

St. Mary, Mother of God Church



Established 1826

Roman Catholic Church
608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229
A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust



Father Ronald Maquiñana—*Pastor*
rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Parish Information

Saturday (Vigil): 4:00 P.M.

Sunday: 8:30 & 11:00 A.M.

Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M.

Holy Day of Obligation: 8:00 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.

Reconciliation: Saturday - 3:00—3:45 P.M.

Baptism: Sundays within the 11:00 A.M. Mass (by appointment)

Marriage: Contact the Parish nine months in advance

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: RCIA helps you to learn more about the Catholic faith. Pre-registration is required. Contact Fr. Ron or William Girardi at 724-295-2281.

Hospital or Home Visit: If you would like to receive Holy Communion or if you know someone who would like to have the priest visit, please call Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

Anointing of the Sick: Contact Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281

Holy Communion: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are available to bring the Eucharist to the sick and homebound. If you know of someone, please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

Baptism: To understand the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. To register for one of these classes, please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

Parish Staff

William Girardi,

Pastoral Associate—412-719-7085

Claudia Vertosick

Business Manager/Parish Secretary

Helen James, *Religious Education Director*

Thomas Koharchik, *Choir Director*

Cindi Harbison

Social Hall Coordinator—724-272-7744

Jennifer Liti/David Valencic

Parish Custodians

Richard Bertino, *Cemetery Caretaker*

724-295-3632 (home); 724-602-5986 (cell)

Ministries

Kristen Marhefka/Julie Polana Gardone

Teen Ministry

Melissa Kristine/Beth Macurdy

Evangelization

John Nemcek—*Homebound Ministry*

Gina Jones—*Helping Hands*

724-448-9251; ginaj1904@gmail.com

Organizations

Diane Grant—*Christian Mothers*

Ray Smetana/Mary Ellen Gray

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Tim Fogarty—*Men's Group*

Office Information

Administrative Center Numbers & Hours :

724-295-2281 (Office) 724-295-3090 (Fax)

Monday through Thursday - 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Friday - 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Parish Website: www.stmaryfreeport.com

Parish Email Address:

thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com

Facebook: Saint Mary, Mother of God - Freeport

Send Information to share:

stmarysocialmedia@yahoo.com

MISSION STATEMENT—St. Mary's is a caring and welcoming family committed to building and strengthening a community of God, reaching out as disciples of Jesus Christ to Freeport and beyond.

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

†=(in memory of) ♥=(IHO/special intention/parishioners)

MASSES FOR THE 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

- SATURDAY: January 18th**
4:00 P.M. ♥St. Mary Parishioners
- SUNDAY: January 19th**
8:30 A.M. †Walter Sliviak (Robert & Diane Grant)
11:00 A.M. †Donna Crabill (Linda Windows)
- MONDAY: January 20th**
8:00 A.M. †Linda Antonucci
(Betty Mason & Mary Beth Wonders)
- TUESDAY: January 21st**
8:00 A.M. †William Bale (Betty Labiaux)
- WEDNESDAY: January 22nd**
8:00 A.M. †Richard Brestensky (Mom & Dad)
- THURSDAY: January 23rd**
8:00 A.M. †Dolores Watt (Rose & David Check)
- FRIDAY: January 24th**
8:00 A.M. †Robert Hughes (Joseph & Olivia Leslie)

MASSES FOR THE 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

- SATURDAY: January 25th**
4:00 P.M. †Geno Pernazza (Maryellyn & Bill Bale)
- SUNDAY: January 26th**
8:30 A.M. †All Who Have Lost Their Spouse
(Fred & Karen)
11:00 A.M. ♥St. Mary Parishioners

Readings for the Week

- Monday:** 1 Sm 15:16-23; Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23; Mk 2:18-22
- Tuesday:** 1 Sm 16:1-13; Ps 89:20-22, 27-28; Mk 2:23-28
- Wednesday:** 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10; Mk 3:1-6, or any of readings for the Day of Prayer
- Thursday:** 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Ps 56:2-3, 9-13; Mk 3:7-12
- Friday:** 1 Sm 24:3-21; Ps 57:2-4, 6, 11; Mk 3:13-19
- Saturday:** Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Mk 16:15-18
- Sunday:** Is 8:23 — 9:3; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17; Mt 4:12-23 [12-17]



Ministry Schedule

January 25th & 26th, 2020

ALTAR SERVERS:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Fred Walker; Lauren & Leah Clark
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** Alexandra Lasko; Sarah, Hannah & Emma Shepherd; Abby & Emily Koharchik
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Victor & Olivia Svitek; Michael & William Speers

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Stella Aul; Nancy Forbeck; Dave Brestensky
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** Tom Brestensky; Karen Nigra; Carol Carson
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Andre Volek; Debbie Baustert; Melissa Schaeffer

LECTORS:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Janice Meola
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** John Nemcek
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Bill Cogley

GREETERS:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Gary & Arlene Miller
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** Diane Grant; Janis Harbison
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Rose Naughton

ORGANIST:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Diane Pleva
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** Tom Koharchik
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Dave Wesolosky

CANTOR:

- Saturday, 4:00 P.M.** Alex Smith
- Sunday, 8:30 A.M.** Tom Koharchik
- Sunday, 11:00 A.M.** Choir



Please contact the parish office if you would like to volunteer for any of these liturgical ministries!

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- Sunday:** Second Sunday in Ordinary Time; Julian Calendar Theophany (Epiphany)
- Monday:** St. Fabian; St. Sebastian; Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Tuesday:** St. Agnes
- Wed.:** Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
- Thursday:** St. Vincent; St. Marianne Cope
- Friday:** St. Francis de Sales
- Saturday:** The Conversion of St. Paul



From the Pastor's Desk

This Sunday, the gospel presents John the Baptist testifying that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and the Son of man. As he saw Jesus coming toward him, he said to the people, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world". He was informing them that Jesus is not only the Messiah who comes with power to save us, but He also comes to us as a sacrificial lamb who offers His whole life so that our sins might be forgiven.

Now what sin is John talking about? When we hear the word sin, we attribute it to any offense committed against God, like breaking one of His commandments, and that is our typical understanding. But it could also mean failure to love and care, especially when God has given us His love, and we turn our back away from Him. We see this in our everyday life, how instead of being grateful that God has blessed us with a family, with children and with a job, we take them for granted. Instead of welcoming and being happy for the gift of a baby given by God, some recourse to abortion.

Last Sunday, a representative from Life Choices came to us to talk about their mission of how many babies were saved from unwanted pregnancies and how they helped women and men who are in need of free services related to pregnancy and sexual health.

No wonder the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), no. 373, designates January 22nd as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children". In all the Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22nd is observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion.

Saint John Paul II, in his farewell address during his 1987 apostolic journey to the United States, said: *"America, your deepest identity and truest character as a nation is revealed in the position you take towards the human person. The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being, but especially the weakest and most defenseless ones. The best traditions of your land presume respect for those who cannot defend themselves. If you want equal justice for all, and true freedom and lasting peace, then, America, defend life!"*

As we observe the *Day of Prayer* on January 22nd, let us pray for the protection of the unborn children in their mothers' wombs. Let us also realize that the respect of all human life depends on our prayers and actions every day. Consider how you can reach out to help a mother facing a crisis pregnancy, give food and warmth to the homeless and care for all of God's children—regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or ability. Each and every person is cherished by God, and we must be His hands and feet.

January 22

**Day of Prayer for the
Legal Protection
of Unborn Children**

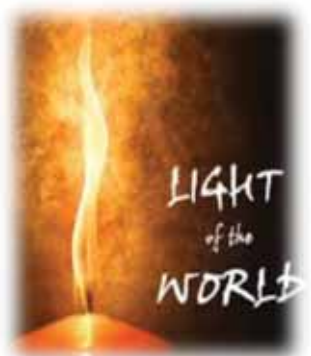


TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

By Candlemas, forty (4) days after Christmas, February 2nd, the season of Christ's coming will have depleted our candle supply. Soon, the parish will order a new paschal candle from a catalogue or candle maker, or in some communities, wax will be collected to be melted and molded. Last year's paschal candle shows the wear and tear of summer heat, or many funerals or baptisms.

Paschal candles have been around since at least the fourth century, when Constantine's biographer Eusebius reported that the night of the sacred vigil was "transformed into the brilliancy of day, by lighting throughout the city pillars of wax, while burning lamps in every place so that the splendor of this night was brighter than the brightest daylight".

Light was a precious commodity in the ancient world, and this lavish use of precious beeswax was a sign of the Christian's call to bear Christ's light into the world's darkness. In a pre-electric age, a whole city aglow from the paschal flame must have been a glorious sight, and a reminder to every baptized Christian of our vocation to "be the light of the world." —Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.





If you are new to the area, we invite you to share fully in our parish life. Your presence brings vitality and new gifts to the community. Please take a moment to register. Forms are available at all of the church entrances or by calling the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

Calendar of Events/Meetings

- January 19th** *Baby Bottle Campaign Continues; Religious Education—9:30-10:40 A.M.— Administrative Building; Teen Ministry—9:35-10:45 A.M.; Choir Practice—9:45-10:45 A.M.—Church; 11:00 A.M. Mass*
- January 22nd** *RCIA—6:30 P.M. - Conference Center*
- January 25th** *New Member Dinner—5:00 P.M. - Fellowship Hall*
- January 26th** *Baby Bottle Campaign Continues; Religious Education—9:30-10:40 A.M.— Administrative Building; Choir Practice—9:45-10:45 A.M.—Church; 11:00 A.M. Mass*
- January 29th** *RCIA—6:30 P.M. - Conference Center*
- February 2nd** *Baby Bottle Campaign Ends; Religious Education—9:30-10:40 A.M.— Administrative Building; Teen Ministry—9:35-10:45 A.M.; Choir Practice—9:45-10:45 A.M.—Church; 11:00 A.M. Mass*
- February 3rd** *Christian Mother’s Meeting—7:00 P.M. - Christian Mother’s Room*
- February 5th** *RCIA—6:30 P.M. - Conference Center*
- February 7th** *First Friday—6:30 P.M. - Benediction*
- February 9th** *Donut Social (Immediately following all masses) - Fellowship Hall*
- February 9th** *Religious Education—9:30-10:40 A.M.— Administrative Building; Choir Practice—9:45-10:45 A.M.— Church; 11:00 A.M. Mass; Baptism “Menjivar”—12:15 P.M. - Church*

Parish Events/Information



A Special Thank You to the families of **Tim & Bridget Fogarty** and **Mark and Melissa Kristine** for the purchase of the beautiful oak kneelers that have been placed at the side altars of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is appreciated!




The **Mardi Gras wine tasting festival** will be held on Saturday, February 22nd, from 6:00-10:00 P.M. in our Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$30.00 each and includes wine tasting and a lite fare. To purchase your tickets, please call Bridget at 724-294-0089; Steve at 724-294-3006; George at 412-913-0561. The event is sponsored by our Parish Council. Proceeds will benefit our Fellowship Hall Improvement Projects. †

Sponsor / Donate

Have you considered sponsoring our **Mardi Gras Wine Tasting Event**? If you would like to be a sponsor, forms are located at all of the church entrances. You can fill one out and return it to our Administrative Office, or, if you prefer, you can contact Jeff Polana, John Zurisko, Dave Kradel or Mark Lepkowski. **Deadline for sponsor forms is Monday, February 10th.** If you would rather help out in another way, donations are being accepted for theme baskets. Basket sponsors should contact Sharon Mihalich, Judy Bergstrom or Beth Macurdy. **Donations/baskets are due by Thursday, February 13th.** †



Please notify the Administrative Office of any address changes. An accurate address is very important! Membership change forms can be found at the bottom of page 7 in our weekly bulletin. Thank you!

In order to meet our weekly deadline, please note that all bulletin announcements/information must be received in writing or by email no later than 10:00 A.M. on Mondays. Thank you!

As part of their service project, students in the Confirmation class passing out gifts (purchased by our religious education students) to our parishioners who are homebound or residing in local nursing homes



A new member's dinner will be held Saturday, January 25th immediately following the 4:00 P.M. Mass for those who joined the parish in 2019. Please RSVP through our parish website at: www.stmaryfreeport.com or by calling Melissa Kristine at 724-230-4450. If you joined the parish in 2019 and did not receive an invitation, please contact the Administrative office at 724-295-2281. †



Please note that the following week-day masses are available if you would like to schedule a mass: February 6th, 7th, 13th, 17th, 25th & 28th. They will be given out on a first come/first serve basis. Thank you! †



In your charity, please remember the souls of those who passed away, especially **Edward Andrewich**. We ask God to welcome **Edward** and all who have gone before us into the joy of everlasting life and bring comfort and peace to their families. †



Change for Life

January is designated as *Respect Life month*. What better way to show your respect and love for life than by supporting *Life Choices* "Change for Life" campaign. *Life Choices* is asking each family for their support. If you didn't get your baby bottle last week, it's not too late. Bottles are located at all of the church entrances. Please take one home today, fill it with your donation and return it to church or drop it off at the Administration Office during normal office hours by Monday, February 3rd and help SAVE lives! Thank you for joining in the fight for life! †

News/Activities from Our Ministries/Organizations



To understand the importance of the *Sacrament of Baptism* and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. The schedule for 2020 is as follows: Thursday, March 12th, Thursday, June 11th, Thursday, September 10th and Thursday, December 10th. If you would like to register, please call Mark or Melissa at 724-230-4450 or the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281. †



Have you visited our beautiful prayer garden! Many of the granite rosary stones for the prayer garden have been engraved and can be viewed at each of the church entrances. Only a few Hail Mary stones are available for sale at \$300.00 each. If you are interested in honoring a loved one, order forms are located at each of the church entrances or you can contact Judy Bergstrom at 724-316-5352. †



We would like to thank Helen James, the Religious Education teachers and all the students for another successful Christmas gift and card program for our homebound shut-ins. Once again, the time and love devoted into buying and wrapping the gifts and the writing of messages in the cards by the students was so thoughtful. The shut-ins were so happy, gracious, and appreciative to receive the gifts, cards and especially the company. It was quite the memorable event. Thank you again! †



All men of the parish are encouraged to attend the 2nd Annual Diocesan Men's Conference — *The Well* — on Saturday, March 21st, at Westmorland Community College. The all day Conference includes a keynote presentation by *TV News Anchor Mike Clark* and three breakout sessions with options for thirty presentations to attend. The \$50.00 registration fee includes a continental breakfast and lunch. The Men's Group will coordinate car pooling for all men who register. To register, please visit: DioceseofGreensburg.org/THEWELL or contact Tim Fogarty at: ftpfogarty618@gmail.com; 724-294-0089 to request a registration form or for additional information. †

News/Activities from Our Ministries/Organizations

Evangelization

It's a Wonderful Life! - It has been just one week since the official ending of the celebration of Christmas. Most of us have "plundered" our trees and have boxed up another year of memories into storage. Liturgically, the church has entered ordinary time, not that its boring or uneventful, but just structured in its familiarity of the readings. Even John the Baptist and Jesus Himself had thirty quiet ordinary years as they prepared for the fullness of their purpose. In the first reading today, we hear of Isaiah proclaiming that God has "formed me as his servant from the womb". This scripture is an echo of Jeremiah, the prophet's words when Our Heavenly Father exclaims "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you". When Elizabeth greets Mary during her visitation, John the Baptist "leaped in her womb" and she rightly proclaims, "Blessed are you among women and Blessed is the fruit of your womb!" Why does scripture dwell so much on the fact that life is still fully life even shrouded in the mystery of a mother's womb? Because it is the truth and needs to be proclaimed.... especially in the year 2020. God has a plan for each one of us, a vocation that we need to live which starts even from the earliest moments beneath the beating heart of our mother. Every life is precious to God. We all have a mission to defend and protect all human life from conception to natural death. Every single one of us is called to carry out this vocation so that every soul has an opportunity to fully live the vocation that God has planned for them. This Friday is the 46th annual March for Life in Washington D.C. If we are unable to attend, then we all have the burden to pray for those making the sacrifice. We must never give up or give in. Changing the Israelites hearts of stone into hearts of flesh took hundreds of years and finally involved the sending of God's only Son. We ask our Father to rain down his mercy upon us and our nation to give us the gift of conversion and understanding of the sanctity of life.

The second half of *The Bible Timeline Bible study* will begin the first week of February—February 5th for the Wednesday morning session and February 6th for the Thursday evening session. **Please complete the reading for Session 12.**

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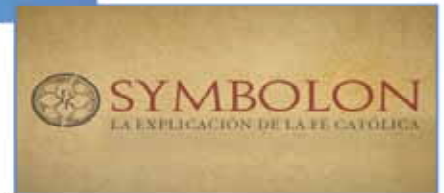
PICK OF THE WEEK

January 22 is the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. In an age when life itself seems disposable, how can we follow God's call to protect and promote the dignity of the human person in all places and circumstances?

**Symbolon:
Living the Faith**
Protecting the Dignity of
the Human Person

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News From Our Diocese/Around Our Diocese

Save the Date — The Pennsylvania March for Life will be held Monday, May 18th at the state capitol in Harrisburg. More details will follow in upcoming bulletins!

The Greensburg Chapter of Magnificat — A Ministry to Catholic Women is holding a breakfast at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center, Rt. 30 East, Greensburg, on Saturday, January 25th, from 9:00 A.M.-12:00 Noon. The speaker will be Judge Patricia McCullough, whose journey to the court began with a life-changing experience in Medjugorje. Cost is \$20.00/person, students/\$15.00. To register, call Brenda Concannon by Monday, January 20th at 724-836-2094 or visit: www.magnificatgreensburg.com to download a registration form. There is no online registration. †



St. Gertrude Parish, Vandergrift, will hold a spaghetti dinner on Thursday, January 23rd, from 4:00-7:00 P.M. in their parish hall. Cost is \$7.00/person; \$5.00/meatball hoagie. Take-outs available. For information, call 412-780-0164. †

St. Vincent College, Latrobe, will hold a *Get Acquainted Day* open house for prospective students and their families on Saturday, January 25th. The day will include presentations on academics, admission procedures, financial aid, college life, tours, and opportunities to meet with faculty, coaches and advisers of clubs and organizations. Registration and breakfast will be from 8:30-9:00 A.M. in the Fred Rogers Center, and the day will conclude by 12:30 P.M. To register, contact the Office of Admission at 800-793-5549 or email: admission@stvincent.edu or visit www.stvincent.edu/visit. †

Altar Bread and Wine

The Altar Bread and Wine were donated for this week in loving memory of



Robert E. "Butch" Hughes
By
Joseph and Olivia Leslie

Sanctuary Lamp

In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ, The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn this week



in loving memory of
Martin J. Sikora
By
Sylvia M. Sikora

Collections

Offertory Collection for January 5th, 2020

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 602

No. of Envelopes Received: 200

Collection: Offertory - \$4,897.00

Loose - \$366.00; Children (16) - \$34.00

Electronic Payments (10) - \$415.00

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (98) - \$1,784.00

Additional Christmas (4) - \$195.00

Additional Children & Family Services (2) - \$70.00

Total Collection - \$7,761.00

Offertory Collection for January 12th, 2020

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 602

No. of Envelopes Received: 184

Collection: Offertory - \$4,111.00

Electronic Payments (13) - \$740.00

Loose - \$398.00; Children (22) - \$61.00.

Additional Solemnity of Mary (2) - \$35.00

Total Collection - \$5,345.00

Thank you!



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Saturday
January 25th, 2020
Jeannie Lepkowski and
Mary Bertino

St. Mary, Mother of God Membership Request/Change

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

____ Address/Phone Change

____ Please remove me from your census

Please drop this form in the collection basket

****New Membership Registration Forms are located at all of the church entrances****

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