

St. Mary's Church & Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima

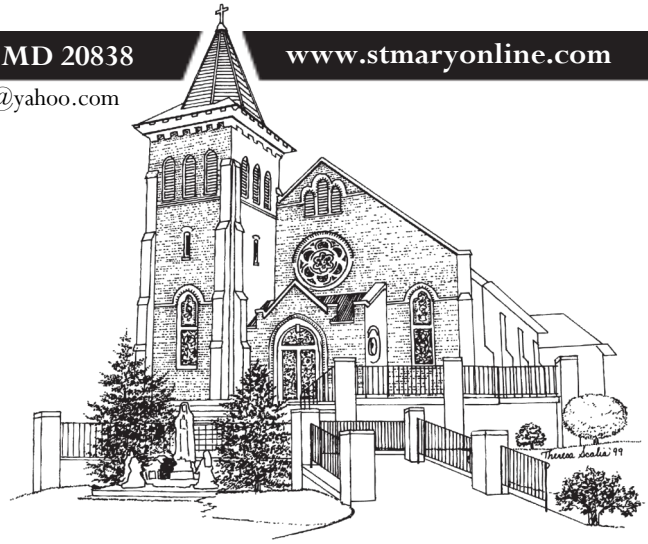
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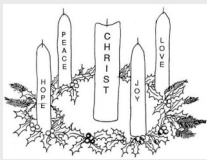
*We welcome you to our historic parish family.
Since 1741 believers such as yourself have built a spirit-
filled, Catholic faith community here in Barnesville.
We are privileged to have you join us in our mission to
share God's blessings.*



December 17, 2023
Third Sunday of Advent

Rev. Kevin P. O'Reilly, *Pastor*
David Cahoon, *Deacon*
Rev. Msgr. John Macfarlane, *Weekend Asst.*
Elizabeth Smith, *Dir. of Faith Formation*
Diane Yendrey, *Dir. of Music*
Bill Lynch, *Pavilion Manager*
Brenda Evans, *Secretary*
Denise Crawford, *Secretary, Notary*
Chris Carey, *Bookkeeper*
Joy McCartin, *Sodality*
Tom McCartin, *Knights of Columbus*

Daily Mass: Monday - Friday: 9:00 am
Sunday Mass: Saturday @ 4 pm, Sunday @ 8:30 & 10:30 am
First Friday: Adoration 9:30 am - Noon
First Saturday: 9:00 am with Devotions
Confession: Saturday @ 3:15 pm
Baptism: by appointment
Wedding: by appointment at least 6 months after initial contact
Rel. Ed.: September - May
School: Mary of Nazareth in Darnestown, grades PreK-8



What is special about the Third Sunday of Advent? For much of the Church's history, this Sunday had a special name: "Gaudete" Sunday. The traditions surrounding this Sunday go back as far as the fourth or fifth century, as does the season of Advent itself. Advent, our preparation for Christmas, was originally a forty-day penitential season like Lent. In fact, since it used to begin on November 12 (just after the Memorial of St. Martin of Tours), it was called "St. Martin's Lent." "Gaudete Sunday" was the Advent counterpart to "Laetare Sunday," which marks the midpoint in Lent.

On Gaudete Sunday, the season of Advent shifts its focus. For the first two weeks of Advent, the focus can be summed up in the phrase, "The Lord is coming." But beginning with Gaudete Sunday, the summary might be, "The Lord is near." This shift is marked by a lighter mood and a heightened sense of joyous anticipation.

Liturgically, the colors lighten as well. The priest usually wears rose-colored vestments, a hue seen only on Gaudete Sunday and Laetare Sunday. On this day, we light the third candle of the Advent wreath, which is also rose-colored, or if you prefer, pink.

The word "Gaudete" is Latin for "Rejoice." In times when the focus of our anticipation is often on the negative and fearful, this celebration is a reminder that God who loves us is still in charge and that we await his coming not with fear, but with tremendous joy.



Please Pray For.....James Abernethy, Frank Anderson, Louise Austin, Michael Austin, Nancy Austin, Christopher Barlow, Lori Bauer, Jim Bowie, Donna & Fred Brashears, Linda Burke, Pete Brunner, Maddie Cabatic, Norma Camp, Ada Candor, Dylan Captain, Gretchen Carrillo, Patrick Carpentier, Eric Carpentier, Pat Chmelik, Sonya Cortez, Bridget Curan, Grant Kraft, Dot Crawford, John Curry, Dana DeLauter, Andrew & Nicholas Diaz, Michael Dillon, Julian Douchard, Steve Drescher, Dennis Edward, Tom Ehart, Jo Evans, Hazel Finney, Timothy Flanders, Sandy Flynn, Dolores Flynn, Mark Fye, Fr. Rich Gancayco, Zachery Gorouch, Kimberly Harris, Bridget Hart, Larry Horton, Andrew Howard, Cecilia Hughan & family, Mary Lillian Hewitt, Marie Horton, Laura Hutchinson, Eleanor Kelly, Michael Kelley, Brittany, Joe & Ava Marie Koelie, Jeffrey Krohn, Jr., Betty Kutts, John Kutzi, Ryma Lacks, Cade Lutz, David Liska Sr., Colleen Loss, Harvey Loveless, Betty MacDonald, Sylvia Marshall, Anna Lozada Martinez, Edwin Mbanude, Joy McIntyre, Joy McCartin, Anthony Murdock, Bea Nastacio, Christine O'Connell, Dennis O'Fallan, Jane Parsley, Bob & Donna Pavlick, Frank Pena, Gene Post, Lauren Prete, Dennis Regii, Susan Reid, Elizabeth Renninger, Everly Reed Rice, Andrea Rivas, Misty Runyon, Tom Schwanbeck, Teresa Silverman, Gene Smith, Jerry Stafford, Colleen Thomas, Richard Thompson, Jack Thorp, Corinne Torney, Rex & Trisha Tully, Vicki Tosques, Pam Verity, Michael Zahn.

Please Pray for Our Military Family & Friends... Richard Alford, Michael Breslin, Alex & Maxwell Chmelik, Lucas Conway, Adam Fitterer, David Gilliam, Erich Lloyd, Joshua Miller, Brian Nazarian, Elvin Rivera, Mark Russell, Oliver Weigand.

Dear Parishioners,

On this Gaudete Sunday, joy is a natural frame for understanding today's readings. These readings focus on our call to create a world reflective of God's plan.

A quick Google search for the word *joy* provides images of people leaping into the air or with their arms outstretched in victory. These images reflect joy as a temporary rush of positive feelings. Today's Scripture passages offer another type of joy, one that originates from within and keeps us connected to the love of the One who calls us.

These readings outline exactly what that call involves: We are anointed "to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners" (Isaiah 61:1-2a). These works of mercy and justice are the mark of our discipleship. They are also quite challenging. Truly practicing solidarity with those who experience injustice can wear at our optimism. We may separate ourselves from the work of discipleship to seek a temporary rush of joy so that we feel refreshed enough to continue.

Thich Nhat Hanh, a Zen Buddhist teacher, offers wisdom about how to avoid this division between discipleship and joy. He draws parallels between the Holy Spirit and the Buddhist practice of mindfulness: Both allow us to tap into the deeper truths that always surround us.

To explain how Buddhists think about mindfulness, he offers a parable in the well-known book, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*:

When the Buddha was asked, "Sir, what do you and your monks practice?" he replied, "We sit, we walk, and we eat." The questioner continued, "But sir, everyone sits, walks, and eats," and the Buddha told him, "When we sit, we *know* we are sitting. When we walk, we *know* we are walking. When we eat, we *know* we are eating."

Today's readings speak of joy in discipleship, just as Thich Nhat Hanh speaks of mindfulness in sitting, walking and eating. As Isaiah acknowledges that he is anointed to proclaim liberty to captives, he also "rejoice[s] heartily in the Lord" (61:10). Mindfully seeking joy in each thing we do allows us to constantly tap into the source of love and goodness; is this not one response to Paul's admonishment to "pray without ceasing"? (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Jesuit Fr. Gregory Boyle lives a compelling example of the "Gospel joy which enlivens the community of disciples" (*The Joy of the Gospel* #21). In his book, *Tattoos on the Heart*, Boyle shares stories from his work in Los Angeles employing and mentoring former gang members. His advice on practicing joy, as captured in an NPR interview in 2009, speaks of being present in each moment: "You know, you don't really get Jesus saying very often there'll be pie in the sky when you die. He's really talking about now and today ... You're supposed to delight in what's right in front of you. ... If you are paying attention, then the day is going to be pretty joyful, and a lot of delight will fill it."

Finding joy in our work for peace and justice may not come easily. At times, we may wonder whether our "crying out in the desert" will ever yield the world we seek. As in spiritualities rooted in mindfulness, seeking joy in each action is a practice, and the more we practice it, the easier it becomes. As it does, we are continually grounded in joy, which makes us more effective preparers of the way of the Lord.

Peace, Fr. Kevin

WORSHIP



"Who are you....what do you have to say for yourself?"

- John 1:22

Mass Intentions

Sat., 16 4 pm - Vince & Joan O'Reilly
Sun., 17 8:30 am - Parishioners
10:30 am - Marilyn Green
Mon., 18 9 am - Kathleen Kellinger
Tue., 19 9 am - Bill Kellinger
Wed., 20 9 am - Dolores Prokopchak
Thu., 21 9 am - Eucharistic Service
Fri., 22 9 am - Tom McGlynn (L)

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23 Mass at 4 pm
December 24 Mass at 8:30 am



Christmas Flower Memorials Remember a loved one, celebrate a special event. Help us enjoy the beauty of the coming holidays with

your donations toward Christmas flowers. Use the envelopes in the back of church and turn them in or drop them in the basket by today.

2023 Calendars are in the church vestibule, courtesy of The Hilton Funeral Home. Please help yourselves.

Gabriel Project Cluster (founded in 1996 to help struggling pregnant mothers in Montgomery County) Urgent: Men volunteers are needed. Want to put your pro-life beliefs into action? You can join one of four men's teams. (Some men volunteers serve on more than one team.)

Crib Team: Men volunteers meet an Angel Friend woman volunteer at the client mother's home and assemble a new crib. **Transport Team:** Items needed by Angel Friend volunteers are transported between the north and south parts of Montgomery County. **Shed Team:** Donated items are picked up usually on Tuesday and Friday mornings and brought to a shed in Silver Spring. **Money-Counting Team:** Change for Life Baby Bottle collections are held at various parishes. A team of men coordinate counting and depositing the collected funds into the Cluster bank account. Please contact: Brenda Stohlman at stohlmanbrendagp@outlook.com or visit our website for more information at www.gpmoco.org.

February 10, 2024 Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass

On February 10 at 10:00am Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala will celebrate the Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. To register, please contact the parish office. Registration deadline to attend the Mass and/or to receive a certificate is January 27, 2024.



Christmas

Welcome to all, especially our visitors. Christmas is a time that brings many people to church to celebrate the birth of Christ, and we're glad you're here! We hope you will come back to visit again.

St Mary's is an active, warm parish, dedicated to following the path of Christ and reaching out to those in need and to one another.

Check us out on Facebook and our website: stmaryonline.com.

The entire staff extends our happiest and holiest holiday wishes to you and your family for the Advent and Christmas Season and throughout the coming year.

Christmas

Sun., December 24

3:30 pm - Prelude
4:00 pm Mass with Pageant
9:30 pm - Prelude
10:00 pm Mass at Night

Mon., December 25

10:00 am Mass

Feast of the Holy Family

Sat., December 30

4 pm Mass

Sun., December 31

8:30 & 10:30 am

New Years

Mon., January 1, 2024

10:00 am
(Not a Holy Day of Obligation)