



We celebrate Christ of all Creation - Born among us in Jesus - Leading us to our fulfillment in Christ's Love

BISHOP OF ALBANY DIOCESE:

Edward B. Scharfenberger

BISHOP EMERITUS: Howard Hubbard

PASTOR: Fr. Tom Zelker

tomzelker@gmail.com

OFFICE MANAGER: Sue Hyde

+OUR PARISH OFFICE & MAILING ADDRESS

67 Main Street

Hoosick Falls, NY 12090

PHONE: 518-686-5064

E-MAIL: immconcept@roadrunner.com

OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Friday 9:00 AM - 3:30PM

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS SCHEDULE:

HELD AT FIRST UNITED CHURCH
SATURDAY, 4 PM & SUNDAY, 9 AM

TRUSTEES: Christina Angell & Ellen Scott

FINANCE COUNCIL:

Krissy Fauler, Dave Stagnitti, Mike Sanders & Linda Billert

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Virginia Cuddihy, Mike Brewster
Jerry D'Acchille, Rick Ferrannini, Karen Kaufman,
and the two Trustees

MUSIC MINISTRY: Richard Cherry

We Pray Christmas

Our worship space is decorated with flowers, candles, trees, colorful banners, and a beautiful Nativity scene. The Lord's Table becomes today's manger where God's people are fed with Bread and Wine of Heaven. As we gather for Mass, we sing "Glory to God; peace to all people," echoing the song of Bethlehem's angels. Our response to the Hebrew Scriptures is Psalm 96 and the canticle "Today our Savior is born, this is the Day, Christ our Savior is born." We live in the eternal today of God! We join together with all Creation rejoicing for beauty, wonder, and life surrounding us. The Gospel acclamation, shouts, "Alleluia!" When we gather around the Table of the Lord, we proclaim with new born faith "you have set us free by Jesus's Cross and Resurrection." We are sent forth, caught up in the love of God, unseen and beyond us, yet now born as one in us. May Christmas' song resound in us every day.



Faith Formation News
Mass is Class

MERRY CHRISTMAS

As part of our new Family based focus, we will list today’s readings here for your reference. If your family needs a bible there will be a sign up sheet after Mass.

1st Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6
2nd Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

We will also list a short YouTube video that you can share and discuss with your family. Go to YouTube and search for the following: **Ignite Your Catholic Faith - What Happens at Mass?**

Each week there will be activity pages at the back of the church for students.

Our next Family workshop is January 12, 2020 following Sunday Mass from 10:15 am to 11:30 am. The whole family is invited. The theme of this workshop will be parts of the Mass. Our workshops will be held at our church hall at Immaculate Conception.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Masses are celebrated at
First United Church**

Friday, January 3

12:00 Noon Mass
Manuel Custodio
(Req. Isabel Custodio)
Stan Lourie
(Req. Comfort & Hope Group)
For Homeless people and
Anyone out of work

Saturday, January 4

4:00 PM Mass
Michael Rodak
(Req. Linda Hutchins)

Sunday, January 5

9:00 AM Mass
Richard Cuddihy
(Req. Family)
Mary Jones Merriam
(Req. Peter & Karen Hewson)
Eva Blinstrub
(Req. Melesky Family)

11:00 AM Mass - St. Patrick’s

Monday, January 6

12:00 Noon Mass
For our Canadian neighbors
*Memorial of Brother Andre
of Montreal*

Wednesday, January 8

8:30 AM Mass at St. Patrick’s

Friday, January 10

12:00 Noon Mass
Remembering farmers

Saturday, January 11

4:00 PM Mass

Sunday, January 12

9:00 AM Mass
11:00 AM Mass - St. Patrick’s

**Epiphany
Reflecting on the Word**

In the movie *Rudy*, Rudy isn’t smart enough to get into Notre Dame. He’s too small to play football. Could he make a touchdown for the Fighting Irish in the final game of his senior year? There’s no way. Not a chance. In the story *Hidden Figures*, Katherine Johnson is a mathematical genius. She works at NASA as a “calculator.” Yet she is a black woman in the early 1960s. Could she do the mathematical calculations for John Glenn’s return from orbit? There’s no way. Not a chance.

We love these underdog stories, don’t we? The one full of grit and determination, the one who was not supposed to be there - a light shines, someone cracks open a door. The hero(ine) pushes through and comes to victory. The elation! The joy! The success!

Today’s readings give us other underdog stories. St. Paul didn’t walk with Jesus. He persecuted Christians. There’s no way. Not a chance. The magi - astrologers from the east, they were not of the Chosen People. How could they ever see the Messiah? There’s no way. Not a chance.

Yet God opens a crack in the door. Light from heaven strikes Paul to the ground. The risen Lord draws him in. In turn, Paul opens the door for those other underdogs, the Gentiles.

A star in the heavens directs the magi to the King of the Jews, and by that light they are overjoyed to see that baby. The elation! The thrill! The success! Unlikely heroes, we still sing their song, “We Three Kings.”

You and I, we are unlikely heroes, too. People of faith, in love with the Lord? No way. Not a chance. Yet a light has shone into our darkness, too - a glimmer, a taste of the Holy Spirit, and a touch of glory. Wow. Sing praise!

Consider/Discuss

What is your favorite underdog story? With whom do you identify most? Who is it that shines the light, opens the door for the hero(ine)? At the conclusion, what causes you to feel elation and joy at their success?

Sometimes we take our faith for granted. Yet glimpses of light have enlightened our darkness. God is faithful. The heavens have opened and we are allowed to enter. How has that door opened for us?

Living and Praying with the Word

Lord Jesus, you came into this world as an underdog, born in a small backwater of a vast empire. But when the magi saw you, they knew that you truly reigned over all. Thank you for opening the door for us. We are not worthy of you, but you have let us in, too. Show us the elation - the joy - the unexpected success that you want for us in our own lives. Inspire us to be a hero for someone today.

A Psalm for the Days of Christmas

O timeless and ever-youthful God,
I thank you for these days of Christmas.
And I ask the gift of an endless encore
of this feast of the birth of your Son.

Thought I am grown now
beyond the age of childhood toys,
gift me with the playful tool
of how to treat each day
as a Christmas gifting day.

Grant me within these days of Christmas
the bottomless gift
of the heart of a child:
enthusiastic with the excitement of expectation,
unashamed to play and dance with delight
and filled with a faith in saints and angels.

Place upon my feet
shoes of lead that I may be slow to put away
the electric stars that have hung
like clusters of constellations
upon my Christmas tree.
They have nightly spoken to me
of what a child's eyes can see in every tree.

Turn to concrete my Christmas consciousness,
that I may continue to greet
hassled clerks in crowded stores
and nameless strangers on the street
with blessing and joyful wishes.

And so by living the whole year
in the quality of Christmastide,
your Word may endlessly become flesh
in me, your Christmas child.

Stone Soup Group

During the cold winter months we make soup for our neighbors at Woodbridge, Wood Park, and the people served at our Food Pantry. You can make any soup (except cream soups) at home and bring it to the rectory or the 3 places served. Containers are available at our office. Your home cooking makes a great difference for our whole community. Call our office for further information.

Winter Volleyball Tournament

This Sunday, January 5, 2020, 6:30-8:00PM at the Armory

The College Champions take on the Super Adults and the High School Hall Passers

Comfort and Hope Group

Monday, January 6, in the Good Shepherd Room
Open Support Group at 7:00PM,
Regular Monthly Business Meeting at 6:30 PM

Prison Ministry Meeting

Sunday, January 12 - 10:30AM in the Good Shepherd Room

CONFIRMATION

Sunday, May 3, 2020 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. We'll gather with people from around our Diocese to celebrate the gift of God's Spirit.

Electronic Giving

If you notice some of your fellow parishioners are not putting their envelopes in the collection basket it could be *that they are* using our automatic withdraw system (ACH). This system is working well and it may be an easy way for you to support our parish. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Office for information or for an authorized form. This is a very simple and easy way to keep track of your donation.

Re-Igniting Our Faith

As of 12/26/19, we've raised \$418,025 from 147 families and friends. Your support is important. Thank all of you for your gifts. Contribution forms are available or use the one in the bulletin.

Immaculate Conception Church Hall

Our hall and St. Joseph's Room are now open and available for parishioners, charitable, and community groups. Please call our parish for reservations and information.

Envelopes

If you use the non-printed offering envelope (the envelope where you write your name on it), you are designating your gift to support Immaculate Conception's building fund. If you use the pre-printed envelope, your offering supports the general parish fund. No matter what, every gift, from every person is most valuable.

THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR:
Peanut butter, cold cereal, shampoo, toothpaste and brushes, and feminine hygiene items.



Please bring these items to our donation box in church. There is always a need for old bags to be reused.

Food Pantry Volunteers... We are looking for volunteers to help. For information and training, contact Dianne Hosterman at 686-5310.

A Home for All

Our Church Hall is now open and ready to be a safe place for those who need a warm room, bed and food. Our Church, before the flood, was and now is again a shelter for anyone in need. In cooperation with the Hoosick Falls Police Department and our local Churches, we are glad we can provide this ministry in the name of Jesus. As Joseph and Mary searched for shelter, may we be that sheltering home in our community.

Beatitudes of Christian Living

The Gospels are always proclaimed among us "to comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable." Even as we find peace in our faith, it also pushes us beyond ourselves. Our life's journey is one of conversion not complacency.

This week's Gospel tells of foreigners, pagans, aliens coming to experience the Christ. Their coming to the home of Jesus changes their lives...they encounter Christ and they go forth continuing to reveal Christ among many nations. I have a photo of my mom in front of the Statue of Liberty...a pilgrimage remembering how her parents sailed past "give me your tired, your huddled masses" in the 1890's. The Gospel speaks of refugees and immigrants...how does Christ effect each one of us today? We are no longer strangers or aliens for in Christ, we are always home.



**Winter Solstice
Fire and Prayer...
we greet the holy
season of snow and
cold.**

Campaign Commitment Form

In support of Re-Igniting Our Faith and _____
(Parish Name, Parish Address)

Parishioner Contact Information:

Addressee _____

Address Line 1 _____

Address Line 2 _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

I/We pledge the following commitment:

Pledge Amount: \$ _____

Initial Payment: \$ _____

Balance: \$ _____

Payable Over: 3 Years 5 Years

Payment Type:

Cash/Check *(Please make checks payable to your parish's Re-Igniting Our Faith Campaign E.g., St. Mary's Re-Igniting Our Faith Campaign.)*

Bill Me *(Payment options will be mailed to you.)*

Credit/Debit/Automatic Recurring Payments *(Payment details will be mailed to you.)*

Please contact me/us, I/we wish to make a:

Gift of Stock/Securities

I/We intend to transfer stock from my/our account at _____ by _____
(Financial Institution) (Date)

Planned Gift *(Bequest, Gift of Life Insurance, Retirement Plan Assets, Charitable Remainder Trust)*

Matching Gift

Payment Schedule:

I/We would like to be billed (please choose one):

Monthly

Quarterly

(March, June, September, December)

Semi-Annually

(June, December)

Annually

(December)

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH - JANUARY 4 & JANUARY 5

This Week: January 4 & January 5

Lectors: Team 1

Counters: Mike Shea, Ellen McMartin & Andrea White

Next Week: Heather Hassett & Eileen Bakaitis

(You are responsible to find a substitute if you are unable to serve.)

YOUR SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS & ATTENDANCE

December 21 & December 22

Offertory \$3,157.00
Total \$3,157.00

Attendance:

Saturday- December 21, 4:00 PM 118
Sunday - December 22, 9:00AM 130
Total 248

Christmas & Christmas Flower Offerings

Christmas \$9,998.00
Christmas Flowers \$1,827.00
Total \$11,825.00

Attendance:

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24, 2:00 PM.....575
Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25, 12:00 AM101
Total 676

December 28 & December 29 * Unavailable at time of print. *

This weeks' second collection is for Faith Formation (Jan. 4 & 5). The next second collection is for Faith Formation (Feb. 1 & 2).

** In order for your contribution to be counted, please be sure to include your full name and/or envelope # if using a plain envelope.*



- ◆ Wednesday mornings at 10 AM: Bulletin proofreaders. **Call the office.**
- ◆ Sunday morning: Collection Counters. **Call the office.**
- ◆ Lectors (readers) at Mass: **See Gloria Shufon, or call the office, 686-5064.**

ELECTRONIC GIVING

Our automatic withdrawal system is working well. This may be an easy way for you to support our parish. Please contact our office for more information.

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Bill McAuliffe, Joseph Maloney, Felicia Martelle, Norman Scott, Pat Carknard, Cheryl McLaughlin, Hanna Stevens, Jean Shaw, Lenny Darosa, Neil Watykus, Corrine Philpott, Jeff Babson, Shirley Bissonette, Cassandra Percy, Chris Haynes, Janet Smith, Sandy McCart, Jack Ellis, Dawn Myers, Hope Kjelgaard, Dr. Marcus Martinez, Lorraine Kalinowski, Nancy Hathaway Mahoney, Sally Blinstrub, Judy Quackenbush, Jane Davis, Sally Williams, Deanna Aldrich, and all those who are ill or hurting. Those who have been on the prayer list for quite some time will still be prayed for, but will not appear in the bulletin. If you are in need of prayer for yourself or someone else, please call Margaret O'Malley at 686-7835.

THANKS...from a parishioner.

Our Sponsor of the Week is...

J. A. BRADLEY, & Sons, Inc.

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P.O. Box 304, 21953 NY Route 22

North Hoosick Rd., Hoosick Falls, NY

ph. (518) 686-5066 ◆ fax (518) 686-4807