

# S a i n t   A g n e s



*St. Agnes is an inclusive Catholic community dedicated to the love of God and service to others. We rejoice in the Gospel, the celebration of the Liturgy, and the Sacraments. We welcome the opportunity to share God's message and to bring all into the life of Christ.*

## **Pastoral Contacts**

Pastor: Rev. Andrew M. Switzer  
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. T. Mathew Rowgh  
Coordinator of Faith Formation: Bill Donahue  
Assistant Administrator: Beth Yates  
Accounting: Lizzie Lowe  
Liturgy: Helen Harris  
Music Ministry: Elaine Rendler-McQueeney

## **Pastoral Council**

Connie Bonner ~ Carmela Cesare ~ Peg Eackles  
Christine Wiegman-Green ~ Patrick Green ~ Shaná Harris  
Colin Hayden ~ Richard Hitchcock ~ Amie Ho-Leung  
Kathryn McAteer ~ Bill Sagle ~ Gil Sateia ~ Becky Tokarcik

## **Finance Council**

Pat Barth ~ Mike Drewes ~ Todd Hershey  
Sue Kemnitzer ~ David Matera  
Bob Morrow ~ Arnold Thomas ~ Richard Walton

## **St. Agnes Church**

200 South Duke Street, Shepherdstown

## **St. Agnes Parish Office**

106 South Duke Street, Shepherdstown  
P.O. Box 1603, Shepherdstown, WV 25443  
Telephone 304-876-6436  
[Office@StAgnesShepherdstown.org](mailto:Office@StAgnesShepherdstown.org)  
[www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org](http://www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org)

## **St. Agnes Chapel**

204 South Church Street, Shepherdstown

## **Sunday Readings**

Isaiah 52:7-10  
Psalm 98:1, 2-3a, 3b-4, 5-6  
Hebrews 1:1-6  
John 1:1-18

## Weekly Schedule

### Sunday Mass

Saturday, 5:30pm

Sunday, 8am

Sunday, 10:30am

### Weekday Mass

Wednesday at 11am

### Church Open for Prayer

10am-3:30pm, Monday-Saturday

(except holidays)

**Bishop Brennan has lifted the request that everyone mask. However, we still encourage masking for love of neighbor.**

**Parish Office:** Tuesday–Thursday, 9am-4pm

**Cash Card Sales:** Weekdays during office hours  
(please call first)

## Solemnity of Mary

Saturday, December 31 ~ 5:30pm

Sunday, January 1 ~ 8am & 10:30am

## Christmas Flowers

Our Christmas flowers have been given

in memory of Edythe Myers and Bailey Tune by Zach & Tricia Myers; Roger Hedrick, Art & Mae Gedeon, Scott Rees, Jacquelyn Klann, and Jason Morrison by Eileen Hedrick; G. Herbert & Elizabeth Mofsses and H. Max & Margaret Derr by Max & Shirley Derr; John & Elsie Piccolomini and George & Dorothy Buys by John & Dotty Piccolomini; Rex A. Norton by Hilda Norton; Elvira Risi and Almerinto Risi by Maria Lamanna; Bill Fritchman by Nancy Curry; Bob & Esther Kubitschek by Margaret Kubitschek; Frank & Cecilia Vassallo by Eric & Anna Sokel; Paul Curry and Mr & Mrs Arnold Thomas by Arnold & Victoria Thomas; deceased Family & Friends by Lyle & Theresa Rush; Francis Snowden, Rebecca McCauley, Jaysen Quintana, Sandra Walker, and Leo Hamson by Marie Snowden; To all my family and friends who have gone by Russ Forrest; the Pulaski Family and the Robertson Family by Carol, Gregg, Scott, Jeanne, and Stephen Robertson; Richard & Jane Nau by Tim & Gretchen Matz; the Burleigh family, the Thompson family, the Moler family, the Robertson family, and the Greaser family by Bryan & Judy Robertson; Ralph Horley by Paula Horley;

and as a gift to St Agnes by Alan & Mary Ellen DeBord, Dennis & Janice Wark, and Stan & Lucille Nelson.

## Scripture Sharing

Our Scripture Sharing group continues to meet on Mondays at noon, with the exception of holidays (there will be no meetings on Monday, December 26, or Monday, January 2). All are welcome! The Zoom link is on the website events calendar.

## Remember in Prayer

Please pray daily for those serving in the Military, our veterans in recovery, and those recently ill especially Richard Hitchcock, John Jankowski (cousin of Frank Bielicki), Mary Hart, Dan VanBelleghem, Ed Kelly, and Barbara Broomall. Names are placed in the bulletin for approximately one month and then those names are placed on the 2nd Friday prayer list and are remembered in prayer each month.

## 2nd Friday Prayer Group

A list has begun for the 2nd Friday in January. Please contact Judy (see below) at any time with names of individuals you would like to add or to join the group. Please contact Judy: 301-432-2276, [jsilga8@gmail.com](mailto:jsilga8@gmail.com).

## Historic Houses of Worship Tour December 26, 2022

Monday, December 26, from 4-7pm is your opportunity to tour the churches of Shepherdstown, including our church and historic chapel. Brochures for the tour will be available at the Community Club that day to guide you through town to each church.

## Year End Giving

If you would like to make a year-end gift to St. Agnes for 2022 Tax purposes, please be sure to write your check by December 31, 2022! Donations received for the Solemnity of Mary will be processed in 2023. Please take note of the charitable giving information on pg 10 of this bulletin!

## After-Mass Coffee Service

We would like to bring back the after-Mass coffee service starting in January. We need people at all three Masses who would be responsible for setting up, making coffee, bringing (homemade or store-purchased) baked goods, then cleaning up afterwards. We will be happy to show you how to do everything we do. You wouldn't have to do it every week and the more people we have, the less frequently everyone will have to be on the schedule. If you would like to join us or if you have any questions, please send an email to [cvpierpont@comcast.net](mailto:cvpierpont@comcast.net).

## Your Help Is Needed!

We are in desperate need of help in the Ministry of Altar Server (both young and old), Eucharistic (Bread & Cup) Ministers, Music, Lectors and Hospitality. I am asking that you search deeply to discern your gifts and give back to God what he has given to you. We want to show we are many parts of the same body. Please remember there are committees that also may need your assistance. Please leave your info at the church office and they will contact me. Please, please discern deeply and faithfully. Thank you and may God continue to bless you. Happy Advent.

Helen Harris

Dear Parishioners,

I want to begin by thanking folks for all the gifts and goodies they sent this Christmas. I am truly blessed to be a part of the St Agnes family. I heard a reflection this week sharing about what it was like growing up in the Netherlands during World War II with the Nazis. The insight was from the person's experience. The churches were the freest place that one could go. This was a place of refuge to breathe freely without the oppression of the Nazis. I thought of it as an image for the Christmas story as the shepherds went to the cave with Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. I wonder at that crib, under the oppression of the Roman Empire, if it was the place where those on the lowest place on the totem pole in society felt the freest. I began to think with Pope Francis and his image of enlarging the space of our tent, what if our space was the place people felt most free to be themselves to share their questions and struggles and to experience joy and love. As we celebrate Christmas, let's recognize how the incarnation has continued throughout history; that God wants to take on flesh in us, the human race, taking up our joys and sorrows and, like the shepherds, leading us on the journey.

Merry Christmas,  
Fr. Andy

## Kolofata Potholder Fundraiser & More!

Celebrate with us! Thanks to all of you, and especially to our seamstress extraordinaire, Regenia Carder, the pot-holder fundraiser for Kolofata raised nearly \$600 in sales and over \$600 in donations from attendees!

As many of you know, we had received a challenge grant from an anonymous couple who offered a \$1 match up to \$5,000 for every \$2 in new donations (and fundraisers) we received for the Kolofata Girls' Education Project by December 31, 2022. Thanks to this fundraiser and many donations, as of Monday, December 19, 2022 we have raised \$10,000 and will receive the \$5,000 match.

If you haven't donated yet but have been thinking about it, please send donations to St. Agnes Church and on the memo-line write *Kolofata* or donate online on our parish website. Although we met this fundraising challenge, we are still a long way from our crucial long-term goal of having the funds on hand when a girl starts school to guarantee that we can cover her educational expenses for a minimum of three years (middle school, high school or university). **In this moment** we rejoice and thank all of you who care about these young girls, Muslim and Christian, half a world away whose lives and whose families' lives are changed forever because you are enabling them to receive an education! Thank you.

## Join in Renewing, Renaming and Reinvigorating St Agnes' Commitment to Service

Our long-time Social Concerns Chair relocated about the same time Covid struck. Although our meetings came to a halt, many of our members, through creative adaptations, kept ministries alive. Parish nurses gave ongoing advice on covid, one parishioner made "ugly sleeping bags" at home, parishioners fed the homeless, provided Christmas gift cards for over 200 people in need, bought Haitian coffee to aid Haitian farmers, provided gift cards monthly to Shepherdstown Shares for personal hygiene needs, donated food weekly to JCCM, raised funds to send Kolofata, Cameroon girls to school through potholder sales and donations, started a Zoom racism group, and many more acts of generosity and service too numerous to name. Though many parishioners helped in multiple ways, a good bit of responsibility landed on the shoulders of a few. It is time to renew and reinvigorate these ministries – and perhaps add new ones.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops refers to its efforts as Justice, Peace and Human Development. The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston just reopened its Justice and Peace Office. To be in tandem with these efforts we are thinking of renaming ourselves either the Justice, Peace and Human Development Committee (JPHD) or the Justice and Peace (J&P) Committee. Please give this some thought.

We need you! We need folks with new energy, new ideas, new interests. We need folks to serve on the coordinating committee and folks to reinvigorate the individual ministries. What would you like to do?

Watch for a meeting date in January. Let's start the new year with a new commitment to justice, peace and human development!

## Support Catholic Charities WV!

Catholic Charities West Virginia helps tens of thousands of our vulnerable brothers and sisters every year. Your donation allows us to provide hope, provide safety, provide food and provide care.

You can give to Catholic Charities:

- Through the collection at Christmas Masses
- Online at [www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org)
- By mail to 2000 Main Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adult) is for those who are interested in learning about the Catholic faith and discerning if they might want to be professed members of the Catholic faith. The goal is to see where the process takes you. Father Andy is leading our RCIA process. If you are interested in learning more or joining the group, please call the office at 304-876-6436. All are welcome!

## A Christmas Message From the St Agnes Conference Of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP)

Christmas is the celebration of the most meaningful birthday of all time. We observe this world changing event by giving gifts to our loved ones, and that's what we do every day of the year at St. Vincent de Paul when we provide the gifts of food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and other necessities to those in need in our parish and the larger Jefferson County Community.

As you prepare to celebrate Jesus' birthday, we ask you to keep the less fortunate in your thoughts and prayers. Christ was an advocate for the poor and oppressed, and His message was one of love, charity, and hope. We are so grateful for your past kindness and generosity.

Thank you, and wishing you and your family an abundance of Christmas blessings, happiness, and cheer.

### New Hymnals

#### The Gift of Music Memorialize this year's hymnal

You will find envelopes in each hymnal if you would like to dedicate a hymnal to a loved one. Place completed forms in the offertory basket.

### Book Discussion Group January 2023 Selection

Our first selection of 2023 is a book by Fr. Peter Daly, a friend of Fr. Andy who was a visiting celebrant at St. Agnes a couple of times in 2022. The title ***is Strange Gods: A Novel About Faith, Murder, Sin and Redemption*** by Peter J. Daly and John F. Myslinski. On his visits to St. Agnes Fr. Daly distributed copies of his book. If any parishioners have a copy they are willing to loan, please put your name on the inside cover and contact Eileen Dooley at [dooleywoods@comcast.net](mailto:dooleywoods@comcast.net) or drop the book off at the parish center. We'll make sure to return copies to their owners.

We meet on the third Friday of the month at the parish center at 11 am. We welcome participants who come regularly or occasionally or just once. Watch the bulletin for a list of upcoming selections.

### Ugly Sleeping Bag Ministry

It is cold outside, and we are making warmer sleeping bags. We are in need of donated **blankets**, and **comforters** (any size). We are also accepting donations of used **sleeping bags**. Items should be clean and in fair condition. Donations can be dropped off at the parish center.

### Haiti Coffee

We have Haiti coffee available at the parish center for purchase!

## Be Aware of Holiday Gift Card Scams!

Every holiday season brings on an increase in gift card scams. There are dozens of ways gift cards can be used by scammers to steal money.

Among the ways scammers try to get us is through **Maliciously Modified Gift Cards in Stores**. In this scam, fraudsters steal department store gift cards, learn their secret PIN information, and then replace back onto the shelves to await a victim. When the victim purchases the previously tampered with card and activates it, the fraudster is often able to spend the gift cards value faster than the victim. The fraudster can call the store's gift card line over and over to verify when the gift card is activated and what value is left on the card.

How to prevent? Look for signs of tampering when you buy a gift card. Some people say to pick gift cards from the end of the stack, but that's assuming that the fraudsters will always place the tampered gift cards up front and that the store's staff didn't rearrange them when restocking new gift cards. Know that all the big vendors using gift cards are aware of these scams and many will offer a way for you to protect yourself against this type of scam and some may even reimburse you if you are out money.

You can find information about gift card scams from the Federal Trade Commission at <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/gift-card-scams>.

## Please Don't Fall Victim To Email & Texting Scams!

We continue to hear from far too many parishioners that they are receiving emails or text messages from someone posing as Fr. Andy or Fr. Mat. **If you ever receive an email from someone posing as St. Agnes staff asking for money, gift cards, etc., it is a scam.**

No one, not Fr Andy nor Fr Mat nor St. Agnes staff, will ever write to you personally asking for 'favors' or to request that you to make a purchase or send money. **You can usually tell by looking closely at the email address who sent the message.** Emails from St. Agnes always come from <<email>>@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

Emails from Fr. Andy will be from [aswitzer@stagnesshepherdstown.org](mailto:aswitzer@stagnesshepherdstown.org) or [aswitzer@dwc.org](mailto:aswitzer@dwc.org). These scammers are very crafty and often make some very slight variation on the actual email address, so you really have to look very carefully. If you receive an email similar to this, simply delete it and be aware that email scams, phishing, and more, are part of our digital world. To protect yourself, it's important that you learn how to recognize these scams.

In addition to email, the scammers also use text messaging for their same nefarious purpose. If a text message looks suspicious, it probably is. Once again, no one from St Agnes will ever ask you by text for money or gift cards!

## Family News

Merry Christmas!

There is NO CFF on December 25th or January 1st. Our next CFF class will be January 8th from 9:15—10:15 AM for K-8 and Pre Confirmation.

Much thanks to our Children's Choir who preformed a few Christmas songs at the 5:30 PM Mass. Special thanks to Beth Wagner who volunteered to lead the Children's Choir this year and who has been working with them for many weeks to prepare for the event.

It's a Wonderful Life—family movie night... Friday, December 30: 6:30 PM Parish Center Movie starts at 7 PM.

Things to look for in January: Youth Centered Mass (Jan. 29) Family Movie Night II (Jan. 20) Hungry Meal Prep (Jan. 22)

Please keep watching this section, the St. Agnes Website, as well as the CFF/ Youth page for continuing announcements regarding Faith Formation and youth activities.

As we update our email lists, if you are a parent and not receiving CFF announcements and emails, please contact the parish center at 304- 876-6436 or Bill Donahue at: [formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org](mailto:formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org)

### **Put the Ornaments That Jesus Likes on the Tree**

Read the words on the ornaments. Color only the ornaments that have words that Jesus would like. Then cut out those ornaments and glue them on the Christmas tree.



### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

- **Dec. 24:** Children's Program 5:15 PM at the church.
- **Dec. 25:** No CFF (Holiday)
- **Dec. 28:** Youth Group Cooking for the Hungry Meal Prep 10 AM. You do not need to stay the entire time. We will provide lunch for the youth that is there at lunchtime. We also need people who will help pack up the meal.
- **Dec. 30:** December Family Movie Night **Parish Center "It's a Wonderful Life" 6:30. Movie starts at 6:45 PM (2 hours and 10 minutes) There will be snacks.**
- **Jan. 1:** No CFF (Holiday)
- **Jan. 8:** CFF 9:15 AM– 10:15—K-8 Class
- **Jan. 15:** NO CFF (Holiday)

# THE YOUTH CORNER

This Week's Gospel: *Luke 2: 1-16++*  
December 25, 2022

Christmas: The Nativity of the Lord

# MERRY CHRISTMAS



G X Z B E T H L E H E M I D O R W  
S C G O P B L T Z S H J K L O S F  
Q M A H L U P W P N A Z A R E T H  
S A L A I Q U C B T V R J H B E A  
M N I M P K D P I F P H A S T E X  
P G L S H E P H E R D S D S Y C Y  
Q E E M R Z F O E B J N W L A R O  
E R E A L A G J X S B A N E P A S  
Y L X R O A L M C S D E S J Q K M  
I U D Y Q X O I Q D V A U G N E D  
E A T Y E P R O L A R S T P J B B  
F J R H L D Y I E I A U A K Y Q C  
U G A T U K N H B U J D I V U H J  
C H E E B G S L E G N A Z R I M N  
D C H N Z N M V B I U J U L C O T  
N T Q J M C S O M B A W D L G Y R  
R M X R H T R I B I H P E S O J J



SWADDLING  
BETHLEHEM  
CHILD  
MANGER  
MARY

ANGELS  
GALILEE  
BIRTH  
JOSEPH

CAESAR  
HASTE  
HEAVENLY  
SAVIOR

NAZARETH  
HEART  
SHEPHERDS  
GLORY



### Across

7. Angels' song when the savior was born  
11. The coming of the savior  
12. God with us  
14. The magi  
15. Worshipped Jesus at his birth

### Down

1. Appeared to Mary and Joseph  
2. Mary and Joseph found no room here.  
3. What led everyone to Jesus?  
4. Where did Mary give birth?

5. Christmas celebrates the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.

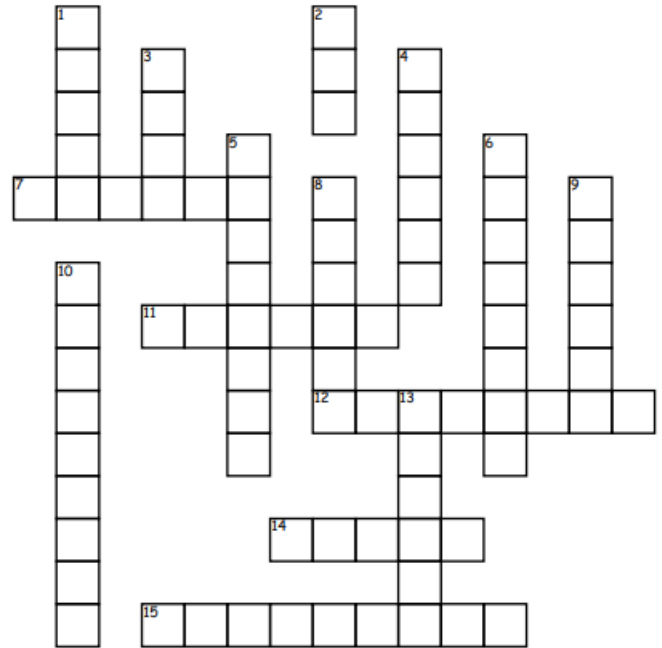
6. The manifestation of Christ

8. \_\_\_\_\_ of peace

9. Scene of Jesus' birth

10. Birthplace of Jesus

13. Where was Jesus placed after his birth?



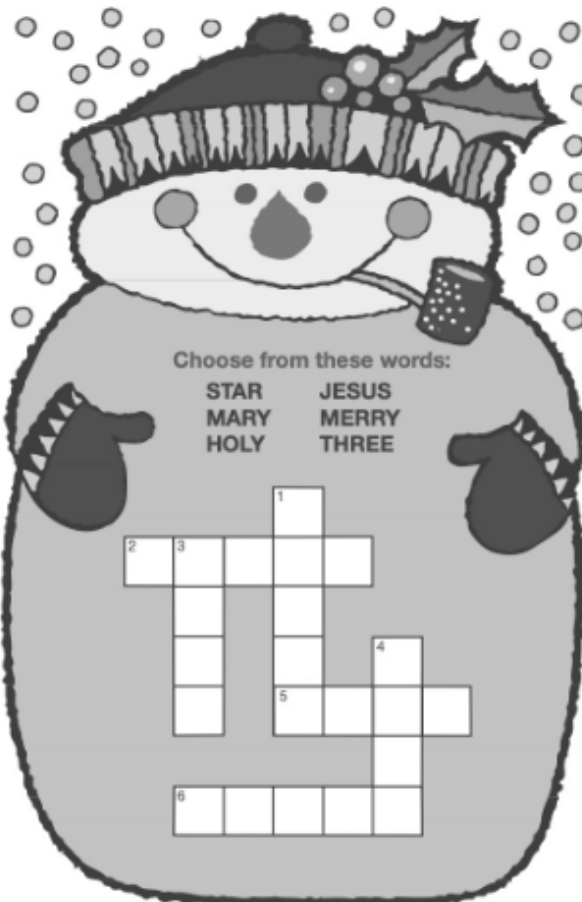
## A Christmas Crossword Puzzle

### Across

2. How many Magi came from the East?  
5. It shined over the place where Jesus lay.  
6. We wish everyone "\_\_\_\_\_ Christmas."

### Down

1. Who was born on Christmas?  
3. We sing, "O \_\_\_\_\_ Night."  
4. Who is Jesus' mother?



Choose from these words:

STAR JESUS  
MARY MERRY  
HOLY THREE

### UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

1. STBALE \_\_\_\_\_  
2. HEEPS \_\_\_\_\_  
3. NLGEA \_\_\_\_\_  
4. TSAR \_\_\_\_\_  
5. GAMREN \_\_\_\_\_  
6. JHPOES \_\_\_\_\_  
7. OENYDK \_\_\_\_\_  
8. EUSSJ \_\_\_\_\_  
9. SKNGI \_\_\_\_\_  
10. YMAR \_\_\_\_\_





## Holiday Saints of the Season

### Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist (1st century) December 27

An evangelist is a "bringer of good news." Today we hear the term applied to preachers, usually those who travel from place to place or appear on television telling others about Jesus and his call to build the Kingdom of God. But *evangelist* is also a term used for a writer of one of the Four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Saint John and his brother, Saint James, made their living by fishing in the Sea of Galilee. One day while they were mending their nets, Jesus walked by. He called to them, and they left their work to follow him. Throughout Jesus' public life, he was close to John. In fact, John is called "the beloved disciple." He was with Jesus, along with Peter and James, at Jesus' Transfiguration. The same three were with Jesus during his agony in the garden. John was the only Apostle to stand at the foot of Jesus' Cross at the Crucifixion, when Jesus told him to care for his mother, Mary.



Of John's later life, we know very little. He is said to be the author not only of the fourth Gospel, but also of the Book of Revelation, which describes the war between good and evil and the eventual triumph of good. The forces of evil are the pagan Roman Empire, which war against the forces of God. John tells Christians to stand firm against evil persecutions and to look forward to the day when Jesus will extend his domain over the entire universe.

John also wrote three letters (we call them *Epistles*) addressed to various Christian communities of the first century. In writing his Gospel as well as his Epistles, John was able to think seriously about the events that occurred in his youth. He knew Jesus. John was with Jesus at the major events of his life and even saw him after the Resurrection. He wrote about the meaning of Jesus' life, how it changes each of us, and about the salvation God offers all of humankind. Because John's work is full of thoughts that soar to the heavens, his symbol is the eagle.

John is the only Apostle who was not a martyr. He lived to a great age, and it is said that when he could no longer walk, he was carried to meetings of his community. When asked to preach, he would say only, "My children, love one another. If you will just do that, you will do enough."

## SOLUTIONS

### A Christmas Crossword Puzzle

Across: 2—three; 5—star; 6—Merry

Down: 1—Jesus; 3—Holy; 4—Mary

7	9	5	8	4	3	2	1	6
1	3	8	2	6	7	5	4	9
6	2	4	9	1	5	7	8	3
3	1	2	7	5	6	8	9	4
5	4	7	3	8	9	6	2	1
8	6	9	1	2	4	3	5	7
9	5	6	4	3	8	1	7	2
2	7	3	5	9	1	4	6	8
4	8	1	6	7	2	9	3	5

G X Z B E T H L E H E M I D O R W  
S C G O P B L T Z S H J K L O S F  
Q M A H L U P W P N A Z A R E T H  
S A L A I Q U C B T V R J H B E A  
M N I M P K D P I F P H A S T E X  
P G L S H E P H E R D S D S Y C Y  
Q E E M R Z F O E B J N W L A R O  
E R E A L A G J X S B A N E P A S  
Y L X R O A L M C S D E S J Q K M  
I U D Y Q X O I Q D V A U G N E D  
E A T Y E P R O L A R S T P J B B  
F J R H L D Y I E I A D A K Y O C  
U G A T U K N H B U J D I V U H J  
C H E E B G S L E G N A Z R I M N  
D C H N Z N M V B I U J U L C O T  
N T Q J M C S O M B A W D L G Y R  
R M X R H T R I B I H P E S O J J

### Unscramble the words

- stable, 2. sheep, 3. angel, 4. star,
- manger, 6. Joseph, 7. donkey,
- Jesus, 9. kings, 10. Mary



## Adult Faith Formation Courses

Two five-week courses are being offered through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) in the first part of 2023. These courses are hybrid models. They are composed of both weekly live two-hour zoom lectures as well as a rich variety of online course materials and discussion experiences through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community For Faith Formation (VLCFF). The courses are being underwritten by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, who pays 100% of the tuition and the cost of any books associated with the courses. The course instructor is Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu. For further information or to register, please contact Jeanne McKeets at [jmckeets@dwc.org](mailto:jmckeets@dwc.org) with your name, address, email, and phone number.

### Survey of Catholic Doctrine

January 9th - February 12th, 2023

Have you ever wanted to explore your faith more deeply and understand more clearly the Trinity, Jesus as God's self revealed, the Holy Spirit and much more? We will study some of the major doctrines of the Catholic Church through the five week hybrid course Survey of Catholic Doctrine, a course sponsored through the Diocese of Wheeling Charleston and the University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation, it will run from January 9th to February 12th. There are no prerequisites, just bring your questions and a desire to learn about your faith. This course combines Zoom lectures/discussions once a week on Wednesday evenings from 7-9pm led by Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu with materials available online through the VLCFF website and meets the course requirement for catechetical certification for the diocese. You can register for this course by contacting Jeanne McKeets at [jmckeets@dwc.org](mailto:jmckeets@dwc.org).

### New Testament

January 9th-February 12th, 2023

This course builds on the material learned in Introduction to Scripture and assumes a basic understanding of how Catholics read and interpret Scripture. We will explore the world behind the text of the New Testament, its history and culture, as well as examine how we today read and understand these texts in light of our own world and culture. We will look at how all four Gospels developed, study the letters of Paul, and examine the world of first century Christianity. This is a five-week hybrid course offered through the Diocese and the Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation of the University of Dayton. You will be able to work online taking quizzes and accessing material, as well as meet once a week via Zoom for class lecture and discussion with the course facilitator, Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu. The Zoom sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings at 7pm (a second session on Monday afternoon may be added if the response is large enough). You can register for this course by contacting Jeanne McKeets at [jmckeets@dwc.org](mailto:jmckeets@dwc.org).

## St Agnes Racial Justice Initiative News

In her engaging, insightful book of 2022, Under The Skin - The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and the Health of Our Nation, Linda Villarosa writes:

"Whereas in the past, race was considered a risk factor for a number of health conditions and early death, now it is clear that we must speak the harder truth: it's not race, something about being Black, or something wrong with the Black body, but racism that makes people sick and shortens their lives. Even after science finds a cure for COVID-19, racism in medicine is the harder the virus to kill."

While helping to document the poorer health outcomes among Black Americans compared to their White counterparts, attributable to poverty, availability of health insurance and healthcare, environmental racism and governmental neglect, she spotlights how we also now know that constantly coping with the stress of enduring racism in America, "weathers" Black people of all economic levels, prematurely aging them and making them more susceptible to health problems.

At this time of year when we Christians focus on honoring the birth of Jesus and Mary his mother, Villarosa recounts a number of stories of bad outcomes for Black mothers and their babies due to racism. She notes at one point a study of Black immigrant women in the United States whose health outcomes for their pregnancies were found to be significantly better than that of their daughters who were born here and grew up here. It was found, correcting for other factors, that racism was a significant factor in their daughters' poor pregnancy outcomes, regardless of their economic status.

Seeing God's saving presence in Mary's birthing of Jesus in a lowly stable, after a late-term, pregnant woman's uncomfortable journey, in an unfamiliar community with little support, hopefully opens our eyes to seeing and serving the needs of mothers and their babies who face special challenges, due to the color of their skin.

## Updating Our VIRTUS (Protecting Our Youth)

As per diocesan policy, all people who work with youth in the parish need to be trained in VIRTUS. If you work with our youth or plan on working with the youth in the future, please take the opportunity to complete the online diocesan VIRTUS training. The program is completely online and requires only about 1 hour of your time. We all want our children to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. Please consider helping us achieve that environment. Copies of the steps to complete VIRTUS training can be found in the Narthex of the church as well as the parish center. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Donahue at [formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org](mailto:formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org).

## IRA Charitable Gifts & Charitable Benefits Under the CARES ACT

A gift through your IRA is a great way to support St Agnes. Here is some information on how you can maximize your giving in 2022:

### IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

- Donors age 70½ or older may make a gift of any amount, up to \$100,000 per individual (\$200,000 for couples with individual IRA accounts), from your IRA without paying income tax on the donated amount.
- For donors who have a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), making a gift directly from your IRA to St. Agnes can be counted toward satisfying your RMD for the year, as long as certain rules are met.
- In addition to the benefits of giving to charity, a QCD excludes the amount donated from taxable income, which is unlike regular withdrawals from an IRA. Keeping your taxable income lower may reduce the impact to certain tax credits and deductions, including Social Security and Medicare.
- QCDs don't require that you itemize, which due to the recent tax law changes, means you may decide to take advantage of the higher standard deduction, but still use a QCD for charitable giving.
- Funds should be transferred directly from the donor's financial institution to St. Agnes.

For additional information about giving from your IRA, please check the St Agnes website for [Giving via Stocks and IRA](#).

### Thank you for supporting St Agnes!

This information is not intended as legal, accounting, or financial advice. Please consult with your tax, legal, and financial advisors to determine whether this or other gift plans are applicable to your tax and financial needs.

### Amazon Smile Pays Off

St Agnes has received its quarterly disbursement, **\$129.84**, from the AmazonSmile program thanks to qualifying purchases made between July 1st - September 30th by those who support St Agnes. Thanks to customers who shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) or use the Amazon app with AmazonSmile turned ON, purchases make an impact.

If you are an Amazon shopper, you can start using AmazonSmile to help St. Agnes if you haven't already. AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. The only thing you have to do is set St. Agnes as your charity of choice and then start using <https://smile.amazon.com> when you shop.

You can learn more about Amazon Smile and how to sign up on the St Agnes Website under the "Giving" tab.

### Missing a Potholder?

A potholder was found in the church parking lot on November 21st. If you purchased potholders and have found that you have come up one short, please call the office.

### Missing Photograph

One of the framed photographs that was around the font in November is missing. Perhaps it got mixed in with some others and ended up in the wrong home. If you had any pictures around the font, please check at home and make certain you didn't end up with an extra. The photo is in a 5x7 wooden frame and is of a handsome man. Thanks!

## Parish Financial Activity

### Collections – Last Week

Offertory Collections	\$16,021
Monthly Mortgage Assistance	\$1,182
<b>Total</b> (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	<b>\$17,203</b>
<b>Weekly Target</b> (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	<b>\$11,500</b>
<b>Total Collections Compared to Target</b>	<b>↑ +\$5,703</b>

<b>Tithe to help those in need</b>	<b>\$1,602</b>
(St. Agnes tithes 10% of all offertory donations)	

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston maintains an Office of Safe Environment in accordance with the USCCB's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. **To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org) to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org). **To Report to Civil Authorities:** Contact your local law enforcement; numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families' Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. **To Report to Diocesan Authorities:** In addition to civil authorities, the diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; or Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the **EthicsPoint** platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected.

**Dr. Gagan Singh, MD**  
**Dr. David Yeh, MD**  
**The Medical Eye Center**  
 710 Somerset Blvd, Suite 101  
 Charles Town, WV 25414  
 New Patients Welcome  
 Call for an appointment  
 304-725-2121

**Office Space Available**  
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 Shepherdstown, WV 25443  
 Call: (304)-876-3500  
 Or email Kathy Morotti:  
[klm\\_pcc@frontier.com](mailto:klm_pcc@frontier.com)  
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## CRISIS FOOD HOTLINE



**(844) 843-6631**

**Call if you or a neighbor are experiencing a food emergency**

**We can help.**

[www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org)



## St Leo's Fish Fry Fridays

Fried fish or shrimp dinner with French fries or sweet potato fries, coleslaw, and roll for \$15; combo dinner for \$20. First Friday of each month, beginning September 2nd. Dine in or carry out. Call ahead-304-279-8770. Open 12:00pm-6:00pm. 2109 Sulfur Springs Rd, Inwood WV.

## Considering a Catholic High School

St. Maria Goretti Catholic HS is a co-ed Catholic high school in Hagerstown, MD. Goretti provides bus transportation and financial aid. For more information visit [www.goretti.org](http://www.goretti.org).

## Shelter Volunteers Needed

Jefferson County Community Ministries is currently recruiting volunteers for their Cold Weather Shelter season which runs from October 31, 2022 through April 30, 2023. Volunteers watch over those in the shelter each night in a caring, compassionate manner. Individual volunteer shifts begin at 7pm and run through 7am the following morning. There is a shelter manager on duty every night ensuring the safety of all and that JCCM protocols are being followed. If you would care for more information or would like to sign up to volunteer, please email their Volunteer Coordinator ([kaz@jccm.us](mailto:kaz@jccm.us)).

## Catholic Radio

*The Eastern Panhandle Catholic Community Calendar can be heard on Fridays at 1030am and weekdays at 3:30pm on [www.rdo.to/WLOL](http://www.rdo.to/WLOL) and at 530am, 1017am & 4:40pm on FM 106.5 and AM 740. And just send your parish and organization programs, events, announcements and prayers, to [comcal@LoRadio.org](mailto:comcal@LoRadio.org) and dedicated volunteers will get them broadcast. For more information on Catholic radio in West Virginia, call 304-598-0026.*

## Pilgrimage to Fatima & Lourdes

Please join His Excellency, Bishop Athanasius Schneider, as well as Fr. Timothy Huffman and Fr. Bradley Greer, of the Diocese of Steubenville, on a pilgrimage to Fatima and Lourdes June 9-18, 2023. Space is limited. For more information, please visit [www.qohtours.com](http://www.qohtours.com) or call 1-800-213-4295.

## Together in Holiness Marriage Conference

**Together in Holiness Marriage Conference**

**February 11, 2023**

**St. Michael Church | Wheeling, WV**

Presented by the St. John Paul II Foundation and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

Registration: \$27/couple and \$18/individual

Early Bird discount available through January 9.

Scholarships available upon request.

On-site childcare (2-12yrs); pre-registration required.

For more information, please visit [togetherinholiness.org](http://togetherinholiness.org) or email [TH@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:TH@forlifeandfamily.org).

## St Joe's Hiring Spanish Teacher

Saint Joseph School is seeking a Spanish teacher for grades kindergarten to two beginning Jan. 2, 2023.

The candidate must have prior experience as a teacher or teacher's aide; be a fluent Spanish speaker; be experienced in differentiating language instruction for diverse learners; and use appropriate instructional strategies for making language instruction comprehensible.

The ideal candidate is proficient in Spanish and has an associate degree or higher education in the field of language or teaching. The preferred applicant will act as an example and motivator toward the fulfillment of the Catholic philosophy of the school. The applicant agrees that the employer has the right to dismiss the teacher for public rejection or violation of the official teachings, and for any violations of the employee handbook policies.

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