

PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW

Stewardship Report – Treasury
WEEKLY COLLECTION

<u>Budgeted Amount:</u>	\$5,000.00
<u>Sunday Collection – 12/10/17</u>	\$2,526.00
<u>Retired Religious Fund Collection – 12/10/17</u>	\$ 920.00
<u>Feast of the Immaculate Conception – 12/8/17</u>	\$ 644.00

Please support St. Monica’s Church by contributing to our Annual Campaign. Forms are located at the Church and Hall exits. We thank you for your generosity.

Campaign Statistics as of 12/6/2017

Total # of Households:	444
Total # Pledged:	70
% of Participation:	15.77%
Total Amount Pledged:	\$21,945.00
Total Amount Paid:	\$18,523.34
Average Pledge:	\$313.50
% of Pledges Collected:	84.41%

We are very grateful to those who have made a pledge to our Annual Campaign. As you can see from the report above, we are halfway to our goal of \$40,000. We hope that those who have not sent in their pledge would consider doing so. This campaign is vital to our parish each year in meeting our expenses and assessments. Whatever you can give is always greatly appreciated and we are sincerely grateful.

The Sanctuary Lamp is given this week:
In Memory of: Joan Yocamelli
Given by: Mary Del Monico

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

12/18	MON:	9:00a	James Fischer
12/19	TUES:	9:00a	Robert Bilz
12/20	WED:	9:00a	No Mass Today
12/21	THU:	9:00a	People of the Parish
12/22	FRI:	9:00a	Mary Romano
12/23	SAT:	5:00p	Joan Yocamelli Hilary Battaglia Charles & Madelyn Jansky Martin Finn
12/24	SUN:	8:00a 10:00a	People of the Parish Raymond Cullen Susan McGovern James & Bernard Bilz

12/24 SUN: 5:00p **FOR ALL IN WHOSE**
(Christmas Eve) 8:00p **MEMORY FLOWERS**
10:30p **HAVE BEEN PLACED**
AT THE ALTAR

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2017

WEEKLY/MONTHLY PARISH EVENTS

COFFEE & DONUTS – are served after 8:00 a.m. Mass on the first Sunday of each month in the Church Hall. All are invited to join us.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION –Wednesdays at 6:30pm in the Rectory Meeting Room. Weekly reading/ reflection of the Sunday Scriptures – fellowship time & refreshments follow.

ST. MONICA’S LEISURE GROUP - There will be no meetings of St. Monica's Leisure Group during the months of January and February. Meetings will resume beginning Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 12:00 noon in the Church Hall. We take this opportunity to thank our members for helping to make the Leisure Group a success during the past year, and look forward to getting together again in March.
--- Grace and Mike Casalino

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Rectory Meeting Room. The current book is entitled, “God of the Fairy Tale.”

Helping Hands meets the second Tuesday of every month in the Rectory Meeting Room at 7:30 p.m.

SPECIAL DEVOTIONS AT ST. MONICA’S

Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal – every Tuesday after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

Chaplet of the Divine Mercy - Every Friday after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – First Friday of the month after the 9:00 A.M. Mass until 10:00 A.M.

Christmas Flower Memorial Envelopes are available on the tables in the Church and hall – print the name(s) of your deceased loved ones and enclose your monetary donation for a poinsettia to be placed on the altar. A printed list will be made available and a copy placed on the altar. Please return envelopes to the box near the pulpit by no later than Sunday, Dec. 17th.

ST. MONICA’S CHURCH – Contact info

Phone # 973-875-4521 Fax # 973-875-7538
Parish office hours: 9:30– 1:30pm Mon-Fri
Website: www.stmonicasussex.org
Email: stmonica@ptd.net

Deadline for bulletin submissions: Tuesday of each week for information to be printed on the following Sunday. Email to stmonica@ptd.net

READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Sunday - Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28
Monday - Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25
Tuesday - Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25
Wednesday - Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38
Thursday - Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Lk 1:39-45
Friday - 1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56
Saturday - Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS:

MASS ATTENDANCE – It is a very important and an integral part of your son/daughter’s faith journey as they prepare for the reception of Confirmation. We ask that you make every effort to attend each week.

CALENDAR:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	YM Class – beginning with the 5pm Mass, followed by a light dinner, then class Phase I & II –
Sunday	Jan 7 th	Make-up class – 6:30 to 8:30 – no dinner

GRADES 7 & 8

CALENDAR:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	Rel. Ed. Class – beginning with the 5pm Mass Followed by a light dinner then class 7 th & 8 th Gr.
Sunday	Jan. 7 th	Make-up class – 6:30 to 8:30 – no dinner

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Grades 1 and 2:

Sunday,	Jan. 14 th	Class – 9:30am to 11:30am
Sunday,	Jan. 28 th	Class – 9:30am to 11:30am

Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6:

Saturday	Jan. 6 th	Class – 9am to 11am
Saturday	Jan. 20 th	Class – 9am to 11am

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN – This is celebrated every Sunday at the 10am Mass. We encourage all families with children in Grades 1 to 4 to have your son/daughter participate in this as part of their faith formation. If anyone is interested in helping to teach our children in this important ministry, please call the rectory.



St. Monica’s Annual Children’s Christmas Eve Pageant will be held at the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass. Please sign your child up on the sign-up sheet in the Church Hall OR call the Rectory. If you have any questions, please call Anne Chirico at 862-268-0875.

THANK YOU

The Fiesta Committee of Helping Hands would like to thank the following for helping with the success of our 7th Fiesta de la Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe

- Father Jan for the beautiful service honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Mrs. Anne Chirico, Mr. Peter Kazmierski, and the children for the music
 - Teenager: Nicole Chirico
 - Children: Addison Cabrera, the Fett children: Christopher, Kevin, Isabella & Matthew; the Stefanelli children: Nicholas and Angelo
- Friends and parishioners who attended and brought delicious food

Thank you all. Mary Eileen Schoen

Please pray to Our Lady and know she is always your Mother.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS 2017

Monday, December 18th – PARISH PENANCE SERVICE

7:00 pm (Confessions)

Sunday, December 24th - Fourth Sunday of Advent (Morning Masses)

8:00 am

10:00 am

(No Mass at 11:45 am due to extra time needed to decorate Church for Christmas)

Sunday, December 24th – CHRISTMAS EVE (Evening Masses)

5:00 pm – Family Mass – Nativity Pageant

8:00 pm –

10:30 pm – “Midnight Mass” – St. Monica’s Choir

Though traditionally associated with the actual stroke of the clock at 12:00 midnight, the term “Midnight Mass” refers more to the title of the Mass - with its own specific scripture readings and prayers. Here at St. Monica’s all the Masses celebrated on Christmas use the “Mass at Midnight” because in it are the Christmas stories with which we are most familiar. The Mass at 10:30 pm will in fact be the “traditional” Midnight Mass but rather than begin at Midnight, it will end before Midnight.

*Parking in the Presbyterian Church parking lot is permissible **except for 5:00pm and 8:00pm Masses on Christmas Eve.** The Presbyterian Church begins their Christmas Eve service at 7:30pm and needs its parking facility while our 5:00 Mass is still going on.*

Monday, December 25th – CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 am and 11:45 am (No Mass at 8:00 am)

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Saturday, December 30th - 5:00 pm

Sunday, December 31st - 8:00 am, 10:00 am & 11:45 am

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Monday, January 1st - 10:00 am

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday, January 6th - 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 7th - 8:00 am, 10:00 am & 11:45 am

SUNDAY AND CHRISTMAS MASSES

There has been some confusion about **Sunday Mass** and **Christmas Eve Mass** due to **Christmas Eve falling on Sunday**. So, here’s the scoop!

You must attend either **Saturday night (December 23rd)** or **Sunday Morning Mass (December 24th)** in order to fulfill your **Sunday** obligation.

Christmas Day is a **holy day of obligation**; therefore, you must attend either **Sunday evening mass (Dec. 24th)** or **Monday morning (Dec. 25th)** to fulfill the **holy day** obligation.

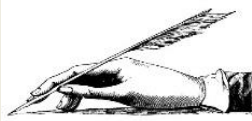
(The last time Christmas Day fell on a Monday, was in 2006 – 11 years ago.)

Women’s Retreat – Theme: “Jesus, Lover of Women”

Sacred Heart Spirituality Center in Newton is offering a Women’s Retreat on the weekend of January 5 – 7, 2018.

Come away to be refreshed in the love of Jesus!

No matter what space you are in or where you find yourself, hear Him tell you of His unconditional love for you and allow yourself to be renewed by His love. Act now to reserve your spot on this retreat that is taking place at the start of the New Year. Registration forms and detailed information are located on the table in the Church Hall. Pre-registration is required. Deadline for registration and payment is December 21, 2017.



... FROM THE DESK OF FR. JAN

The Spirit of Advent

Advent is marked by spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation, and of longing. There is a yearning in our souls for deliverance from the evil of the world. It is the cry of those who have experienced the tyranny of injustice in a world under the power of sin, and who have hope of deliverance from evil by God who hears the cries and brings deliverance! It is that hope that God, however distant He sometimes seems, brings to the world the anticipation of a King who will rule with truth, justice and righteousness over His people and His creation. It is that hope that once anticipated, and now anticipates anew, the reign of an Anointed One, a Messiah, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness to the world.

During Advent season we also anticipate the Second Coming as a twin theme of the season. So part of the expectation also anticipates a judgment on sin and a calling of the world to accountability before God. The prophet Amos warned of the expectation of a coming judgment at the “Day of the Lord”. Because of this truth, the Season of Advent has been a time of fasting and penitence for sins, similar to the season of Lent. However, the season of Advent has come to be celebrated more in terms of expectation or participation. Yet, the anticipation of the Coming of the Messiah throughout the Old Testament and Judaism was not in connection with remembrance of sins. Rather, it was in the context of oppression and justice, the longing for redemption, from the systematic evil of the world expressed in evil empires and tyrants. It is in that all creation groans for its redemption as we witness the evil that so dominates our world (Rom 8:18-25), so it is longing for God who comes and sets the world right!

Because of the dual themes of threat and promise, Advent is a time of preparation that is marked by prayer. Advent’s prayers are prayers of humble devotion and commitment, prayers for deliverance from evil, prayers from those walking in darkness, awaiting and anticipating a great light (Is 9).

While some church traditions focus on penitence during Advent, and there remains a place for that, the spirit of that expectation from Old Testament is better captured with a joyous sense of expectancy rather than a time of mourning and fasting. Advent then should be celebrated as a time of joy and happiness as we await the coming of the King, who comes to rule, and to save the world. The third Sunday of Advent which we celebrate this weekend reminds us of this joy. Therefore, this Sunday is called “Gaudete Sunday”. Gaudete from Latin means rejoice.

The spirit of Advent is expressed well in the parable of the bridesmaids who are anxiously awaiting the coming of the Bridegroom (Mt 25:1-13). There is profound joy at the Bridegroom’s expected coming, and yet a warning of the need for preparation echoes through the parable. But even then, the prayer of Advent is still: *Come, O come Emmanuel and ransom your captive people!*

As we are waiting for coming of our Emmanuel, our Savior, my prayer for you is: *May the Lord Jesus be born in your hearts this Christmas and bring you deep peace and great joy!*

