

The Roman Catholic Community of Elizabeth, Glassport, South Allegheny

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

Saint Mark Parish

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust
1125 Romine Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15133
Phone 412-678-6275
Fax 412-673-1393

Email: saintmarkparishdiopitt@gmail.com

Saint Eugene Church (StE)
3210 Liberty Way - Liberty

Saint Joseph Church (StJ)
1125 Romine Avenue - Port Vue

Religious Education
412-678-6275 x 102

Youth Ministry: 412-678-6275 x105

Saint Michael Parish

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust
101 McLay Drive
Elizabeth, PA 15037-2363
Phone 412-751-0663
Fax 412-751-2161

Email: stmichael11@verizon.net

Saint Michael Church (StM)
101 McLay Drive - Elizabeth

Religious Education
412-754-0886

Youth Ministry: 412-384-8356
sformicaym@comcast.net

Queen of the Rosary Parish

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust
530 Michigan Avenue
Glassport, PA 15045
Phone 412-672-7209
Fax 412-672-6390

Email: 50501@diopitt.org

Queen of the Rosary (QoR)
530 Michigan Avenue - Glassport

Religious Education
412-872-5136 or 412-672-7209

Youth Ministry: 412-672-7209

Accept God's Love, and Live! Share God's Love, and Thrive!

Coming Soon - Website: ElizabethSouthAlleghenyCC.org - Coming Soon



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

PREPARE

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

*"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths."*

- Lk 3:4

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Looking For A Parish?

Wherever you are on your faith journey,
we welcome you to join our community.
You may register by contacting the Parish Office.

Implementation Phase Prayer

Father of Mercy,

During this time of implementation help us to grow in unity
with St. Mark Parish, St. Michael Parish
and Queen of the Rosary Parish.

Grant us the wisdom and willingness to understand
how our parishes will become stronger and more vibrant
in fulfilling the mission of the Church.

Assist us in opening our arms to welcome others
as we continue to journey

On Mission for The Church Alive!

Help us, O Lord, to trust in the future
you have planned for us.

This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Learn Jesus, Love Jesus, and Live Jesus.

The Second Sunday Of Advent

December 9, 2018

*The Lord has done great things for us;
we are filled with joy.*

-Psalm 126

Pastoral Staff

Clergy Team

Reverend Thomas A. Wagner, Administrator
Reverend Miroslaus A. Wojcicki, Senior Parochial Vicar
Deacon Stephen C. Pikula, Permanent Deacon
Deacon John E. Ragan, Permanent Deacon

Religious Education

Julie Fleckenstein, St. Mark
Joan Kilgore, St. Michael
Darla Losteter, Queen of the Rosary

Youth Ministry

Lori DiMarco, St. Mark
Susan Formica, St. Michael
Darla Losteter, Queen of the Rosary

Safe Environment

Emily Carlson, St. Mark
Mary Jo Ignatius, St. Michael

Music Ministry

Brandy Irish-Gerjuoy, St. Mark
Celeste Cafasso, St. Michael
Carol Gioia, St. Michael
Pamela Whitney, Queen of the Rosary

Facilities

Kevin Hopkins, St. Mark
Patricia Muic, St. Mark
Tony Hutskow, St. Michael

Pastoral Secretary

Lisa Mykeloff, St. Mark
Jeannie Premozic, St. Mark
Jan Kunkel, St. Michael
Amy Megahan, Queen of the Rosary

Parish Nurse

Pam Curcio, 412-754-0317, St. Mark

Collaboration, Courage and Compassion

Mary of Nazareth Catholic School

Growing in Wisdom, Age and Grace

Time for Twos, Pre K 3 & 4, Kindergarten, Grades 1– 8
1640 Fawcett Avenue White Oak, PA 15131
Phone: 412-672-2360 Fax: 412-672-0880
Webpage: www.maryofnazarethschool.org

Religious Education Program

Enlisting Witnesses for Jesus Christ

All children, Grades 1-8, are invited and encouraged to participate in a Religious Education Program.

Youth Ministry

All Youth, High School (9-12 grade) and Jr. High School (6-8 grade), are invited and encouraged to participate in the youth ministry program.

Mass & Adoration of the Eucharist

Tuesday Evening

St. Eugene Church, Liberty

Mass - 6:30 pm

Adoration - 7:00-7:30 pm

Confession - 7:00-7:30 pm

Elizabeth, Glassport, South Allegheny Catholic Community

Saint Mark Parish, Saint Michael Parish, Queen of the Rosary Parish

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, Vigil, December 24, 2018

4:00 pm Saint Eugene Church, Liberty

4:00 pm Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

10:00 pm Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

Christmas Day, December 25, 2018

9:00 am Saint Joseph Church, Port Vue

9:30 am Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

11:00 am Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport

Mary, Mother of God Mass Schedule

New Year's Eve, Vigil, December 31, 2018

4:00 pm Saint Eugene Church, Liberty

4:00 pm Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

New Year's Day, January 1, 2019

9:00 am Saint Joseph Church, Port Vue

9:30 am Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

11:00 am Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport

Morning Mass Snow Cancellations

For everyone's safety, a delay or cancellation at Elizabeth or South Allegheny School Districts is our notice of **Safety First**. Mornings with a delay or cancellation—**There will be no morning Mass at Saint Eugene Church.**

Please listen to the radio or watch TV for delays or cancellations. **Safety first! Be careful!**

Again, safety first! Be careful!

December Rosary Intention

That people who are involved in the service and transmission of faith may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.

Sacraments

Baptism of Infants & Children

Baptism is a joyous event in the life of the parish. Baptism is celebrated any Sunday after Mass and during Mass on the Fourth Sunday of the Month.

Previous arrangements are necessary.

Instruction in the Faith - R.C.I.A.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Program is offered for those interested in the Catholic Faith. For more information, please contact Fr. Wagner.

Reconciliation

St. Eugene Church, Liberty
Tuesday, 7 - 7:30 pm

St. Michael Church, Elizabeth
Saturday, 11-11:30 am

Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport
Saturday, 1- 1:30 pm

St. Michael Church, Elizabeth
Saturday, 3:15-3:45 pm

St. Eugene Church, Liberty
Saturday, 7-7:30 pm

Marriage

The prospective bride and groom are to make arrangements with the priest or deacon at least 6 months prior to the proposed date of the wedding. Diocesan regulations require all couples to attend an approved pre-marriage preparation program.

Anointing of the Sick

the Anointing of the Sick is celebrated communally on the Second Sunday of the Month.

Ministry to the Sick and Shut In

Homebound members of the Parish should call the Parish Office to make arrangements to receive Holy Communion at home.

Sponsorship Forms

Only registered, practicing, fully-initiated Catholics are eligible for sponsor certificates. Please call the Parish Office.

Bulletin Information Deadline

All information must be received 2 weeks in advance.

Moving

Please call or email your new address to the Parish Office.

Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-932-0313

Mass Intentions For The Week

StE St. Eugene Church, Liberty StJ St. Joseph Church, Port Vue

StM St. Michael Church, Elizabeth QoR Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport

December 9 - 16, 2018

Saturday, 8, Vigil, Second Sunday of Advent

StM 4:00 pm T Jennifer Tour - Mom

StE 6:00 pm M Michael Thomas Pope - Denice Vanscoy, Mother

Sunday, 9, Second Sunday of Advent

StJ 9:00 am M Dorothy Hornfeck - Daughter, Louise Rarick

StM 9:30 am T Ernest Oblack - Maryann & Jonathan Kabana

QoR 11:00 am M Rose D'Angelo-Gladkowski - Giulia DiStasi

StM 12:00 nn T Helen Gogoel - Family Living & Deceased of the Parish Family

Monday, 10, Advent Weekday

QoR 8:00 am Gerry Michalski - Mary Jean & Duane Molinaro
Novena - Infant Jesus of Prague

StM 9:00 am Julie Spernack - Posa & Caldwell Families

Tuesday, 11, Advent Weekday

StM 9:00 am Ronald McEvoy, Jr. - Audrey Benz

StE 6:30 pm Helen Kish - Husband, Joe
Eucharistic Holy Hour (6:30 - 7:30 pm)

Wednesday, 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe

QoR 8:00 am Edward Iwanowski - Wife & Children Novena Miraculous Medal BVM

StM 9:00 am Dorothy Cassidy - M/M Bob Sibole Novena - Michael the Archangel

Thursday, 13, Lucy, virgin & martyr

StE 8:00 am Joann Ryan - Popovich Family

StM 9:00 am Bill Owens - Tim & Joan Petty

Friday, 14, John of the Cross, priest & doctor of the church

QoR 8:00 am Patricia Crawley - Nick Protz Holy Hour from 8:30 to 9:30 am

StM 9:00 am Dorothy Gossman - Bartko Family

Saturday, 15, Vigil, Third Sunday of Advent

StM 4:00 pm M Dorothy Hamrick & LuBelle - Pat & Bill Mains

StE 6:00 pm T Living & Deceased Members of Christian Mothers & Ladies Guild
- Christian Mothers and Ladies Guild

Sunday, 16, Second Sunday of Advent

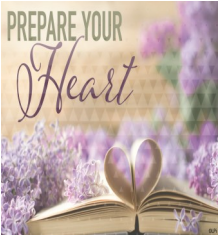
StJ 9:00 am T Gertie Fox, Mary Osieki, and Justine Antkiewicz - Liz Fox

StM 9:30 am M Harvey Reder - Wife, Helen

QoR 11:00 am T Paul Gooch - Evelyn Gooch

StM 12:00 nn M James Ranchik - M/M Ron Ziegler
Living & Deceased of the Parish Family

Low Gluten Hosts available - please see Priest before Mass



Second Sunday of Advent December 9, 2018

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee...and Lysanias was tetrach of...

Did you need to pinch yourself awake during the first few lines of this Sunday's Gospel? John the Baptist received quite a prelude today as Luke described the religious and political leadership of the time period. Scripture is divinely inspired, and we believe that everything that made it into the Bible is there for a reason. These lines remind us of an important truth. The Christmas story isn't a fairy tale or nursery rhyme. It's not a parable we say to give meaning to the holiday. At Christmas, God's presence is made tangible in a precise moment in time. The birth of Christ is a historical event. As precursor to Jesus' preaching, the ministry of John the Baptist is also a historical event.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. John's call to repentance and the forgiveness of sins happened in a particular time and place. But that does not mean it is limited to first century Palestine! God continues to move in our daily lives. What we hear in today's Gospel - and what we anticipate at Christmas - occurs in our daily lives. God works in concrete ways in time and space. He did that 2,000 years ago, and He continues to do so today!



This Second Sunday of Advent, examine your own Christmas preparations.

- Is there anything you need to repent of before the Christmas season?
- Are there low points in your life, valleys to **be filled** by the love of God?
- Are their mountainous obstacles in your spiritual life?
- How can they be **made low**?
- Are you making decisions that have moved you away from God?

This Advent season is the time for them to **be made straight and made smooth.**

Prepare the way in your heart for Christ today!

© Liturgical Publications Inc

*The Lord has done great things for us;
we are filled with joy.*

The Light is Still On for You!

The Light is Still On for You! is an initiative of the Diocese of Pittsburgh to encourage Catholics to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Confession is the best way to prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord at Christmas. Confession will be available on **Tuesday, December 11, 2018** at

Saint Eugene Church - Liberty
(Mass at 6:30 pm & Confessions - 7:00-9:00 pm)
and **Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport**
and **every Roman Catholic parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh from 6:00-9:00 pm.**

There will be no confessions at St. Michael.

Awaiting The Salvation Of God



The world does not seem big enough to contain the jubilation of the first reading. In the Gospel reading, the Roman empire isn't big enough, either. The great powers of Rome are named and made to stand waiting for the arrival of God's salvation. And we find Paul meditating joyfully on what really matters.

According to Baruch, the city of Jerusalem is like a person standing on tiptoe looking for God's salvation, which is coming from the east. Those who were led away on foot, heads down, now come back, a proud people. Why, the very way is smoothed out. The path is lined with fragrant, lush trees.

It can't get any better than this, can it? Well, yes, it can. For a voice calls out in the desert. Here is the beginning of the salvation of God.

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Saint Michael Angel Tree



Once again the Saint Michael Parish Family will be sponsoring the Angel Tree, providing Christmas gifts to those in the local community who need our help.

The Angel Tree Ornaments will be available on the weekend of November 24 & 25, 2018.

All gifts should be returned to the church by **Next Sunday, December 16, 2018 at 12 Noon Mass for sorting and distribution.** Thank You for caring!

Kind deeds change lives, Thank You!

**Pray for Peace. Pray for Unity.
Pray for Patience and Understanding.**

Treasures From Our Tradition

Look around most Catholic churches, and you will discover an image of John the Baptist, often in the old baptistery, or in a window near where the font is or was located. He has two feast days in the calendar: one commemorating his birth, and the other his death. **There are only three nativities in our calendar: for Jesus, for Mary, and for the Baptist.** John's birthday is reckoned according to the schedule given in Luke's Gospel of the angel's announcement to Mary. The angel tells her that her cousin Elizabeth is in the sixth month of pregnancy, and so Mary hastens to help her. Reckoning Christmas as December 25, we count backwards nine months to March 25 for the Feast of the Annunciation. Then we count forward three months to June 24 for John the Baptist's birth. Halfway to Christmas, his nativity gives ample reason for rejoicing in the summer, and his symbols of fire and water are used playfully in bonfires and dives into the sea. Even at the polar opposite of Christmas in the calendar, the energy of Christ's birth in the Incarnation provides cause for rejoicing.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch

May God Bless Our Service Personnel

If you would like to add or update an active Service member, please call the Parish Office.



As a faith community, we pray for and remember our Service Men and Women who are serving on active duty in the Armed Services, especially: **Pvt. Peter A. Barranté, USMC; Maj. Damian Baskerville, USAF; Capt. Perry Cansick, USAF; Col. Richard Collage, PA NG; Staff Sgt. Nicholas DeLuca, Army; Cadet 1/C David DeMaio, USCGA, Capt. Craig Dolhi, Army; Capt. Anthony Formica, Army; 2nd Lt. John Formica, Army; T/Sgt. Michael Goodman, USAF; E5 Sgt. Brian Imundo, Army; Sgt. Russ Langley, Marines; A1C Timothy Oeler, USAF; ENS Timothy Ragan, USNA; Sgt. Brandon R. Smith, USAF Pararescueman; Amn. Adam Stitt, USAF.**

Saint Michael, protect them.

May We Never Forget . . . Freedom is Never Free!

Riches —St. Ambrose

Riches are the instrument of all vices, because they render us capable of putting even our worst desires into execution.

Annual Bell-less Red Kettle Drive

serving families in 15037, 15013, 15018 & Pangburn Hollow
Red Kettles will be in the Gathering Space
on the First, Second & Third Sundays of Advent.
 Please make checks payable to Elizabeth Salvation Army.
 Thank you for your kindness and concern for others.

On Mission For The Church Alive!

Prepare the Way of the Lord – This Second Sunday of Advent we hear the call in the Gospel to **Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low.** This is a vivid reminder that, as God desires to be with us, so must we work to prepare our hearts and our lives to be places where he desires to dwell and that are fitting for his coming. While this preparation can take on many forms, Saint Luke reminds us of one important way, **repentance for the forgiveness of sins.** As Catholics, we repent of our sins and are forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Advent, the season of preparation, is a perfect time to celebrate this beautiful sacrament and ready our hearts for the coming of the Lord. **This Tuesday, December 11th, The Light Is On For You! at parishes across the Diocese of Pittsburgh from 6:00-9:00pm and priests will be available to hear Confessions.** No matter how long it has been since you last went, consider taking this opportunity to prepare your heart this Advent.

Visit onmissionchurchalive.org
 to learn more and to stay informed.

Celebration of Lesson and Carols Saint Michael Church, Elizabeth

Thursday, December 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm

The Celebration of Lessons and Carols features a mixture of Readings from Sacred Scripture, Traditional Carols, Hymns, Choral Music combined with prayers appropriate to the Season.

A mini choir will support and lead the faith community in praise and participation. Rehearsal will be on Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 pm. If interested in singing with the mini choir, please call Celeste, 412-751-7814. All are welcome!

Yet To Do —Marie Curie

**One never notices what has been done;
 one can only see what remains to be done.**

Enlisting Witnesses for Jesus Christ



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Candidates for Sacraments should be adequately prepared to receive these gifts, and a proper understanding of the Sacrament should be gained and demonstrated. Generally, **two (2) consecutive years of instruction is necessary** for the reception of the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Saint Mark Parish

Religious Education Sunday Morning

10:00 - 11:30 am

For information or questions, please call Julie at the Religious Education Office, 412-678-6275 x 102.

Youth Group will meet Wednesday, December 12, 2018 from 6:30-9:00 pm at St. Joseph, Port Vue.

Saint Mark Decorating for Christmas

We will be decorating our churches for Christmas.

Please come and join us.

Saint Eugene Church

Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 10:00 am.

Saint Joseph Church

Friday, December 14, 2018 at 10am.

Food, drinks, and many blessings will be provided!

Thank you!

Have you heard the good news?

St. Mark Parish Festival - August 1-3, 2019.

With the Christmas right around the corner, we invite you to keep our festival baskets in mind. You can get many nice items for these holidays when the clearance sales begin, in most cases the day after the holiday.

Please drop your items off, year round, in the specially marked baskets at the Liberty or Port Vue churches. Thank You for your generosity!!!

Common Grounds COFFEE HOUSE

is open after 9:00 am Sunday Mass at St. Joseph Church, Port Vue. Please join us!

Saint Michael Parish

Religious Education Sunday Morning

8:00 - 9:20 am & 10:30 - 11:50 am

For information or questions, please call Joan at the Religious Education Office, 412-754-0886.

Family Mass Sunday

January 6, 2019 at 9:30am

The Fifth Grade will assume the roles of liturgical leadership: greeters & ushers, lectors, gift bearers, etc. for the 9:30 am Mass.

May the Lord Bless All of Our Children!

Confirmation Candidates will meet Sunday,

January 6, 2019 from 4-6 pm

in Archangel Hall.

Senior Youth Group will meet

Sunday, January 6, 2019 from 4-6 pm

in Archangel Hall.

Junior Youth Group will meet

Friday, December 13, 2018 from 7:00-9:00 pm

in Archangel Hall.

Marriage Moments by Susan Vogt, SusanVogt.net

Marital arguments sometimes go round in circles with each spouse trying to prove they were right. Sometimes you are right, but that's not the point. If you can recognize the part of the argument that you were wrong in, simply saying **I was wrong** can help. Resist following it with, **But...**

Parenting Pointers by Susan Vogt, SusanVogt.net

Teach your child some Latin. In Latin Advent means something is coming. For Christians, it points us to the coming of Jesus at Christmas. It's not here yet. We have to wait for it. Talk about how you wait for relatives or friends to arrive. It's hard to wait, but you shouldn't hurry it by celebrating before the guest's arrive.

A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel shows that John the Baptist and parents have similar vocations. Like the Baptist, parents are asked to make **rough ways smooth** and to **prepare the way of the Lord** for their families. This Advent ask: **Does my life hinder or help my family to know Jesus?**

*The winding roads shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth.*

Queen of the Rosary Parish
Religious Education Sunday Morning
9:30 - 10:45 am

For information or questions, please call Darla at the Parish Office, 412-672-7209 or 412-953-8119.

Religious Education & Youth Group News

Please see that your child attends classes weekly and arrives on time. The children continue the Advent journey to Bethlehem.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Warm Feet for Veterans collected a total of 184 pairs of socks. Thank you to everyone who donated socks and a special Thank You to the Gulasky Family for delivering them.

Youth Group meets on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Social Hall.

New members are always welcome.

Youth Group News: Through empowerment, participation, personal and spiritual growth, we hope to guide our youth to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. We learn that we can make a difference in this world through friendship and love. All youth in 6th grade and up are welcome. **Thank You** to everyone who encourages and supports our youth. Youth will be visiting the shut-ins this month. Stop in or call Darla, 412-953-8119. New members are always welcome.

Christmas Trees Decorating

Holy Name Society will be setting up the Christmas Trees on **Sunday, December 16, 2018 at 1:00 pm in Queen of the Rosary Church.**

Anyone wishing to help decorate, please see the bulletin board for more information. Decorating will begin December 17th. Thank you.

CCM/WG Scholarship Applications

Scholarship Applicants must be a graduating High School Senior (2018) or a current student attending an accredited post secondary school and a registered member of Saint Michael Parish. There are two \$500 scholarships available. Applications can be obtained at the Rectory Office. **Scholarship Applications must be returned by Monday, December 31, 2018.**

Altar Bread & Wine, Altar Flowers, Sanctuary Lamp

Queen of the Rosary Church: Sanctuary Lamp for the Edward Iwanowski, requested by Wife & Family.

Adult Faith Formation
Faith, Fellowship and Food
Mary: A Biblical Walk
with the Blessed Mother

Tuesday evenings through December 18, 2018.
St. Michael Church, Archangel Hall 6:45-9:00 pm



Read the Bible.
Pray over Sacred Scripture.
You can keep whatever you find...

Diocesan Regulations for all Ministries
(Criteria for public ministry)

All parish staff & volunteers: Advisory Council (Finance & Pastoral), Catechists & Aides, Choir, CCM/WG, Eucharistic Ministers, Fish Fry, Lectors, Liturgical Hospitality, Ushers, etc., are required by the USCCB, the Diocese of Pittsburgh, the Parish and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be cleared in the following ways:

- 1. registered on the Diocesan Data Base.**
- 2. sign the Code of Pastoral Conduct**
- 3. cleared by the Department of Public Welfare**
- 4. be cleared by the Pennsylvania State Police**
- 5. attend Protecting God's Children Seminar.**

Protecting God's Children Seminar

is a requirement for all adults (18 or older) who are involved in the public ministry of the church. This seminar is online or a live class, which will be scheduled after the New Year for our Parishes.

Parish Stewardship

Time, Talent and Treasure

Sunday, December 2, 2018

Saint Mark Parish

Regular Offertory \$ 2,918.00

Maintenance \$ 3,641.00

Parish Share Goal \$61,731.00 Received \$38,111.00

Saint Michael Parish

Regular Offertory \$ 7,771.00

Capital Improvement \$ 1,350.00

Parish Share Goal \$90,241.00 Received \$75,252.27

Queen of the Rosary Parish

Regular Offertory \$ 4,039.50

Parish Share Goal \$31,507.00 Received \$16,145.00

Thank You for Your Sacrificial Giving!
Have you remembered your Parish in your will?

Daily Bread, Celebration Publications**Monday, December 10; Is 35:1-10; Lk 5:17-26**

The desert and the parched land will exult. A friend related a dark time in her life when she suddenly became an unemployed single mother of two small children. Simple survival filled her thoughts during the day, but at night, her fears would overwhelm her. Although she wasn't a churchgoer, she began reading the psalms, at times only able to complete a single verse. Within them, she found a glimmer of hope and sensed she wasn't alone. That speck of hope gave her the courage to face a new day and slowly over time that glimmer grew until she knew she would be OK. The Advent season reminds me of her and countless others who struggle for hope. The season is a gift in our darkest time, reminding all who live in darkness that God's hope and light exist within every struggle we face. **Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not!** Mary Joshi

Tuesday, December 11; Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14

Will the [shepherd] not ... go in search of the stray? I was disturbed by a parishioner who expressed her belief that the recent violence and disasters in the world were God's "punishment" to us for disobeying his laws. This belief is totally at odds with Jesus' parable of the lost sheep that we proclaim today. Free will carries a great responsibility and when people abuse it to turn away from God, we cannot blame God for the consequences of those actions. God mourns our rejection, we are told, and continually seeks out our return. When we answer the call, God rejoices! Would any loving parent deliberately put their children in dangerous or harmful circumstances only to teach them a lesson? I only wonder what mess the remaining 99 sheep managed to create among themselves before the shepherd returned. **Loving God, when my heart grows fearful of the world's evil, help me to remember you have not given up on us.** Mary Joshi

Wednesday, December 12; Rv 11:19-12:1-10;**Lk 1:26-38 - Our Lady of Guadalupe**

See, I am coming to dwell among you. We rarely see any depictions of the Holy Family with dirty hands or work-stained clothing. We are more comfortable picturing them as distant from the detritus of everyday human life. For many years, in fact, our Christian tradition had taught that our

earthly bodies were inherently bad, dirty and sinful. Yet Advent is a celebration of the coming of Emmanuel, **God with us.** Our humanity is exactly what God chooses to enter into; not to condemn it but to empower its potential as the body of Christ. We celebrate the miracle of Christmas at the Eucharist as we hear the words: ***By the mingling of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity. May we rejoice, as Mary did, in our ability to become the body through which Christ is delivered to the world.*** Mary Joshi

Thursday, December 13; Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15**Lucy, virgin & martyr**

Let anyone with ears listen! If you have ever given multistep instructions to a teenager while they are watching an electronic screen, you soon discover there is a big difference between hearing and listening when you confront partially completed tasks. I think this is how I sometimes treat Advent. I know it is an important season, but my energies are torn in so many directions and the readings and traditions have become so familiar, I become like that distracted teenager in my prayer life. In order to move from hearing to listening, from looking to seeing or from knowing to understanding, a commitment to focused awareness is required. I pray that amid the lights, tinsel and preparations for Christmas, I make that conscious effort to give God some real time with my undivided attention. **May all our Advent works and prayers give you praise and thanks, O God.** Mary Joshi

Friday, December 14; Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19**John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the church**

Wisdom is vindicated by her works. John the Baptist and Jesus may have walked the earth before the advent of social media, but their integrity was judged by rumors similar to the modern phenomenon of **fake news.** John was judged to be **possessed** because he lived an austere lifestyle in the desert, while Jesus who lived among people without concern for their social reputation, was deemed immoral. The advice given by Jesus still holds true when he tells us that the character of a person can be discerned by the **fruits** produced by their words and actions. If a person's words or deeds promote hatred, fear or injustice, then we may assume that they are not people who **delight in the law of the Lord.** If, on the other hand, their actions lead to justice, equality and mercy, then there is a good chance God would deem them **blessed.** **God of light, teach us to discern the way of your truth.** M Joshi

Saturday, December 15; Sir 48:1-11; Mt 17:9-13

Elijah will indeed come and restore all things. John the Baptist was beheaded and the disciples had just witnessed a transfigured Jesus on the mountaintop flanked by Moses (the law) and Elijah (the prophets). They were questioning this vision in light of having been told by the scribes that Elijah would return to restore the broken tribes of Israel. Jesus compares John the Baptist to the prophet Elijah, both of whom confronted their civil leaders for ignoring God's teachings and abusing their power. Both were persecuted for holding the authorities accountable for their actions. The world has always needed prophets like John and Elijah to remind its leaders that they are responsible for the well-being of many. Unfortunately, leaders still use their power to forcibly silence those prophets brave enough to hold them accountable to truth and justice. **Give courage, O Lord, to the Elijahs of today who call us all to live with integrity.** Mary Joshi

Catholic Charities Did you know . . .

Catholic Charities provides counseling services? Free therapy for adults who have no health insurance for depression, anxiety and life circumstance issues. Please call 412-456-6910 for more information or referrals. All calls are confidential. www.ccpgh.org.

In a troubled marriage?

Retrouvaille has helped tens of thousands; it can help you. For confidential information about or to register for the program, please contact Retrouvaille at 412-277-3434 or e-mail 3041@retrouvaille.org. or for more Information, www.helpourmarriage.com.

2018 Christmas Flower Memorials

___ St. Mark ___ St. Michael ___ Queen of the Rosary

Please Print

Requested by

Donation \$ _____ **Phone #** _____

Suggested Donation \$10.00

Deadline Monday, December 17, 2018

Please place in an envelope marked Christmas Flower Memorial and deposit in the collection. Thank You!

We remember . . . In your charity, please remember all those who have died, especially: **William School, all who will die today, and those who have no one to pray for them. Resting in Paradise.**

Eternal Rest grant unto them O Lord. And let Perpetual Light Shine upon them.

Grief Recovery Support Group
Wednesday, December 18, 2018 - 7:00-9:00 pm
Saint Robert Bellarmine Parish Center Lounge
1313 Fifth Avenue, East McKeesport

Anyone who has experienced a loss is invited. No pre-registration. For information, 412-824-2644.

I am confident that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus

Holiday Fruit Sale, 2018

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus, St. Michael Branch

	Quantity	Price	Total
Naval Oranges 4/5 BU	_____	35.00	_____
Holiday Navel 2/5 BU	_____	20.00	_____
Juice Oranges 4/5 BU	_____	31.00	_____
Red Grapefruit 4/5 BU	_____	35.00	_____
Holiday Red Grapefruit 2/5 BU	_____	20.00	_____
Grapefruit/Oranges			
Mixed Box 4/5 BU	_____	35.00	_____
Mixed Box 2/5 BU	_____	18.00	_____
Apples/Oranges/Pears Gift Box	_____	16.00	_____
Sunkist Oranges Gift Box	_____	21.00	_____
Gift Box Apples	_____	16.00	_____
Full Box Red Apples	_____	41.00	_____
Tangerines 4/5 BU	_____	42.00	_____
Tangerines 2/5 BU	_____	22.00	_____
		Total	_____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Make check payable to **St. Michael K of C, # 10077**
 Deposit order with check in collection basket.
 Please mark envelopes **FRUIT BASKET ORDER.**
 Deadline for orders, **Monday, December 17, 2018**
 Pick-up, **Saturday, Dec. 22, 2018 at 9:00 am**
 at **Saint Michael Church, Archangel Hall, Elizabeth.**

Upcoming Events

Holy Name Society will meet on Sunday,
December 9, 2018 at 9:30am,
in Queen of the Rosary Social Hall.
We will be discussing the Pre-Super Bowl Party.
All men are welcome.

Ladies of Charity will meet on Wednesday,
Dec. 12, 2018 at 9:00 am at St. Eugene, Liberty.

Catholic Men's Fellowship will meet on Saturday,
December 15, 2018 at 7:00 am
in St. Michael Church & Meeting Room.

Knights of Columbus will meet on Monday,
January 7, 2019 at 7:00 pm
in the St. Michael Church Meeting Room.

Ushers will meet on Thursday, January 10, 2019
at 7:30 pm in the St. Michael Church Meeting Room.

Rosary Makers will meet on Monday,
January 21, 2019 at 9:30 am
in the St. Michael Church Meeting Room.

St. Michael CCM/WG Annual Cookie Sale
Saturday, December 15, @ 4:00 pm
Sunday, December 16, @ 9:30 & 12 Noon

Saint Mark Parish & Queen of the Rosary 50/50
In your offertory packet, there is a special envelope
marked 50/50 Drawing--Donation \$5.00.

At the end of each month, one lucky winner is
drawn to win half of the proceeds.

Thank you for your support!

Handbell Practice meets on Sunday morning
from 10:15-11:15 am at St. Joseph Church, Port Vue.

Quilting Club meets on Monday,
from 11 am-2 pm at St. Joseph Church, Port Vue.

Crochet Club meets on Tuesday morning,
from 9:30-11:30 am at St. Joseph Church, Port Vue.

Adult Choir Practice meets on Wednesday,
from 7:00-8:30 pm at St. Eugene Church, Liberty.

Adult Choir Practice meets on Wednesday,
from 7:00-8:30 pm at St. Michael Church.

Queen of the Rosary Choir meets on Thursday
at 6:00 pm in the Church. New members welcome!

Cantor Practice meets on Thursday,
from 7:00-8:00 pm at St. Michael Church.

Oplatki (Christmas Wafers) are available after
Mass or in the Parish Office, \$3.00. Limited Supply.

St. Mark Parish, St. Michael Parish
Queen of the Rosary Parish
Pastoral Council & Finance Council Meeting
This combined Councils meeting will be held on
Monday, January 7, 2019 at 7:00 pm
in St. Michael Archangel Hall.
If you are unable to attend,
please call Jan, 412-751-0663.

New! Quilting Club at Saint Mark Parish

Bring your sewing machine and join us
on Mondays at 11:00 am
in the St. Joseph Meeting Room, Port Vue.
All are welcome!

For more information call Kathy, 412-672-4508.

Winner Wonderland Raffle - \$1,500
New Year's Eve - Monday, December 31, 2018
sponsored by St. Mark Parish
Winner Wonderland Tickets - Great Stocking Stuffers
Each Ticket will have 2 numbers
Winner based on the first number of the
PA PICK 3 evening drawing.
Donation \$5.00 No Bonus Numbers

Mark Your Calendars A Country Night Out!
Saturday, March 2, 2019 - Fr. Rowan Hall
Spend the evening with
Tim Litvin & the Nature Boy Band
Details coming soon!

Motor Coach Trip to Lancaster, PA
Save the Date: June 18, 19 & 20, 2019
Sponsored by Elizabeth, Glassport, South Allegheny Grouping
Round Trip Transportation, Two Nights Lodging,
2 Breakfasts, Dinner & reserved seating for Jesus
at the Sight & Sound Theater, Dinner & Show
at the Dutch Apple Dinner Theater, Kitchen Kettle
Village, Amish Life Experience Tour and more.
Bus will leave St. Michael Parking Lot.
More information coming, save the date.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is a tune-up
for your marriage! Get weekend dates and more info
by visiting YourMarriageIsWorthIt.org.

*The winding roads shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth.*

**Let the Church always be a place of mercy
and hope, where everyone is welcomed,
loved and forgiven.** - Pope Francis