



December 18, 2011

4th Sunday of Advent

# Our Lady of Grace Church

A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg | A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust  
 1011 Mt. Pleasant Road | Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601

## Liturgical Schedule

**Weekend Masses:** Saturday Vigil: 4 PM  
 Sunday Masses: 8:30, 10:30 AM  
**Weekday and Holy Day Masses:** Please see inside bulletin.



## Mission Statement

Our Lady of Grace, founded in 1910 as an Italian ethnic parish, is now a territorial parish of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Greensburg to which all people are welcome. The responsibility of each member of Our Lady of Grace is to hear the Word of God and live it by sharing in worship, especially at Eucharist; by nurturing our Catholic faith through formation and prayer; by reaching out to identify and serve the needs of our parish and the community; and by welcoming others into our faith community. Through our actions, we strive to share, and to encourage others to share, in the fullness of God's kingdom.

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 5:30-6 PM or until finished.

### Baptisms

By appointment only. Please call the Parish Office at least four months in advance of the birth. A class for parents is required to reflect on the meaning of the sacrament, to review the ceremony, and to highlight the importance of the family's commitment to practicing the Catholic Faith.

### Sponsorship Forms

Forms for our members to serve as sponsors for Baptism and Confirmation must be filled out in person at the Parish Office. To serve as a sponsor, you must be at least 16 years old and a practicing Catholic who has received Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist. If you are married, it must be within the guidelines of the Catholic Church. Please call the Parish Office to make an appointment to fill out the form.

### Weddings

Please call the Parish Office at least six months in advance. Do not set a date until you have contacted the parish priest. Pre-marriage preparation classes are required and are available in a couple of forms.

Parish Office.....724-838-9480  
 Fax.....724-838-1842  
 Religious Formation.....724-832-6730  
 Aquinas Academy.....724-834-7940  
 St. Vincent de Paul Helpline.....724-837-5154  
 St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank.....724-836-0175  
 Albanese Hall.....724-836-8157  
 Catholic Charities Pregnancy.....1-800-241-7360  
[www.ourladyofgracechurch.org](http://www.ourladyofgracechurch.org)

**Rev. Paul A. Lisik, Pastor**

Rev. Larry J. Kulick,  
*In residence*

Hollie Uccellini,  
*Pastoral Associate*  
 Marisa Cazden,  
*Music Minister*  
 Dorothy Skoloda,  
*Secretary*  
 Donna Stewart,  
*Secretary*



Greg Petrucci,  
*Director of Faith Formation*  
 Katrina Coleman,  
*Director of Young Adults  
 & Youth Ministry*  
 Tom Stumpo,  
*Maintenance Supervisor*  
 Dave Stumpo,  
*Maintenance*

**SAVOR THE MOMENTS — “A PERSONAL TOUCH”:**

Over the centuries, life has tended to become more impersonal. Electric lights and central heating enable family members to go off into separate rooms, rather than gathering around a fire in the fireplace. Interactions among people take place by way of cell phones, e-mail or on a computer screen, rather than face to face. Holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas bring people together and are almost like an oasis in a desert of impersonal distancing.

God's love became real and personal in the presence of Jesus, the Christ. The good news of our faith is not only about what Jesus taught. Many of his teachings echo themes that are found in the writings of Hebrew scripture and even of other religions. In Jesus, God's Spirit gained flesh. He could touch and be touched.

At times, Jesus' touch reaches our inner sensitivities. It is not enough simply to obey the law. Jesus calls us to be humble, merciful, willing to forego some of our own comfort in order to be peacemakers and healers of those around us, who have been injured along life's Jericho roads. How would it feel to see Jesus, himself, as our "neighbor"? Jesus makes God personal to us.

God can sometimes seem distant and impersonal. Can a "creator," a "law-giver," a "judge," also be one whom we see as really loving us in a personal way? Jesus shows that it is possible. Jesus is a companion, an elder brother, a hand of

love that reaches out to us. It takes some work on our part to be able to see God in this way, but the effort is so worthwhile. The God we come to know in Christ is one who loves each of us as persons, as we really are. Savor the experience of knowing and experiencing God's personal love.



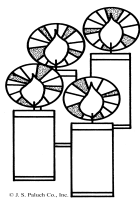
**GIVING TREE WRAP-UP:** The Giving Tree Committee would like to thank all of you who participated in this project for your overwhelming generosity. Through your kindnesses, we were able to provide gifts for 437 children from food pantry families, calls to the St. Vincent de Paul Helpline, and the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau. Thank you so much!!



Our gratitude also is warmly extended to the volunteers who helped us collect, sort, bag, and deliver the gifts — you are so appreciated!

We also would like to thank Fr. Paul and the Parish Staff for their support — especially Katrina and the Youth Ministry groups for helping to prepare the angels, Dorothy and Marisa for getting our messages out, and Tom and Dave for helping us to deliver the gifts to the agencies to distribute to families. We could not do what we do without your help!

**OPLATKY:** Christmas wafers (Oplatky) are available in the Gathering Area and at the parish office. The donation is \$3.00 a packet, containing four individual wafers.



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**THERE ARE THREE CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES, PLUS ONE AT MIDNIGHT AND TWO ON CHRISTMAS DAY. I ASK FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING AS YOU SEEK A TIME BEST FOR YOUR SCHEDULE.**

- Please consult and check the Christmas Mass schedule because it is different from the normal weekend schedule.

**CHRISTMAS EVE:** 4 p.m. in the church;  
4 p.m. in Albanese Hall;  
7 p.m. in church

**MIDNIGHT MASS:** 12 Midnight

**CHRISTMAS DAY:** 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

*This year there will be two Masses at 4 p.m., one in the church and one in Albanese Hall to alleviate the overcrowding for this vigil Mass.*

**THE CHRISTMAS COLLECTION IN OUR PARISH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A TRADITION OF YOUR GENEROSITY TO OUR PARISH.**

Your continued and increased generosity will help us meet some large bills and assessments that are due at this time of the year. We, once again, ask you to be as generous as you can and may the Christ Child continue to bless and reward you. The Christmas Feast commemorates the gift given to each of us by God without question of our merit or eligibility. Your support is needed this year during the **Children and Family Services Appeal**. Please help change the future of a child with your gift in the second collection at Christmas. Thank you!

*Please be as generous as you can. I trust you are noticing in the bulletin that we have not been coming close to the amount needed in the Sunday collections to meet our expenses.*

**JUST A LITTLE REMINDER,** there is an envelope in this month's packet for Christmas flowers and decorations. We will continue to accept them throughout the coming weeks. Donations may be given in memory of a deceased loved one, the sick, your own intention, etc. A special Mass will be celebrated on Christmas Day for all who gave and their intentions.



**BECAUSE OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE SPECIAL SEASON OF CHRISTMAS,** the *parish offices will be closed Monday, December 26, and Tuesday, December 27.* The offices will re-open Wednesday, December 28, at 8:30 a.m. I share this with you so you can be prepared. Please know that we are always available for emergencies. Thank you for your understanding as we allow our staff to celebrate with their families.

## FAITH FORMATION NEWS



**HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THERE IS A WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATION.** If we are forced to have a cancellation of a L.I.F.E. session or a Sacrament Preparation session due to inclement weather, every effort will be made to generate an e-mail to all registered families who have supplied an address to the Faith Formation Office. Also, cancellation information will be posted on the Pittsburgh TV stations: WPXI (channel 11) and WTAE 4 (channel 4) and will be listed as *Our Lady of Grace, Greensburg*.

**RIBBONS AND BOWS:** The practice of gift wrapping is a fairly recent phenomenon in American life. It started at the turn of the century, when people stopped giving handmade gifts and instead began exchanging factory-made items. To some, these gifts seemed cold and less intimate, and so, to restore some kind of personal touch, retailers encouraged their customers to wrap their presents.



**NATIVITY SCENE:** The tradition of having some kind of Nativity scene, also known by its French name (*crèche*), in churches and homes evolved during the Middle Ages, first in churches as a prop for nativity plays associated with Mass. A *crèche* is a reproduction of the cave in Bethlehem with images of Mary, Joseph, the Infant Jesus in a manger, shepherds, angels, animals and Magi. St. Francis of Assisi popularized this custom with a living Nativity scene at Greccio, Italy, in 1223. You are encouraged to make a "visit" to the nativity scene in our church. You are particularly invited to bring the children "up close" and spend some time in prayer.

**2012 CALENDARS:** Through the courtesy of Leo M. Bacha Funeral Home Inc., we once again have our parish Catholic calendars available in our Gathering Area. The ushers will help distribute them after the Masses this weekend. *We thank the Bacha Funeral Home for their generosity and the beautiful Catholic calendars.*

**CHILDREN & YOUTH OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR THE YEAR 2012** are being mailed out to those who didn't pick them up at this month's L.I.F.E. session. If your child does not receive a box of envelopes by Wednesday, Dec. 28, please call the parish office.

**FINAL PRACTICE FOR THE 4 P.M. YOUTH MASS** for Christmas Eve will be at 3 p.m. on December 24 in the church. Bring all your music and a stand if you have one. If you need music, call the office and leave a message at 724-838-9480, Ext. 20, or e-mail Marisa at mcazden@dioceseofgreensburg.org.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, IS THE FEAST DAY OF ST. PETER CANISIUS,** *presbyter, religious, doctor of the church (1521-1597).* The town where Peter Canisius was born, Nijmegen, was then a German town. Peter's father was a town leader who thought his son should be a lawyer. Peter chose to become a priest of the Jesuit Order, newly founded at that time. He committed himself to a life of prayer, study, reflection and writing. However, he also spent a lot of time visiting the sick and people in prison.

People came in large numbers to hear Peter preach. He also founded colleges and seminaries. He became known as the second apostle of Germany. (The first was Boniface, June 5.)

Peter's letters fill 8,000 pages. He had many friends and wrote to people of every walk of life. Some of his letters were criticisms addressed to church leaders, but even here Peter was tactful.

One of Peter's greatest concerns was instructing people in their faith. During the course of his life, he wrote three books called catechisms to fill this need. Even in the last years of his life, when he had been paralyzed by a stroke, he worked on a very simple catechism for children. Throughout his life he wrote many other works, and he encouraged others to write as well. For that reason, he is considered one of the founders of the Catholic press.

**THIS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, IS THE WINTER SOLSTICE.** Today marks a turning point in the year. For people of the Northern Hemisphere, the winter solstice is the shortest day and longest night. From now on, days will lengthen. For the ancient peoples of Europe, the winter solstice was one of the greatest feasts of the year.

Once the harvest was in, there was little farm work to do, and so there was plenty of time to relax and celebrate. Sometimes the festivities lasted for two months! Many northern Europeans called these days "Yule," from the word "wheel." They thought that the year was like a wheel. When the days started to get longer it was as if someone had given the year a fresh turn.

At Yuletide there were special songs, dances, and hospitality. Circle dances called carols helped to celebrate the renewal of the circle of the year.

**LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS GIFTS:** Aquinas Academy still has a few 2012 lottery calendars available. These calendars make great Christmas gifts! The calendars are embellished with delightful artwork contributed by all of the Aquinas Academy students. Each calendar features five four digit numbers and will be in play for 365 days during the 2012 calendar year. Winners are determined by the 4-digit Pennsylvania Lottery 7 p.m. daily number. Total calendar payout is \$15,000. Calendars are available for a \$25 donation. Contact Allison at 724-331-5354 or Melissa at 724-424-4525. Thank you!

**PARISH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK**

**SATURDAY, Dec. 17**

*Food Pantry collection*

**SUNDAY, Dec. 18**

*Food Pantry collection*

9:15 a.m. RCIA

6 p.m. HSYM – Youth Loft

**MONDAY, Dec. 19**

7 p.m. Centering Prayer – Daily Chapel

**THURSDAY, Dec. 22**

10 a.m. Legion of Mary – Albanese Hall

**WE HAVE OPENED THE MASS BOOK FOR 2012.** Request sheets may be found in the back of the church. *Please pay attention to the directions for filling out the forms.* All Mass Intentions have to be submitted in writing on the reservation sheet. **No Masses will be scheduled over the phone.** Thank you for your understanding.

**LECTOR WORKBOOKS** are available on the book rack in the Gathering Area. Please stop and pick up your book, if you have not already done so.

**WELCOME BACK!** We welcome back to the Catholic Church and our parish any in attendance today who have been away from the Church for awhile. We have missed you! Many of you may have “come home” because of the commercials being aired by Catholics Come Home. Catholics Come Home is running commercials on major television networks from December 16–January 9, encouraging people to “come home.” The goal of this advertising effort is to bring a message of hope and invitation. It is the desire of our parish that you also have heard this message at today’s Mass and through the welcome of our parishioners. We encourage you to contact the parish office to schedule an appointment with the pastor or a parish staff member if you have questions or would like to discuss further “coming home.”

**VOCATION CRUCIFIX PROGRAM:** The following individuals and families have signed up for participation in the Vocation Crucifix Program in December. Prayers for vocations will be said in their homes during these weeks.



- Rose Theresa – Dec. 4-10
- Alissa and Ed McMullen – Dec. 11-17
- Crott Family – Dec. 18-24
- Karen Beck – Dec. 25-31

**ADVERTISER OF THE WEEK**

**Tony Rocco**

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## MASS SCHEDULE

### Saturday, Dec. 17

4 p.m. John Spino by Lou Dicriscio

### Sunday, Dec. 18

8:30 a.m. Deceased members of the Mirolli family  
by M/M Nick Mirolli

10:30 a.m. For the living and deceased members of  
Our Lady of Grace Parish

### Monday, Dec. 19

6:45 a.m. Ruth Cavic by OLG Rosary Altar Society

### Tuesday, Dec. 20

6:45 a.m. Firm Dinkins by wife, Helen

### Wednesday, Dec. 21

6:45 a.m. Jack McGinley by McGinley family

### Thursday, Dec. 22

6:45 a.m. Jean Arzenti by Richard/Diane Very

### Friday, Dec. 23

6:45 a.m. Dr. Thomas X. Kissell  
by Randy/Cindy Hoffman/children

### Christmas Vigil, Saturday, Dec. 24

8 a.m. Frank Wall by Mary Spice

4 p.m. — **Church** Intention of Celebrant

4 p.m. — **Albanese Hall** Intention of Celebrant

7 p.m. Intention of Celebrant

12 midnight Intention of Celebrant

### Christmas Day, Sunday, Dec. 25

8:30 a.m. Intention of the parishioners

10:30 a.m. Intentions of those who gave for Christmas flowers



## *Bible Sharing*

### **READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25

Tuesday: Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Lk 1:39-45

Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56

Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66

Saturday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Lk 1:67-79

Sunday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89; Acts 13:16-17,  
22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]

Midnight: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96; Ti 2:11-14;  
Lk 2:1-14

Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97; Ti 3:4-7;  
Lk 2:15-20

Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18  
[1-5, 9-14]

### **STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE**

\$ 14,416.00 was collected on December 11

*In order to meet our ordinary expenses, Our Lady of Grace  
needs about \$17,500 per week in the regular collection.*

**Thank you for your generosity!**