are aware of it or not, we are always in God's presence no matter what we are doing. All that is required (for prayer) is that I am conscious of God's presence and whatever activity I engage."

Our Advent Program, *Your Gift is Wrapped in Prayer* is an opportunity for us to encounter God in our daily lives.

Reflection Questions and Prayerful Activity

- When have I felt closest to God?
- What does God's desire to be in a personal relationship with me mean? What does this invite me to do?
- What people, places or things awaken my awareness of God?
- The gifts in my life for which I am grateful are.... Share your thoughts and feelings about these gifts with God.
 - One way that I will share the gifts that God has given to me with another person this week is....

THE GIVING TREE

Pope Francis challenges us to answer God's call for us to be protectors *"showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about."*

The holidays give us the perfect opportunity to answer this calling to help people in our very own community in need of help. After Mass today, please make a stop at our **Giving Tree** in the vestibule. Participating is simple!

- Pick a tag from the tree.
- Purchase the specified gift.
- Wrap the gift in prayer.
- Pray for the recipient of the gift.
- Attach the same gift tag to the wrapped gift.
- Place your wrapped gift with the specified gift tag back under the tree.

*All gifts need to be returned by the 12:00 PM Mass on **December 18.***

ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday, December 17 - 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Christmas Pageant:

Sunday, December 18 - Auditorium following 8:00 AM Mass with refreshments

LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Youth Choir, Adult Choir and Handbell Choir of St. Philip the Apostle will present the Annual Service of Lessons and Carols on **Sunday, December 18** at 3:00 PM in the Church. Admission is free; however, a free-will offering is appreciated to help support the efforts of the Music Ministry program. Please join us for an afternoon of readings from scripture and singing of hymns and carols in celebration of this most joyous season.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study continues during the Advent Season on **Mondays** at 11 AM in the Molloy Center. Our final session for this year will be on Monday, **December 19th.**

RCIA

RIGHT OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Please pray for and support our catechumen as they accept to continue their journey toward full initiation into the Catholic Church.

Our next session of the **RCIA** is **Monday, January 9th** at 7 PM in the Russo Room. All are welcome and invited to join us. For more information about RCIA please call Donna Scancarella at (973) 779-6200.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grade One students will sing at the 8:00 AM Mass on **Sunday, December 18.** Please arrive at 7:30.

The Confirmation and Youth Group students will present a Christmas Pageant for our students on **Sunday, December 18** in the auditorium following the 8:00 AM Mass. Grades One and Two students are invited to dress as angels, shepherds, or stable animals for both the Mass and Christmas Pageant.

Parents, please remain with your child/children for the duration of the Mass and Pageant. It will not be a full class session.

All are invited! Refreshments will be served.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES SCHEDULE

Grades 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6: December 18, January 8

Grade 2: December 11, 18, January 8, 25

Grades 7, 8: December 11, January 22

Confirmation Grade 9, 10: December 11, January 22

MINISTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

WIDOW/WIDOWERS

- The Monday Night Group: **December 12th** at 6:30 PM in the *Left Conference of the Molloy Center.*
- The New & Recently Bereaved Group: **Wednesday, January 11th & 25th** at 7:00 PM.

ROSARY SOCIETY

The next meeting of the Rosary Society will be our Christmas Party on **Monday, December 12, 2016** in Marian Hall. The meeting will begin with the Rosary at 6:30 PM followed by Mass. *Bring*

your favorite Christmas mug or cup. All are welcome!

COLUMBIETTES

CHRISTMAS PARTY

All Columbiettes, our Brother Knights and your guest are invited to come to celebrate the birth of Christ on Friday, **December 16, 2016** at 6:30 PM in Marian Hall. A light dinner will be served at 7:00 PM followed by a homemade dessert table. Due to popular demand, we will play LCR. (Come prepared.) Admittance to the party is three items of food for local school food pantries: unsweetened cereal, peanut butter, juice boxes, canned meat and fish. Please RSVP by **December 11, 2016** to Sharon at [973 742-0926](tel:9737420926) or sfbeanie@aol.com.

COLUMBIETTE BLANKET MINISTRY

The next meeting will be on **Thursday, January 5, 2017** at 9:45 AM in the Molloy Center. All crafters are welcome. Blankets are donated to hospitalized children, chemotherapy patients, needy children, and the homebound of the community. For donations or further information, call Cathie Murtha at 973-471-1265.

ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The students of St. Philip Preparatory School performed at their annual Christmas Show on Tuesday, December 6. The performances took place in the school auditorium for family and friends. All grades from Pre-K3 through 8th were involved. While the primary grades sing and dance to fun and happy Christmas tunes, the middle school grades were responsible for representing Advent through Christmas Day with the birth of our Lord, Jesus. The performances were well received, and a joyous start to our Christmas season.

YOUTH MINISTRY

12/22 Christmas Party 7-9 PM in the Youth Room

1/12 Movie Night 7-9 PM in the Youth Room

Our Seven Retreat team meetings will begin on **Sunday, January 8**. If you are a high school student and you have been confirmed and are interested in helping lead the Retreat, please contact Andrew ASAP for more information!

DIOCESAN NEWS

SIMBANG GABI

You are invited to join a Filipino tradition for a "Mass of the Night or Evening" during Advent on **Saturday, December 17th** at the 5:30 PM Mass at St. Philip. Fellowship will immediately follow Mass in Marian

Hall. Simbang Gabi is a Filipino tradition of a 9 day novena of Masses during Advent in preparation for the Nativity of Our Savior, Jesus.

CERTIFICATE IN CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION

St. Paul Inside the Walls is accepting applications for the next three year program for a **Certificate in Catholic Evangelization**.

Any interested candidates should email Allan Wright at awright@patersondiocese.org for an application and information. Or you can visit insidethewalls.org/leading-others.

PRAY FOR

THE SICK: Joan Hughes, Silvia Berardo, Lara Buell, Ryan G. Micale, Jayce Mazza, Patsy Sinisi, Barbara Sikora, Margaret Sikora, Steve Kuchta, Sister Beverly Aiazzone, Linda Brady, Gus Perez, Joseph Villano, Marie Nattvo, Jennie Marto, Antoinette Van Setters, Mary Ellen Stanton, Alexander Bancey, Josephine Pipitone, Zigrid Roman, Derrick Medeiros, Maria Ligato, Philip Kutzenko, Susan Russell, Evelyn Wescott, William Steckowich, Ana Cabezas, Theresa Buhler, Alton Ferry

PRIESTS' SCHEDULE: DECEMBER 17/18, 2016

5:30 PM	Fr. Julio	10:00 AM	Fr. Joe
8:00 AM	Fr. Kevin	12:00 Noon	Fr. Miguel

HOLIDAY BULLETIN DEADLINE

Bulletin information for the weekend of **December 25th** and **January 1st** must be received no later than **Friday, December 16th**.

PARISH GIVING

Total Sunday Collection: Nov. 29, 2015

\$13,972.00

November 27, 2016

Envelopes

\$11,797.00

Cash 1,576.00 \$

Online Giving donations 3,828.00 \$

Total

\$17,201.00

2 nd Collection: Retired Religious	\$
5,844.00	

MASS INTENTIONS

Many Masses are available in 2017 as early as January. Mass intentions are \$20.00 each. The Sanctuary Candle and Offertory Gifts are also \$20.00.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Is 35:1-6a, 10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2016

8:00 Henry F. Marrocco, Jr., Rosario & Columbia Lomauro

10:00 James Downey
Barbara & Stan Wielgus
Vittoria Masucci
Albina Agosta

12:00 Victor Maximos & Deceased family members

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2016

7:00 Victoria Yu

9:00 Betty & Ed Welsh

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

7:00 Robert Sproha

9:00 Fred Anthony, Betty & Clemens Wehner

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2016

7:00 Sr. Nancy Grassia

9:00 Joseph Cullen

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016

7:00 Charles Lang

9:00 Danilo V. Caparaz

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2016

7:00 Victoria Yu

9:00 Kris Thiruvathukal

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016

9:00 AM Jim Loftus

5:30 PM Catherine Hughes
Florenzo Giangrande
Peter Wilk

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2016

8:00 All the People of the Parish

10:00 John F. Trommelen, Jr.
Charles Braunlich
Patricia Braunlich
John Herald
Justina Cruz

12:00 John Kilrow

Dec'd members: Sieminski & Farrelly Family