

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020

Saint Joseph Church

79 Case Avenue, Sharon, PA 16146
Phone 724-981-3232 / Fax 724-981-4174

Rev. Thomas J. Whitman, Pastor

Director of Religious Ed:
Sr. Sandy Pedone, H.M.
Parish Secretary: Lori Vasconi
Financial Secretary: Carol Koch
Maintenance: Brad Goodall
Music Director: Mary Messina

Office Hours

Monday - Friday,
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
(closed 12:30-1:30 PM)

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil - 5:15 PM
Sunday - 8:30 & 11:00 AM
Weekday: M, T, Th, Fri - 8:00 AM
Wed. - 12:10 PM
(Check weekly bulletin for changes.)

Confessions

Saturday: 4:00 - 4:30 PM or by request.

Religious Education Program

Option of Google Classroom or
Family Centered (Home School)
To Register or for More Information
Contact Sr. Sandy

Parish Council Meetings

Council typically meets on the third
Monday of each month.

**Shenango Valley
Catholic School System**

Catholic Middle and High Schools:
724-346-5531
St. John Paul II:
724-342-2205

3RD WEEK OF ADVENT



Facebook.com/
StJosephSharon



www.Stjosephs-Sharon.org



HEARING
ENHANCEMENTS
AVAILABLE

PARISHIONER PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY & ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-Mail _____

Place completed form in today's collection basket or drop it off in the church office.

New Member

Address Change

Update Info

Baptism: Please contact the parish office to schedule a time and date. A pre-baptism class is required. No baptisms during Advent and Lent.

Matrimony: By appointment six months in advance.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA): Please call the church office at 724-981-3232.

Prayer Line: For intentions, please call 724-981-3232.

PASTOR'S COLUMN

ADVENT REFLECTION: I have put together a small reflection for each of the weeks of advent. Each week there will be an insert in the bulletin, and on the website, that will reflect on the Christmas story and what it might invite us to in prayer. I have also recommended some books for your own personal reading and reflection. Usually, these days are filled with Christmas parties and activities, but these are not usual times. Maybe the time that we have can be used in productive ways of prayer, reading, and reflection.

COVID-19 CHRISTMAS: Our celebration of Christmas Masses will most likely not be any different than our Masses now. The obligation to attend Mass on that day will be removed. We will also have to wear masks and keep socially distant from each other. It will also mean limitations on the numbers of those who will be permitted at each Mass – that number will be 200 people. **A letter should have arrived at the home of every registered parishioner outlining our procedures for Christmas.** Christmas Masses will be Christmas Eve at 4:30, 7:00, and 9:00pm and Mass on Christmas Day will be at 9:30am. In order to limit the number of people at each Mass you will be asked to call the parish office to make a reservation for the Mass you wish to attend. The reservation process will promptly conclude on December 22 at 4:30pm. Once that number reaches 200 the Mass will be considered full and people will need to consider a different Mass to attend. Also know that we will provide an online Mass as we have been doing since Easter. This might be a better option for people as the Mass can be viewed at a time that is convenient for you and your family in the safety of your home. **4:30 MASS IS FULL.**

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION: We will continue our annual practice of tithing (10%) the Christmas Collection and forward that tithe to the Prince of Peace Center. I have two people who are willing to match that tithe. If there are others who would like to do the same, please contact Fr. Tom.

COVID 19 GUIDELINES: Please do not become lax with the guidelines for being in church during this pandemic. We are all tired of doing things differently and being inconvenienced but we need to be vigilant to protect one another, particularly those who are most vulnerable. And that includes most of us, and even me, your priest. All the guidelines are listed below but here a few that have been neglected lately:

1. **MASKS/FACE COVERINGS:** Masks must be worn at all times when you are in the Church and should cover **both your mouth and your nose.** Please keep your mask on when coming to communion. Once you have received the host in your hand, then you can pull the mask down momentarily to receive communion. The mask should then cover your mouth and nose again.
2. **FRONT ROWS:** If you have difficulty walking please sit in the front rows where you can be seated during the whole Mass and I will bring you communion directly to you.
3. **COMMUNION STATIONS:** No matter which section you sit in, you must follow the directions for receiving communion. If you go in the wrong direction, you put other people at risk.
4. **NO OBLIGATION:** remember the obligation to attend Mass has been removed during the pandemic. If you have difficulty attending Mass or are not feeling well, please stay home and watch Mass on TV or on the internet.
5. **LEAVE WHEN MASS IS OVER:** Please leave the church immediately after Mass. People should not be staying in church to light candles or to talk to other people – this puts people at risk. You can talk outside if you wish. **We need this time after Mass to clean and sanitize the church.**
6. **RECEIVING COMMUNION:** I have said this from the pulpit and written it in the bulletin and even said it to people as they come up to communion: PLEASE KEEP YOUR HAND FLAT TO RECEIVE COMMUNION (This includes your thumb!). Your other hand should be UNDERNEATH YOUR FLAT HAND. If you are right-handed, your left hand should be on top and FLAT and your right hand should be UNDERNEATH your left hand. Some people are doing this correctly, but some people are still not keeping their hand flat and are reaching for the host before I can pull my hand away and thus touching me. You should not be reaching for the host until you have stepped to the side and are ready to consume the host. Please be attentive to this.

IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TO MASS IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, YOU NEED TO READ THROUGH THESE GUIDELINES AND FOLLOW THEM CAREFULLY TO PROTECT OTHER PEOPLE.

NOT A RETURN TO NORMAL: We have been open for a few weeks for daily and weekend Masses, **but this is not a return to normal.**

Bishop Persico has given us permission to begin public Masses, **if people follow the protocols that have been put in place.** Those protocols can be viewed on the diocesan website www.eriecd.org and our parish website <http://www.stjosephs-sharon.org/> The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holyday Mass is still in effect. Those who are ill or who are at risk should remain at home and continue to use the television or internet Masses that continue to be made available.

- Confessions are being heard on Saturday from 4:00 to 4:30. Because of the restrictions of COVID 19 we are not able to use the confessionals. Confessions are in the main body of the church in front of the confessional, masks are required, and six feet of distance needs to be maintained between the priest and the

Pastor's notes continued...

person confessing. People are asked to sit in the section near the organ to wait for confession. **Because of this the church is not available for others to come and pray at this time to give privacy to those wishing to go to confession. Please do not enter the church for Mass until 4:45pm.**

- **GENERAL RULES FOR MASS: Masks are to be worn by everyone.** Social distancing – six feet apart – must always be maintained – even when in line for communion and when entering and leaving the church. Families in the same household may sit together. Pews will be taped off to indicate where you can and cannot sit. Hand sanitizer is available at each entrance and you are encouraged to bring your own in preparation for communion. We are only permitted to use 1/3 of the church capacity. There will be no collection basket passed, but there will be baskets at the front of church to put your envelopes in either before or after mass. Communion is strongly encouraged to be received in the hand. People should come to Church and find a place to sit and not gather to talk. After Mass people should leave in an orderly fashion keeping the appropriate distance from each other. People should go immediately to their cars and leave and not gather in groups that will block exits and cause people to come into close contact. Please avoid contact with surfaces. Doors and pews will be sanitized after each mass.
- I realize these are an inconvenience to everyone, but we need to be very diligent about protecting others. Think of others first.

LATEST INFORMATION: The best place to find the latest information is our parish APP or the parish website. You can connect this App to your phone by texting APP to 88202. This App is FREE. This was something the diocese paid to let all parishes and parishioners stay connected about two years ago. Some people, including me, have experienced the Sunday readings not being up to date. The best fix seems to be to uninstall the App and reinstall it.

Our parish website will also be a place for the parish bulletin and other information <http://www.stjosephs-sharon.org/>

ST. JOSEPH PARISH MASS ONLINE: https://youtu.be/JLH_u7_NP4

PARISH OFFICE: To do business with the parish office, please call the office between 8:30am and 4:30pm. The office is **not** open for walk-in business.

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS: The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete Sunday – Gaudete means “rejoice.”

The first reading today is a passage from the prophet Isaiah which Jesus will read in the synagogue and then proclaim that “this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” For those who heard Jesus proclaim this, it was a clear indication that he was claiming to be the Messiah. He was announcing that he was the hope for all people in how he would bring about justice for those who were being oppressed.

In the second reading Paul proclaims that we should rejoice always. Paul invites us to open our minds and hearts to the Spirit of God through our gratitude and our openness to being dwelling places for God’s Spirit. If we are allowing God’s Spirit into our lives, we will find ourselves doing the work of God. We will continue the work of Jesus the Messiah.

We encounter John the Baptist again this week in the Gospel. John is asked to clearly state who he is because he is baptizing people. John does not hesitate to say that he is NOT the Messiah. John has a clear understanding of who he is and who Jesus is. John makes no claims for his own importance but focuses attention on the person of Jesus. That humble way of life is what we are called to as well.

ST. JOSEPH PARISH PRAYER LINE –VOLUNTEERS The Prayer Line is a special chain of people that in your time of prayerful needs branch out to each other and begin to pray immediately for the sick. If you are someone who can pray for the sick or one who physically cannot volunteer but still feels the desire to volunteer, please consider becoming a volunteer for our Prayer Line. There are no meetings to attend, only a phone call from our prayer chain leader. To become part of the prayer chain team, please call the church office at 724-981-3232.

SCAMS AND FRAUD In this age when personal data can be misused by scam artists, please be aware that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, its clergy, and entities such as parishes and schools will never solicit your personal or business information by any method unless initiated by you. Should you receive an unsolicited request for such information – including a request for gift cards of any type – exercise extreme caution. Contact the person or entity by using official contact information only. Do not use contact information provided in the potential fraudulent request.



DOWNLOAD OUR PARISH APP:
TEXT APP to 88202

LOG ON TO OUR PARISH WEBSITE:
www.StJosephs-sharon.org

PLEASE PRAY FOR: Dorothy Ogg, Ford Bartle, Evelyn Tew, Fr. Manning, Joe & John Mochanski, Don & Rose Becker, Lorraine Schuller, Diane Young, Joseph Byers, Jackie Hoffman, Nadine Vellente, Alice Fill, Liam Rueberger, John Kutchenriter, Bev Chalupka, Peggy Heldorfer, William Clarke, Tess McCallen. Irene Chaussard, Mary Ann Biro and Sheila Ann Biro-Aldato



**Simply Celebrating
Advent and Christmas**

A new website created by the Office of Faith Formation and the Communications Office to help people find simple, creative ways

to celebrate Advent and Christmas at home in a year like no other. Visit www.eriercd.org/christmas.html for everything from Advent wreath ideas to a Christmas-week prayer service that can be offered in the home or with loved ones who are far away using technology. In addition, a link to a listing of Christmas Eve and Christmas Masses being offered at parishes across the diocese, both in person and via livestream, will go live on the site beginning Dec. 10.

RENTAL: The Caretaker’s House at St. Rose Cemetery is available for rent. If you or someone you know are interested, please call 724-346-3711. Monthly rent is \$850. The two story house has 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, kitchen, L.R. and D.R. Real Estate taxes, sewer, grass cutting and snow plowing taken care of. All other utilities paid by tenant. Sorry, no pets permitted.

LECTOR SCHEDULE

Date	Mass Time	Lector
Saturday, Dec. 19	5:15pm	P. Lozano
Sunday, Dec. 20	8:30am	S. Swogger
Sunday, Dec. 20	11:00am	J. Bonomo

Mass Intentions

+Indicates Mass

Monday, December 14—Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a / Mt 21: 23-27

+8:00 Robert S. Mayo (Dr. & Mrs. Robert Weiner & Family)

Tuesday, December 15—Zep 3: 1-2, 9-13 / Mt 21: 28-32

+8:00 Mark Mohan (Food Pantry)

Wednesday, December 16—Is 45: 6b-8, 18, 21c-25 / Lk 7: 18b-23

+12:10 Amie Arp (Carol & Lori)

Thursday, December 17—Gn 49: 2, 8-10 / Mt 1: 1-17

+8:00 Michael Kuzel (Mrs. Des Puhak)

Friday, December 18—Jer 23: 5-8 / Mt 1: 18-25

+8:00 Elizabeth Frola (M/M August DelFratte, Jr.)

Saturday, December 19—2 Sm 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 / Rom 16: 25-27 / Lk 1: 26-38

Fourth Sunday of Advent

+5:15 Deceased Members of the Parish

Sunday, December 20—2 Sm 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 / Rom 16: 25-27 / Lk 1: 26-38

Fourth Sunday of Advent

+8:30 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Rhodes (Family)

+11:00 Marie Rindosh (Gary & Elaine Hruska)

Christmas Tree Memorials



We are again offering you the opportunity to remember a loved one by contributing \$100 towards one of the six Christmas trees we will be placing throughout the church. Please place your donation in an envelope, include your name, phone number and the name(s) of those you wish to remember, and return it to the church mailbox outside the office door or in the offertory basket, by Monday, December 14, 2020. We will take the first six donors. Donors and those to be remembered will be listed under a special heading in the Christmas Flower Memorial included with the December 20 bulletin.

St. Joseph
Sunday Mass
Available Online

https://youtu.be/JLH_u7_NP4

www.StJosephs-Sharon.org

CORONA VIRUS PRAYER

Dear God, I pray for healing to all affected by this deadly virus. Only You can move in a mighty way to bring peace and healing to all. We pray for all negative outcomes to be resolved by your healing hands. Bless and cover each and every single person with your compassionate care and bring healing to their bodies and spirits. Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.