

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23, 2018



Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve Masses: 4 pm at St. John
6 pm at St. Peter
Christmas Day Masses: 8 am at Holy Family
9:30 am at St. Peter
11:15 am at St. John

♪ CHRISTMAS INVITATIONS ♪

Planning to attend St. John's 4 pm Christmas Eve Mass? Please join the choir -- all singers are welcome!

The annual carol sing-along at St. Peter's 5:30 pm Christmas Eve Mass is on -- all are welcome!

Tree Blessing

*Lord our God,
We praise You for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon, & the stars of the night.
We praise You for the light of Israel:
the Law, the prophets, & the wisdom
of the Scriptures.
We praise You for Jesus Christ, Your Son:
He is Emmanuel, God-with-us,
the Prince of Peace,
who fills us with the wonder of Your love.*

*Lord God,
Let Your blessing come upon us
as we illumine this tree.
May the light & cheer it gives
be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree
come to the knowledge & joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen*

MINISTRY SCHEDULES READY

St. John Ministers, please be sure to pick up your new schedules at Church, and St. Peter Ministers, check your email or mailbox. Thank you.

OUTDOOR LIVING NATIVITY

The Delhi First Presbyterian Church, Four Clinton Street, will present their annual outdoor Living Nativity complete with music and live animals December 22 and 23, 6:30-8 pm. This is their gift to our community and a reminder of the true meaning of the Christmas Season. Please bring a donation for the Delhi Food Bank along with you.

PARENTING POINTERS Susan Vogt

As your family prepares Christmas gifts for each other, this is a good time to discuss with your child how to share their older, but still good, toys, clothes, etc. *"Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none."* Luke 3:11

MARCH FOR LIFE

There will be a bus (different company this year) available to the March for Life in Washington, D.C., which takes place on Friday, January 18. The cost of a bus ticket is \$73; call Chrissy at 652.7170 to sign up.

The bus will leave Oneonta at 11:30 am on Thursday the 17th with stops at Sacred Heart Church in Stamford at 12 noon, the Hamden Town Hall around 12:40 pm, and St. John the Baptist Church in Walton around 1 pm. There will be a stop for dinner before arrival at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Forestville in Maryland to spend the night -- bring a mattress, sleeping bag or blanket and a pillow as sleeping will be on the floor.

The Knights will provide breakfast and a bag lunch on the 18th before the bus makes the drop near the National Mall in D.C. There will be an opportunity to attend numerous activities near the Mall before the March starts in the afternoon. Activities usually finish around 3 pm then after boarding the bus and stopping for dinner, arrival back is late Friday night.

WALTON FOOD BANK

Jell-O, pudding, Knorr rice/noodles, cake & cookie mixes, tea, cocoa, and coffee are some requested items on the Walton Food Bank list.

LEARNING FROM THIS CHILD

The One, who in His poverty and humility, proclaims and shows that true power and authentic freedom are shown in honoring and assisting the weak and frail. The One who had no place to be born is proclaimed to those shepherds who had no place in the town. The faith we proclaim makes us see God present in all those situations where we think God is absent: in the unwelcomed visitor often unrecognizable, who walks through our towns and our neighborhoods, knocks on our doors.

In the Child of Bethlehem, God comes to meet us and make us active sharers in the life around us. God offers Himself to us so that we can take Him into our arms, lift Him and embrace Him. So that in Him we will not be afraid to take into our arms, raise up and embrace the thirst, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned. In this Child, God invites us to be messengers of hope and agents of God's hospitality. ~ Pope Francis

MARRIAGE MOMENTS Susan Vogt

Is your tradition to decorate the tree or open presents on Christmas Eve? Keep the focus on your love for each other, not whether everything goes right -- often the best stories are about fiascos!

The grace which was revealed
in our world is Jesus.
He had entered our history;
He has shared our journey.
He came to free us from darkness
and to grant us light.
In Him was revealed the grace, the mercy,
and the tender love of the Father.

FAMILY PERSPECTIVE Bud Ozar

Mary was excited about her first pregnancy and rushed to tell her cousin. Sadly children are often seen as a liability: "another mouth to feed" or "an obstacle to my career." It is said, "Christmas is for children." It is more accurate to say, "Christmas is for adults to appreciate the gift of children!"

God's Sign

God's sign is the baby in need of help and in poverty. Exactly the same sign has been given to us: simplicity and that He makes Himself small for us. This is how He reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendor.

He comes as a baby -- defenseless and in need of our help. He does not want to overwhelm us with His strength. He takes away our fear of His greatness. He asks for our love; so He makes Himself a child. He wants nothing other from us than our love, through which we spontaneously learn to enter into His feelings, His thoughts, and His will. We learn to live with Him and to practice with Him that humility of renunciation that belongs to the very essence of love. God made Himself small so that we could understand Him, welcome Him, and love Him.

Christmas has become the Feast of gifts in imitation of God, who has given Himself to us. Let us allow our heart, our soul, and our mind to be touched by this fact! ~ Pope Benedict XVI

Mary, Holy Mother of God

Vigil Masses on Dec. 31: 6 pm at St. Peter
7:15 pm at St. John

Masses on January 1: 8 am at St. Peter
9:30 am at St. John