

THE CHARITY OF CHRIST COMPELS US:

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

ERECTED 1963, FIRST IN THE WORLD NAMED AFTER MOTHER SETON

1377 EAST MAIN STREET, SHRUB OAK, NY 10588



PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Fr. Robert A. Quarato, Administrator
Rev. Fr. Brian Graebe, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Fr. S. Kulandairajan, Parochial Vicar

Rev. Mr. Richard Juliano, Deacon, Plant Manager
Rev. Mr. Michael F. Wilson, Deacon
Rev. Mr. Matthew Reiman, Seminarian Deacon

Sr. Gabriel Miriam, S.C., Regional School Principal
Mrs. Sara Koshofer, Religious Education Coordinator
Ms. Lana Kollath, Director of Sacred Music and Organist

Ms. Noreen Donnellan, Parish Council President
Mr. Edward Murgia, Finance Council Chairman
Mrs. Janet Angelillo, Lay Trustee
Mrs. Gwen Briggs, Lay Trustee

CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

THE LORD'S DAY

Saturday: 5:30PM (Birthday Blessing, 1st Sat)
Sunday: 7:00 (no music), 8:00, 9:30 (Family Mass)
11:00 AM (Solemn Choir Mass), 12:30 PM

Monday-Friday, 7:00AM, 9:00AM
Saturday, 9:00AM
Morning Prayer: Monday-Saturday 8:45AM
For Holy Day schedule, consult bulletin

PARISH CONTACTS

PARISH SCHOOL
(914) 528-3563
FAX: (914) 528-0341

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(914) 528-8553
E-mail setonre@bestweb.net

RECTORY
(914) 528-3547
FAX: (914) 528-4216

E-mail seton@bestweb.net



Handicapped accessible

Website <http://www.seton-parish.org>

DECEMBER 7, 2014

ADVENT 2

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

Baptism/Becoming a Catholic

Adults (RCIA): call the rectory for information
Infants: Parent Instructions, 2nd Saturday, 11:00am
Celebrations: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Sun., 1:30; 4th Sat, Noon

Reconciliation

Sat. 4-5:30PM; **Thurs.** 9:30AM
Other times: upon request.

Marriage

The Sacrament of Matrimony requires specific preparation. Contact a priest **one year** before the planned ceremony. Archdiocesan marriage instruction is mandatory.

Anointing of the Sick/Eucharist for the Homebound

Contact a priest for ministry to the sick and aged at home or at a local healthcare facility. Upon request, the Eucharist will be brought to **any Catholic** who is seriously ill or homebound.

Confirmation

Baptized adults who have never received First Eucharist and/or Confirmation should contact a priest to complete their Christian Initiation through the RC.I.A. process.

Holy Orders/Religious Vocations

A pastoral staff member is **always** ready to discuss the prospect of a vocation to the priesthood or religious life.

POPULAR DEVOTIONS

Eucharistic Adoration (Suspended for July and August)

Monday-Friday, Our Lady Memorial Chapel, 12:00-3PM
First Friday, 12:00-6:00PM
First Saturday, 9:30-10:30AM

Novenas, following 9:00AM Mass

Monday, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Parish Patroness

Thursday, Miraculous Medal

Recitation of the Rosary, Our Lady Memorial Chapel, After 9:00 Masses, daily

ALTAR SERVER TRAINING CONTINUES!

SETON Boys and Girls who signed up to be altar servers must complete one **of each of the FIVE remaining sessions to be held in the church. TRAINING SESSIONS:**

Mondays: 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Thursdays: 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Saturdays: 1:30-3PM.

DATES (All server candidates must attend one of each session):

SESSION 5 - 12/8 or 12/11 or 12/13

6 - 1/5 or 1/8 or 1/10

Special Needs Children

Next **Sunday, Dec. 14th from 3:00pm to 7:00pm**, the Westchester Foundation for Autism and Related Developmental Delays (www.WFAutism.org) is sponsoring a Holiday Winter Wonderland Celebration for children with special needs and their families at the Mansion on Broadway (Knights of Columbus Hall), 139 North Broadway, White Plains. There will be a full buffet, music and dancing, and pictures with Santa. Suggested donation is **\$15 per adult** (children under 16 are free). To register, please call **Pattie, 914-548-6899**, or email **WFA@WFAUTUSM.ORG**. Seats must be reserved.

Midnight Run

Next weekend, members of the Seton Midnight Run will be outside church before and after each Mass seeking donations to support our Friday, December 19th Run. Donations of warm winter clothing are needed. Since homeless men outnumber homeless women by a large margin, men's winter clothing is in high demand. We are also in need of warm blankets for the homeless. Please leave clothing donations inside the first gym door. Thank you in advance for all you do for the homeless. Questions: Call **Walt Krisa 914-248-9737**, or **Eileen Kulp 914-391-5418**.

JESUS SAID: LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME!

TO THE PARENTS OF OUR YOUNG CHILDREN, MAY WE SUGGEST ...

Relax! God put the wiggle in children, don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house. All are welcome! Sit towards the front where it is easier for the little ones to see and to hear what's going on at the altar. They tire of seeing the backs of other's heads. Quietly explain the parts of the Mass and the actions of the priest, altar servers, choir, etc. Open up the Missalettes and have the children follow and read the Mass responses and prayers. Help them to follow the hymn texts. Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn liturgical behavior by copying you. The chapel is available for those times where the children get a little too noisy. However, we encourage you to bring them into the general assembly. Do not miss the opportunity to socialize the children into the Christian community. If you have to leave Mass with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said: "let the children come to me." Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship. Help them to realize that the parish is a family, and that all these people care about them and are there to help them. The **9:30AM Mass** has been designated the **FAMILY MASS**. We invite parents with young children to come to this particular Mass. The Liturgy is "child friendly" and noise is expected by all who attend.

TO THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH FAMILY:

The presence of children is a gift to the Church and they are a reminder that our parish is alive and growing! Remember that the children are watching you! Children learn what it means to be Catholic by watching Catholics. Young married couples, get to know the other couples in the parish. Mature couples, offer to be of help to young parents. Helpful advice offered is a wonderful thing! Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

MASS INTENTIONS

	5:30	Andrew Amendola
Sun	Dec 7	Second Sunday of Advent
	7:00	Frederick Niebler
	8:00	Antonia Gusmano
	9:30	People of Seton Parish
	11:00	Ron D'Alessandro
	12:30	George Kinsley
Mon	Dec 8	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
	7:00	Frederick J. Niebler
	9:00	Antonia Gusmano
	12:00	Ron D'Alessandro
	7:30	Salem & Mary Joseph and Paul Zsiday
Tue	Dec 9	Advent Weekday
		St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin
	7:00	Margaret & Oliver Reilly
	9:00	Valentino Santavicca
Wed	Dec 10	Advent Weekday
	7:00	Carl Pacensa
	9:00	Sarah & Bernard Kelly
Thurs	Dec 11	Advent Weekday/St. Damasus I, Pope
	7:00	Harold Whalen
	9:00	Tommy Roberts
Fri	Dec 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
	7:00	Frs. Dennis & Michael Hanna
	9:00	George Solarz
Sat	Dec 13	St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr
	9:00	Louis Zanini
	5:30	Joanne Finnerty
Sun	Dec 14	Third Sunday of Advent
	7:00	Frederick J. Niebler
	8:00	Mary Bastiani
	9:30	Pietro Canale
	11:00	Edward F. Cook & Msgr. John J. Foley
	12:30	People of Seton Parish

WEEKLY MEMORIALS (3)

The **Sanctuary Lamp**, indicating the Real Presence, burns in memory of **John W. Buckley**.

The **Eternal Flame** in Our Lady Memorial Chapel, burning in memory of deceased children, and those lost on September 11, 2001, has been donated in memory of **Vito Albanese**.

The **Sacramental Bread and Wine** were donated in memory of **John W. Buckley**.

REMINDER FOR 8:00 MASS-GOERS!

December 14th, Sunday morning's Religious Ed classes begin with the 8:00 AM Mass; so it is very important that students be in the auditorium by 7:45 AM. If they are brought after Mass begins, they are to *sit with their parents* for the Mass.

Select December Events

Mon, Dec 8	The Feast of the Immaculate Conception "Night of Prayer" for Life
Sat, Dec 13	Pre-Baptism Class
Mon, Dec 15	Advent Reconciliation Monday
Thu, Dec 25	Christmas Day-Rectory Closed
Fri, Dec 26	Christmas Friday-Rectory Closed

Second Collections: Seton Emergency Maintenance, Seton Christmas Flowers, Retirement Fund for Religious

Monday

Immaculate Conception Holy Day of Obligation

MASSES:

Monday, December 8th:
7 & 9AM, 12 NOON, 7:30PM

"Night of Prayer for Life"

Tomorrow, Monday, Nov. 8th, in solidarity with more than 800 parishes throughout our nation, please join the Respect Life Committee in the chapel **from 8pm to 1am** to pray for the defense of life at all of its stages. The evening will include Eucharistic Adoration, recitation of the Rosary, music, prayers and periods of silence, concluding with the Benediction at midnight. Come pray with us!



PARISHPAY – ELECTRONIC COLLECTION
SUPPORT SETON WITH ONLINE DONATIONS
See our website, www.seton-parish.org, go to ParishPay.com, or call 866-727-4741.

Religious Ed Catechist Substitute

Our Religious Ed program needs a **7th grade Wednesday Catechist Substitute** from 4:30 to 6:00pm for January and February. Please call **Sara Koshofer, 914-528-8553** or email setonre@bestweb.net.

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

As is our custom, a person's name will appear for four weeks, after which it will be removed unless we hear from the family.
Barbara Barreiro, Gloria Colbrook, Oscar Orlando Cruz, Brynlee Davis, Edward DiCaprio, Kathleen Heffernan, Patrick Hurley, Jr., Eileen Kostecke, Marie Lazarz, Brad Lewis, Sr., ina Murphy, Ramona Olszewski, Mary O'Neill, Frank O'Rourke, Katharine Pacensa, Eric Powell, Jennie Salerno, Eugene Sheehan,

PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED

**Mildred Cousins, Mary Kehayas,
Thomas Fahy, Ann Bambach, Lois Cimmino**

Next Weekend

Second Collection: Archdiocesan

Dec. 13th/14th: Retirement Fund for Religious

Thank You!

Many thanks to **Mrs. Muller's** and **Mr. Howley's 7th grade students** for putting new covers on the 800 new *Word and Song* books. And special thanks to **Sister Gabrielle's 4th and 6th grade classes** for taking the old ones out of the pews and putting in the new ones. Truly a labor of love.

Monthly Prayer Intentions of Pope Francis

The Holy Father asks the people of the world to pray with him for the following during December:

Christmas, hope for humanity. That the birth of the Redeemer may bring peace and hope to all people of good will.

Parents. That parents may be true evangelizers, passing on to their children the precious gift of faith.

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A CATHOLIC?
OR ARE YOU AN ADULT WHO WOULD LIKE TO
RECEIVE COMMUNION AND/OR CONFIRMATION?
Please speak to Fr. Quarato if you are interested. RCIA Meets on Tuesday evenings from 7:30PM to 9PM in the Chapel.

Cold/Flu Season – Some Precautions!

In order to ensure the health and wellbeing of all, some precautions are advisable. If you are sick or showing symptoms of a cold/flu please remain at home for your own wellbeing and for the wellbeing of others in our parish family. There is no obligation to attend Mass if you are ill. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are to use the available hand sanitizer before entering the sanctuary to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion. As a general rule, close contact with others is best avoided. At the sign of peace, consider a kind word, bow, nod or wave instead of shaking hands. Hand shaking is not required. Avoiding close contact with others will go a long way in helping prevent the spread of the common cold/flu. Thank you for your cooperation!

It's Time to Come Home!
www.CatholicsComeHome.org

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON SCHOOL ALUMNI

In anticipation of Seton School's 50th anniversary in 2015-16, we are searching for all Seton graduates and alumni. If you are a Seton alumnus, parent, relative, friend, spread the word and send full contact information to **SetonShrubOakAlumni@outlook.com** or call **Christopher Campo, 845-526-2363**. Find us on Facebook: "Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton School Alumni, Shrub Oak, NY."

Looking for that right person?

www.catholicingles.com

Veterans & Active Military

San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch, NJ, is hosting a "Hope and Healing" retreat, **January 2nd, 4:00pm through January 4th, 12:00pm**. They welcome men and women to begin a new year of hope and healing with conferences, rituals, and personal time. Cost of \$200 includes all meals, activities, and accommodations for the weekend. For reservations, call **732-222-2731**, or email, info@sanalfonso retreats.org.

Reconciliation Monday

Consider preparing for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas) by making "a good confession." You and your families are welcome to come to our church on Monday, December 15th, between the hours of 4:00 and 8:00 PM to be reconciled with our Lord.

Pregnant? Need Help?

Are you pregnant, or do you know of someone who is pregnant, and could use some help? Call *Birthright* at **914-737-0344**, or **1-800-550-4900**.

+ NOVEMBER SUNDAY TITHE +
The people of our Parish Family gave back to the Lord for the upkeep of His House \$86,156.50 in November (5 weeks).

Second Collections:

11/2	Emergency Maintenance	\$6049.00*
11/9	Hudson Valley Chaplaincy	\$4382.00
11/16	Word & Song Books	\$4044.50*
11/23	Campaign for Human Development	\$3825.00

Special Collection:

11/1	All Saints Day	\$2126.00*
11/27	Thanksgiving (Benevolent Fund)	\$3857.00*

(* Remains at Seton)

If you are not currently using ParishPay or the envelope system, would you please consider doing so? Contact the Rectory for information. Thank you for your generous support! Remember, you make it happen!

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor 9: 6-7)

Our Lady of Fatima

The Seton Legion of Mary Fatima statue can be brought to any homebound parishioner for a week to pray with them and their family. If interested, please call **Loretta, 845-803-7291**.

Please Note:

Although we appreciate your generosity, food items for donation cannot be left at the rectory. We have no means to bring the items to their designated donation place. Thank you for your understanding.

Young Adult Outreach
www.catholicnyc.com

A Note about Becoming Sponsors For Baptism and Confirmation

It is a great honor to be asked to be a sponsor for Baptism or Confirmation. The role of a "godparent" is to be an "other parent" in matters of our holy Faith. That is why sponsors must be practicing Catholics, 16 years of age or older, having received Confirmation and currently living a good Christian moral life. If the sponsor is married, that person must be in a valid Church marriage. One sponsor is required for Confirmation. It is customary to have two for Baptism, in which case one must be male and the other female. A nominated sponsor is asked to get certification from his/her current parish. This is a declaration by a priest/ deacon that the individual is qualified to be a sponsor according to Church Law. To be so certified, the individual must be a current parishioner of the particular parish where the certification is being sought, and be known to the priest/ deacon as being a faithful practicing Catholic, attending Mass there regularly. Unfortunately, at times, family members or friends are chosen to be sponsors with good intentions, but are found to be ineligible according to Church Law. Also, more and more, people seem to think that they are still "parishioners" of their childhood parish, where they attended school or received sacraments years ago, while no longer living in the area or attending Mass there regularly. It is important for all individuals to be active members of their local Catholic faith communities. The unfortunate fact is that some are neither practicing Catholics nor faithful members of a parish family, and are thereby ineligible to become sponsors. Like all other things in life, individual choices bring consequences. **Here, at Seton, Certificates of Sponsorship are given by the pastor to registered members of the parish who are practicing Catholics and who meet the above criteria. Please see the pastor after Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday to inquire about getting a certificate.**

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER AND LECTOR TRAINING

After Christmas, we will begin training sessions for Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. A candidate must be Catholics at least 14 years of age to become a Lector / 18 years of age to become a Eucharistic Minister, having received First Holy Communion and Confirmation. The candidate must be leading a life of faith in keeping with the function to be assumed, not bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared, be reverential, respectful of his/her faith, and of good moral character; and if married, be in a valid marriage according to the law of the Catholic Church. Lectors should possess the necessary ability and talents to proclaim the Word of God in a clear, dignified, and effective manner. Extraordinary Ministers who will bring Holy Communion to the sick should be able to minister to the sick in a compassionate, prayerful, and sensitive way. They should possess psychological maturity and the ability to keep confidences, not discussing indiscriminately the condition of patients or their homes. Many signed up on Ministry Weekend. If you did not sign up then, and are interested, please call the rectory. Questions? Please see Fr. Quarato. *Working together to serve the Seton Family.*

BANNS OF MATRIMONY

Please remember in your prayers those who are to be joined in the Sacrament of Marriage in the next few weeks:

Announcement 2:

Kyle Ferry & Christine Chiara

Welcome to Our Youngest!

Seton Parish is delighted to welcome into the Catholic Church the following children, baptized in November:

Jaelynn J. Rathschmidt, Daniella Frances Gentile

Cub Scout "Giving Tree"

Seton Cub Scouts will be collecting gifts for the parish "Giving Tree" at all the Masses next weekend. Please contact **Kathleen Kaiser, 914-245-0597** or kmkaiser@optonline.net with any questions.

Mass for Couples

Experiencing Infertility & Miscarriage

On **Friday, Dec. 12th at 6:30pm, St. Patrick Church**, Yorktown, will hold a special Mass for couples experiencing infertility and miscarriage. The Mass is sponsored by the Family and Respect Life Office, The Gianna Center NYC, and St. Patrick Church. Following Mass they will have the Miraculous Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and relics of St. Gianna Beretta Molla for veneration.

DECEASED PARISHIONERS

Parishioners who "passed from this life to the next" during the week of December 6th in previous years: **James Murphy, Dolores A. Costa, Joseph Adessa, Victor Sgarlata, Henry Schipf, Joseph Francia, Janice Donohue, Robert Weaver, Cornelius John Callahan, Louis Grizzaffi, Mary Weisgerber, Connie J. Smith, Carmella Buttitta, Madeline Guiliani, Marie Schultz, Irene M. Fingerhut, Valentino Gennarelli, Jean Mariani, Elizabeth Vaughn, Walter Melnychuck, Caroline Caro Peter Portante, Anne Lowenthal, Doris Maher, Francis F. Smith, Gino Savo, William Virginia, Genaro LeGuillou, Kathleen Higgins, Liliana Rovedo, George Kinsley, Jr., Robert Sammarco, Lewis Gordon, Angelina Iarossi, Albert Laughlin, Angelo Bertocchi, George Goodwin, Gustave Carlson, Beatrice F. Pesci Thomas Duffy, Dolores Barthalomew, Anna Kiss, John Frederick Hinckel, Martin Beck, Peter Brancati, Roger Tosto, Arlene Bellantoni, Joseph Cantalupo, John Bar, Carmel Magliato, Adele Bonferraro, John Geramita, Evelyn Salch, Jerome Murphy, RoseMarie Giambone, Ann T. Villani, Frank Piscioti, James Robertson, Francesco Ricci, Charles Schneider, Joseph Foley, Margaret Strong, Anne Marie Whelan, Helen Coombs, Michael Yannarelli, Edmond Linehan**

BULLETIN SPOTLIGHT

This week, Seton Parish highlights **Putnam County Savings Bank** and **Adrian Auto Body** whose advertisements at the rear of our bulletin, along with nearly 100 other local businesses, make possible the printing of this parish bulletin by the John Patrick Publishing Company, 52 weeks a year. **When the need arises, please patronize our advertisers.**

Parish Men's Retreat : Jan. 9-11, 2015

Mount Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls, NY.
(website: www.mtalvernia.org)

- The weekend is run by the Franciscan Friars.
 - While the weekend has a number of activities, each person is encouraged to spend the weekend as best suits him.
 - It includes Mass, conferences and workshops.
 - It offers opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - The bedrooms are private, which allows for plenty of time for quiet introspection & prayer.
- ❖ All men are invited, so please consider joining us this year.
 - ❖ Feel encouraged to invite someone who needs a retreat.
 - ❖ Arrival time is 6 PM on Friday, concluding Sunday after lunch.
 - ❖ Carpools to & from Seton are available.
 - ❖ The total cost for the weekend is \$175 (this is the “recommended” donation).

A Retreat makes a great Christmas gift for someone who is hard to shop for!

Any questions, feel free to contact the Retreat Team: Tom Engelhart (914-245-9391) or Walt Krisa (914-248-5192).

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REGISTRATION FORM

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's Men's Retreat : Jan. 9-11

I would like to reserve a spot on your Men's retreat. A check for \$25 is enclosed to reserve my spot.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email address: _____

Please mail it to:

**Mount Alvernia Retreat Center
Delavergne Ave.
P.O. Box 858
Wappingers Falls, N. Y. 12590-0858**

ADVENT: THE SEASON OF HOPE AND ANTICIPATION

Celebrating Advent: Evergreens and the Advent Wreath

Green is not just for St. Patrick's Day. The beginning of Advent is also marked by the hanging of the green, decoration of the church with evergreen wreaths, boughs, and trees that symbolize the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus Christ. Green is the symbol of life and a welcome reminder of life during the dead of winter. Green is the liturgical symbol of hope, and calls to mind the hope that is Jesus Christ. Here at Seton, you will notice that there is a progressive greening of the church as we proceed throughout the weeks of Advent. The atmosphere is one of heightened expectation and longing.

The Advent wreath has become a common symbol in many parish churches, as well as homes. It is part of our long-standing Catholic tradition. However, the actual origins are uncertain. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future warm and extended-sunlit days of Spring. In Scandinavia during winter, lighted candles were placed around a wheel, and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn "the wheel of the earth" back toward the sun to lengthen the days and restore warmth. By the middle ages, the Christians adapted this tradition and used Advent wreaths as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. After all, Christ is "the Light that came into the world" to dispel the darkness of sin and to radiate the truth and love of God (cf. John 3:19-21).

The Advent wreath is a circular evergreen with four or five candles, four around the wreath and sometimes one in the center. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. Even the types of evergreens have a traditional meaning which can be adapted to our faith: the laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering; pine, holly, and yew, immortality; and cedar, strength and healing. Holly also has a special Christian symbolism: the prickly leaves remind us of the crown of thorns, and one English legend tells of how the cross was made of holly. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life found in Christ. Any pine cones, nuts, berries or seedpods used to decorate the wreath also symbolize life and resurrection. All together, the wreath of evergreens depicts the immortality of our soul and the new, everlasting life promised to us through Christ, the eternal Word of the Father, who entered our world becoming true man and who was victorious over sin and death through His own passion, death, and resurrection.

The candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His Son. There are four candles representing the four weeks of Advent. One tradition holds that each week represents one thousand years, to sum to the 4,000 years from Adam and Eve until the Birth of the Savior. Another tradition speaks of the four outer candles representing the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ. The colors of the candles are three purple and one pink or rose candle, corresponding to the liturgical colors of Advent. The purple candles in particular symbolize the prayer, penance, preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead.

Continued on next page

In family practice, the Advent wreath is most appropriately lit at dinner time, after the blessing of the food. When used as an evening after-dinner devotion, typically a Scripture passage is read, a short devotional or reading is given, and a prayer offered. Since Advent is a time to stir up our faith in the Lord, the wreath, and its prayers, provide us a way to augment this special preparation for Christmas. Moreover, this good tradition helps us to remain vigilant in our homes and not lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas.

The light of the candles becomes an important symbol of the season. The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. It also reminds us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's grace to others (Is 42:6). The progression in the lighting of the candles symbolizes the various aspects of our waiting experience. As the candles are lighted over the four week period, it also symbolizes the darkness of fear and hopelessness receding, and the shadows of sin falling away as more and more light is shed into the world. The flame of each new candle reminds the faithful that something is happening, and that more is yet to come. Finally, if there is a center candle, it is white and is called the *Christ Candle*. The light that has come into the world is plainly visible as the center *Christ candle* is lighted at Christmas, and the faithful rejoice over the fact that the promise of long ago has been realized.

The first candle is traditionally the candle of Expectation or Hope (or in some traditions, Prophecy). This draws attention to the anticipation of the coming of a Messiah that weaves its way like a golden thread through Old Testament history. As God's people were abused by power-hungry kings, led astray by self-centered prophets, and lulled into apathy by half-hearted religious leaders, there arose a longing among some for God to raise up a new king who could show them how to be God's people. They yearned for a return of God's dynamic presence in their midst. And so, God revealed to some of the prophets that indeed He would not leave His people without a true Shepherd. While they expected a new earthly king, their expectations fell far short of God's revelation of Himself in Christ. And yet, the world is not yet fully redeemed. So, we again, with expectation and hope, await God's new work in history, the Second Advent, in which He will again reveal Himself to the world. And we understand in a profound sense that the best, highest of our expectations will fall far short of what our Lord's Second Advent will reveal!

The remaining three candles of Advent may be associated with different aspects of the Advent story. Usually they are organized around characters or themes as a way to unfold the story, and direct attention to the celebrations and worship in the season. So, the sequence for the remaining three Sundays might be Bethlehem, Shepherds, and Angels; or Peace, Joy, Love; or Isaiah, John the Baptist, and Mary; or the Annunciation, Proclamation, and Fulfillment. Whatever sequence is used, the Scripture readings, prayers, lighting of the candles, the participation of the faithful in the prayer, all are geared to telling the story of redemption through God's grace in the Incarnation.

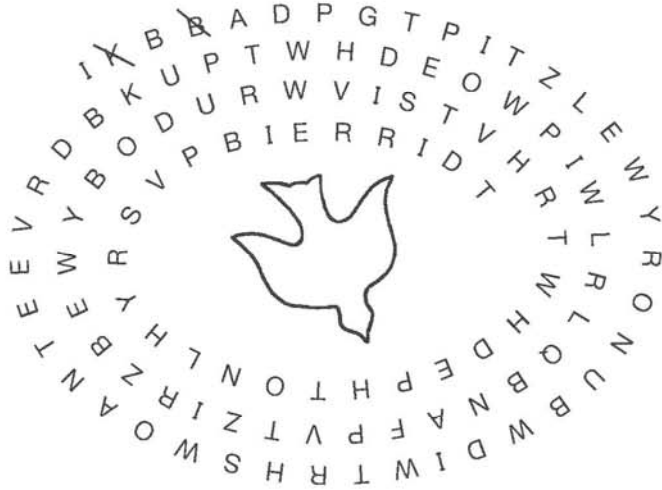
The third candle for the Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally Pink or Rose and symbolizes Joy at the Advent of the Christ. This color is also used for the sanctuary and vestments on this Sunday. Whatever sequence is adopted for these Sundays, the theme of Joy can still be the focus.

Although the wreath is taken away on December 24th in churches, the candles may still be enjoyed in homes. The *Christ Candle* is traditionally lighted on Christmas Eve after Midnight Mass or on Christmas Day. In some homes, all five candles are lighted during prayer through Epiphany (Jan. 6). The central location of the *Christ Candle* reminds us that the Incarnation is the heart of the season, giving light to the world.



John said that One who was more powerful than he would come after him.

Cross out every other letter and write the remaining letters on the lines below. The puzzle has been started for you.



“ | b _____

_____.”



Preparing the Way for Jesus

It was written in the book of Isaiah that someone would prepare the way for Jesus.

Cross out every letter that appears four or more times. Unscramble the remaining letters to fill in the blanks.



A _____

For Home Use Only