

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
Associate of Youth Faith Formation: Bill Donahue
Assistant Administrator: Beth Yates
Accounting: Lizzie Lowe
Associate of Liturgy Ministry: Helen Harris
Associate of Music Ministry: Elaine Rendler-McQueeney

Pastoral Council

Connie Bonner ~ Derek Gallagher
Christine Wiegman-Green ~ Patrick Green
Shaná Harris ~ Colin Hayden ~ Brendan Jarrell
Bill Sagle ~ Gil Sateia
Vanessa Santiago ~ Becky Tokarcik

Finance Council

Pat Barth ~ Steve Bledsoe
Mike Drewes ~ Todd Hershey
Sue Kemnitzer ~ David Matera ~ Arnold Thomas

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
www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org

St. Agnes Chapel

204 South Church Street, Shepherdstown

Sunday Readings

Genesis 15:1-6; 17:3b-5, 15-16, 21:1-7++
Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5
Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19
Luke 2:22-40

Weekly Schedule

Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God Mass

Sunday, December 31, at 5:30pm

Sunday Mass

Saturday, 5:30pm

Sunday, 8am

Sunday, 10:30am

No Weekday Mass week of New Year's

Reconciliation: Saturday, 4:30pm

Parish Office: Tuesday-Friday, 9am-4pm

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

Christmas Flowers

Our Christmas flowers have been given in memory of the Lattus family, the Kemerer family, and Wayne Kemerer by Greg & Debbie Lattus; Edythe Myers by Zach and Tricia Myers; George & Dorothy Buys, John & Elsie Piccolomini, and Ron & Shirley Burkett by John & Dotty Piccolomini; Kay Boal by James Boal & Christine Mougín-Boal; the Burleigh family, the Thompson family, the Moler family, the Greaser family, and the Robertson family by Bryan & Judy Robertson; Bruce Hughes Schmidt by Brigitte Schmidt; Patricia & Serge Vernice and Howard Shelkowsky by Joe & Teri Vernice; Elvira Risi and Almerito Risi by Maria Lamanna; Frank & Cecilia Vassallo by Eric & Anna Sokel; Francis Snowden, Rebecca McCauley, Jaysen Quintana, Sophia Hansen, and Sandra Walker by Marie Snowden; Bailey Tune & Lorraine Rose by Rebecca Tokarcik; Bill Fritchman by Nancy Curry; Richard & Sarah Nau by Tim & Gretchen Matz; Paul & Hermine Curry by Arnold & Victoria Thomas; Cynthia Nocjar by David & Christine Nocjar; Philip Mueller and Kenneth & Anna McCullough by Barbara Mueller; Rex A. Norton and Adam Mikolajczyk by Hilda Norton; Tom & Alma Bonner, Ellis & Randy Armstrong, and Mary Lou & Richard Anderson by Leo & Connie Bonner; the McCafferty Family, the Merhaut Family, and Fred Dase by Larry & Pat Merhaut;

in honor of Renee Mougín by James Boal & Christine Mougín-Boal;

and as a gift to St Agnes by Shawn & Lisa Becker, Erick & Amy Schlanger, Michael & Peg Eackles, and Stan & Lucille Nelson.

In Gratitude

We owe a debt of gratitude to all those who volunteered their time and talent to make our Christmas celebrations so joyous. To those who beautifully decorated our worship space both inside and out, to our choir, cantors, and musicians who put in hours of preparation, to our youth who performed at the vigil Mass, and to all of our lectors, Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, and our hospitality ministers, we are truly grateful to all of you!



Mass Intentions

Saturday, 5:30pm Mass for

Maureen Maidhof

Sunday, 10:30am for the intentions of

Jan Sengers

Cathy Lauri

May Maureen share in the fullness
of God's mercy and peace.

Remember in Prayer

Please pray daily for those serving in the Military, our veterans in recovery, and those recently ill especially Rebecca Ramsey, Marie Snowden, Barbara Mueller, Bill Seymour, Todd Hershey, Anne Oxford, and Georgette Rush. 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 at any time with names of individuals you would like to add or if you would like to join the group. Judy: 301-432-2276 or jsilga8@gmail.com.

Holy Land Collection

In light of the current Hamas-Israeli war and the escalation in violence in the Holy Land, Bishop Brennan has approved a special collection for the Holy Land region to be held the weekend of January 13-14, 2024. The money collected will be sent to The Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), a papal agency for humanitarian and pastoral support. They will provide the essentials of water, food, and emergency kits on the ground in the Holy Land. CNEWA has offices in the region and know where and what kind of help is needed the most.

Checks should be made payable to St Agnes and on the memo line indicate *CNEWA Holy Land Collection*.

A Parishioner's Journey

Camino de Santiago

A journey + a metaphor for life

Sunday, January 7, 2024

After the 10:30 Mass

Parishioner, Christine Wiegman, recently expanded her life journey with a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Come hear Christine as she shares the personal story of her pilgrimage.

Service, Justice, and Peace Weekend

Happy New Year! January 6 and 7 will be the first Service, Justice, and Peace weekend of 2024. Hopefully this new year will be healthy and happy for us all, and we can share the wealth! We will have volunteers available to take your donations for feeding the hungry and homeless, Kolofata, and feminine hygiene products and diapers. Haiti coffee will be for sale as well.

Blood Pressure & Blood Sugar Checks

Our parish nurses will be available after each Mass next weekend, January 6 and 7, for blood pressure and blood sugar checks. Please take advantage of this opportunity to monitor your health!

Scripture Sharing Holiday Break

Given our two consecutive Monday holidays, our Scripture Sharing group will be taking a holiday break. They will be back in session on Monday, January 8, 12noon on Zoom. All are welcome!

All St Agnes Volunteers... VIRTUS Deadline Is This Week!

All Volunteers must be VIRTUS trained by December 31st! This is required by the Diocese of Wheeling Charleston of all parishes, schools, etc. If you volunteer in any capacity at St Agnes, you must be Virtus trained.

The good news is that the training is all online and can be completed in a short period of time. Our Coordinator, Bill Donahue, can assist with verifying your training status and/or initiating your training. For questions or concerns, contact Bill at 304-876-6436 or formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

VIRTUS training is designed to help adults recognize the signs that indicate a child or vulnerable adult might be suffering abuse. It also helps adults by offering key points to help children and adults, who might confide in them, deal with potential situations. Finally, it helps adults know who to contact and what the next steps are if they suspect or discover a child or vulnerable adult is being abused. All this training is designed to help adults help others through a difficult situation.

It is truly in the best interests of everyone to have all volunteers VIRTUS trained.

Book Discussion Group

The January 19, 2024 Book Discussion Selection

Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival and Hope in an American City by Andrea Elliott, winner of the Pulitzer Prize. "It is an astonishing story about the power of resilience, the importance of family and the cost of inequality—told through the crucible of one remarkable girl."

We meet at 11am in the Parish Center. Please join us!

Advent Calendar Review

As we approach Christmas, our online Advent calendar is winding down. If you didn't have the opportunity to look at the entry each day, it will be up on the website through the 12 days of Christmas. But MOST IMPORTANTLY, we have two parish community projects to follow-up on:

1. The 3D puzzle of St. Agnes is being passed around the parish. Let's keep it going.
2. Don't forget to submit one image (per person) of "your favorite thing" from the Christmas holiday by January 8th. We will post all images on the Narthex monitor so we can enjoy those special memories in each other's lives. Send your image to tech1@stagnesshepherdstown.org or text it to 571.216.4744.

For questions, look at the Advent calendar on December 10 and 23.

Year End Giving

If you would like to make a year-end gift to St. Agnes for 2023 Tax purposes, please be sure to write your check by December 31, 2023! 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!

Prayer Sponsors Needed

We are looking for prayer sponsors for our children preparing for First Eucharist. A prayer sponsor is someone who would like to show support and offer prayer for a child preparing to receive their First Eucharist. If you are interested in serving as a prayer sponsor, please call or email the parish office. You will be assigned a child, and you faithfully pray for them every day. A prayer sponsor may send a card to them (anonymously) and let them know they are being prayed for, but the giving of gifts is not necessary. We want this to be about the gift of prayer, not material gifts. We ask that if you send a card to sign it "your prayer sponsor." It is nice to stay anonymous until the First Eucharist celebration. We ask that the prayer sponsor come to the First Eucharist Mass on Sunday, April 28th at 10:30 AM where you can introduce yourself. If interested in being a prayer sponsor, please call the office or contact Bill Donahue at formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

The Gift of Music



Memorialize this year's hymnal

Our 2024 Hymnals are here! Envelopes can be found in each hymnal if you would like to dedicate a hymnal to a loved one (either in memory of or in honor of). Place completed forms in the offertory basket.

Shepherdstown Shares Current Needs

Shepherdstown Shares exists to respond to any crisis threatening the lives, vitality, and prosperity of the Shepherdstown Community. They serve anyone in the zip code and often beyond.

Our St Agnes food pantry collection the 1st weekend of each month goes to Shepherdstown Shares. They can also take donations of non-perishable items in the entry-way of the chapel at Trinity Episcopal Church any time for those who would prefer to drop items off themselves. In addition, they also gratefully accept monetary donations as well (for electronic options, check out their website, <https://www.shepherdstownshares.org/>, or mail a check to PO Box 1780, Shepherdstown, WV 25443). They are now feeding up to 285 people a week. Their costs beyond donations have increased by \$450 per week since this time last year. Shepherdstown Shares is a 501(c)3 organization, so your donations are tax deductible.

Here are their current pantry needs:

Toilet paper

Tuna

Any soup

Canned peas and green beans

World Day of Peace

The **World Day of Peace** is a feast day of the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to universal peace, held on 1 January, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Pope Paul VI established it in 1967, being inspired by the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* of Pope John XXIII and with reference to his own encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. The day was first observed on 1 January 1968.

World Day of Peace often has been an occasion on which the Popes made magisterial declarations of social doctrine. Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II made important declarations on the Day in each year of their pontificates regarding the United Nations, human rights, women's rights, labor unions, economic development, the right to life, international diplomacy, peace in the Holy Land (Israel), globalization, and terrorism." (*Wikipedia*) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Day_of_Peace

We Need Your Help

Have past experience working on a school yearbook, directory, photo album, scrapbook, or publication? Have experience in scheduling activities for yourself or others? Would you be interested in contributing your experiences toward the next St. Agnes Church Photo Directory? If you have applicable experiences or an interest in helping, please contact the office at Office@StAgnesShepherdstown.org or Gil Sateia at snoremaster@comcast.net. Thanks in advance!

Thank You From the Jesse Tree Project

Through the generosity of the parishioners of St. Agnes Church, the church assisted 226 individuals from 10 organizations this year. This included 15 teen moms (and their children) who are seeking support through Young Lives of the Eastern Panhandle and 20 veterans who are seeking comfort and peace through counseling services provided by Father Mat and the VA Medical Center. The church also assisted 50 children through the Boys and Girls Club and Shepherdstown Elementary School, and 96 seniors through Canterbury Center, Shenandoah Center, Willow Tree Manor, Jefferson County Council on Aging, and Good Shepherd Caregivers. And the church provided 30 meals to local residents through Shepherdstown Shares. As we distributed your donations, each organization expressed their overwhelming appreciation for the support and how much this meant to the individuals they were supporting. Your generosity made a huge difference in the lives of these 226 individuals and is a witness to God's love and the importance of celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank you!

Meal for the Needy Needs

Our youth ministry utilizes plastic grocery bags to distribute meals each month. They have run out of those bags. Please help them out by donating your plastic grocery bags at the parish center.

Emancipation Proclamation

This New Year's Day is also the 160th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863.

Ugly Sleeping Bag Ministry

We are always in need of donated **blankets**, and **comforters** (any size) and also used **sleeping bags** (clean and in fair condition). Items can be dropped off at the parish center. Please join our team of sewers! For more information, contact Barbara Mueller by email at barbaramueller596@gmail.com.

In Case of Inclement Weather...

It is that time of year when we need to be prepared for inclement weather! Should we experience wintry precipitation, we will do our best to make a decision regarding in person CFF class by 8pm the evening prior. You can call the parish office at 304-876-6436 and listen to the recording. You can also access this information on the St. Agnes CFF/Youth Facebook (closed) group page. If you have not yet joined the group, please do! Contact Bill Donahue at formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org to join.

CFF, AFF, Youth Group & Family News

CFF: Happy New Year! There are no CFF classes today, Dec. 31. CFF will begin again in the new year on January 7 at 9:15 AM.

ADULT Classes: **Growing in Faith** will not meet on Dec. 31. Happy New Year. We will meet again Jan. 7th at 9:15 AM

RCIA and RCIC will not meet today, December 31. We will meet again on Jan 7th at Noon in the Parish Center.

Keep watching this spot, the Youth Facebook Page, our church calendar and the church website for additional activities. **Remember to join the CFF Google Classroom (link was sent to your email).** It is a one stop spot to find all the latest forms, classroom information, recorded classes, etc.

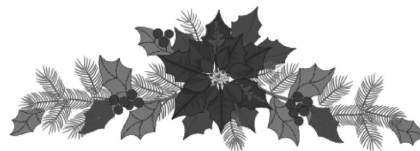
Most importantly, if you are a parent and not receiving CFF announcements and emails, please contact the Parish center at 304-876-6436 or contact Bill Donahue at: **formation @stagnesshepherdstown.org** Parents are also encouraged to join our Youth Facebook Group. Please email Bill at the above address for the link to the closed group. You won't be able to find Our Youth Facebook Page any other way!

THE YOUTH CORNER

This Week's Gospel:
Luke 2: 22—40

December 31, 2023

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary and Joseph



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



Happy

New Year!

Feast of the Holy Family

R	P	A	R	E	N	T	S	A	S	H	E	D	W
P	E	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M	M	E	I
J	I	S	G	N	I	T	I	A	W	A	R	G	R
N	E	E	N	O	M	O	S	E	S	H	O	L	Y
R	I	S	R	D	J	F	M	E	S	S	I	A	H
M	U	S	U	C	L	D	A	O	S	D	C	R	D
O	R	W	S	S	E	I	R	S	A	I	E	I	R
L	E	O	D	O	I	G	H	T	T	T	I	A	I
S	F	R	A	R	M	S	E	C	S	I	N	E	A
S	F	D	Y	S	M	H	E	A	D	N	N	P	P
N	O	R	O	V	A	F	M	R	A	E	N	G	S
A	A	I	I	D	E	V	O	U	T	G	A	T	S
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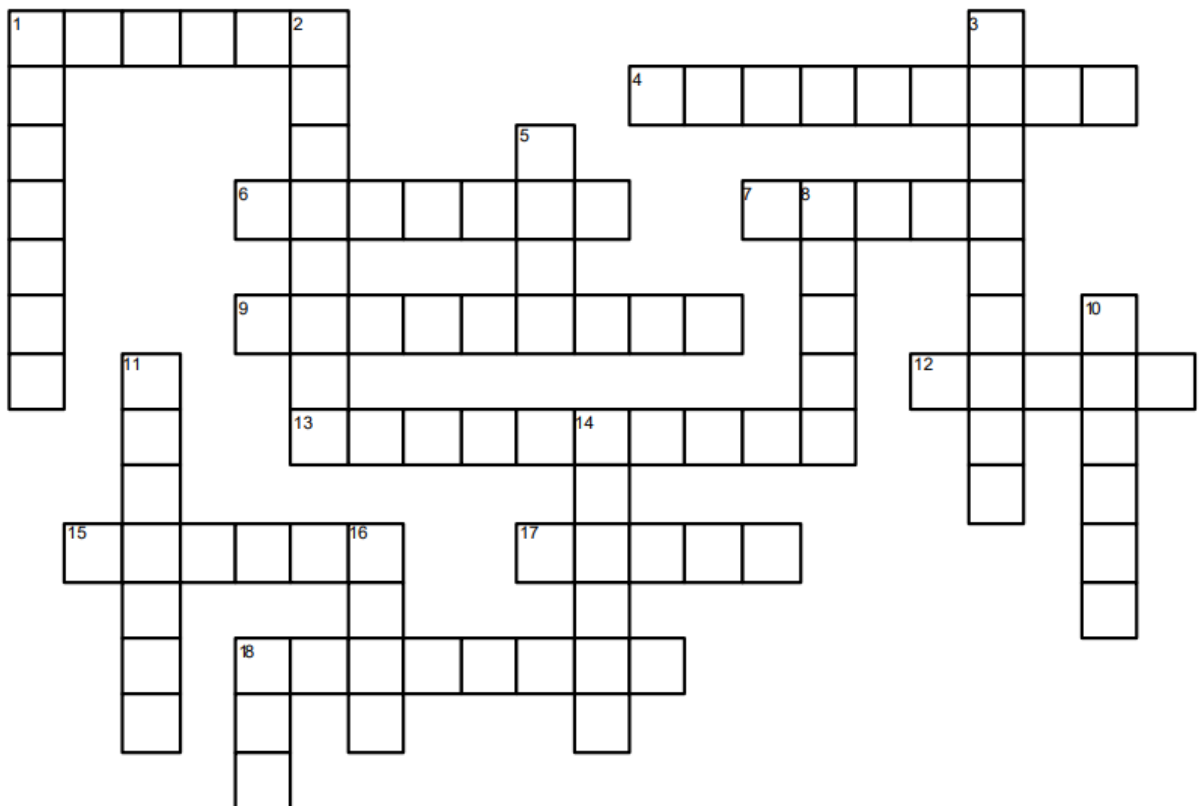
ARMS
MESSIAH
FASTING
CHILD
MARY
SIGHT
MASTER
JERUSALEM
PIERCE
HOLY
REDEMPTION
PARENTS
DEVOUT
ANNA
FAVOR
OFFER
AWAITING
BLESSED
GOD
PAIR
SWORD
LORD
MOSES
JESUS

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/6501043/>

JESUS PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE

Luke 2:21-40

Clues to Crossword Puzzle on the Next Page!



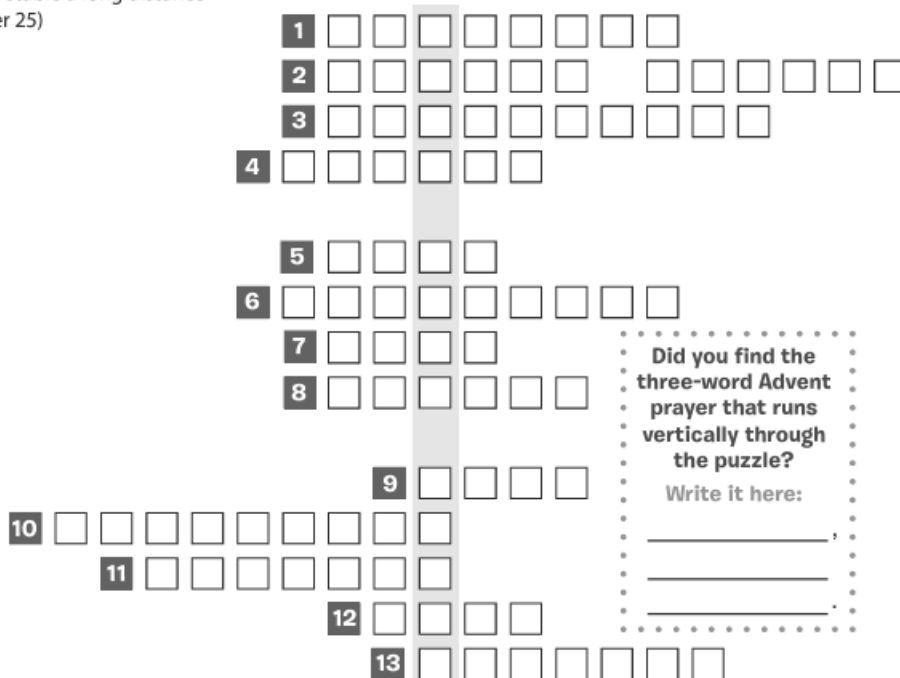
Saints of Advent and Christmas

Can you name these saints of Advent and Christmas? Put your answers in the puzzle below. When you finish, look for the words of an Advent prayer in the yellow column.

- I am the bishop best known for my generosity to children. (December 6)
- I was murdered in my cathedral in Canterbury, England, in 1170. (December 29)
- Mary was born without Original Sin. This is called the _____ Conception. (December 8)
- This is the first season of the Liturgical Year.
- What kind of family were Jesus, Mary, and Joseph? (December 31)
- We died when King Herod tried to kill Jesus. We are the Holy _____. (December 28)
- My child was born in a stable a long distance from home. (December 25)
- Advent begins on the Sunday closest to my feast day. (November 30)
- I am called "the beloved" apostle. (December 27)
- I appeared to an Aztec called Juan Diego. I am Our Lady of _____. (December 12)
- I was the most dedicated missionary since Saint Paul. My second name is Xavier. (December 3)
- I am an early martyr. My name comes from the Latin word for light, *lux*. (December 13)
- I am the first Christian martyr. (December 26)

Choose from these answers:

John
Immaculate
Lucy
Nicholas
Francis
Advent
Stephen
Thomas Becket
Guadalupe
Holy
Andrew
Innocents
Mary



Did you find the three-word Advent prayer that runs vertically through the puzzle?

Write it here:

ACROSS

- It was revealed to which man that he would see the Savior before he died? (Lk. 2:26)
- God's _____ through Jesus is for all people. (Lk. 2:30-32)
- The prophetess Anna was in the temple worshiping God with _____. (Lk. 2:37)
- What was the name given by the angel before he was conceived? (Lk. 2:21)
- What was the city Joseph and Mary took the baby Jesus to be presented? (Lk. 2:22)
- The law of Moses required a sacrifice of two _____. (Lk. 2:24)
- Who revealed to Simeon that he would see the Savior before he died? (Lk. 2:26) two words
- As Jesus grew up, the _____ of God was upon Him. (Lk. 2:40)
- As Jesus grew up, the _____ of God was upon Him. (Lk. 2:40)
- Simeon's hymn of praise speaks of Jesus as being a light to the _____. (Lk. 2:32)

DOWN

- Simeon identified himself as God's _____. (Lk. 2:29)
- A town in Galilee where Joseph and Mary returned after Jesus was presented in the Temple? (Lk. 2:39)
- According to the law of Moses, the _____ male is to be set aside or consecrated to the Lord. (Lk. 2:23)
- Who was the prophetess and a daughter of Phanuel, who never left the temple because she saw the child who would redeem Israel? (Lk. 2:36-38)
- What was the number of days after the birth of a male child when he was to be circumcised? (Lk. 2:21)
- The place where Joseph and Mary brought the baby Jesus to be presented to the Lord. (Lk. 2:27)
- The town of Nazareth was located in this region. (Lk. 2:39)
- The prophetess Anna was in the temple worshiping God with _____. (Lk. 2:37)
- Simeon prophesied that Jesus would be opposed, attacked or rejected by _____ people. (Lk. 2:34)
- Who sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world?

Clues to the cross-word puzzle on the previous page!

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

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

The Gospel at Home

Christmas and Holy Family Gospels: Luke 2:1-14 and Luke 2:22-40

Christmas celebrates God becoming one of us and one with us. Jesus comes as an infant, placed in the care of a struggling but loving family. The Feast of the Holy Family celebrates Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Together, the two Gospels reveal how our salvation came into the world. Try greeting each other by saying, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph each morning.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Promise (Grades K-1): Make a ceremony of setting up the simple Nativity scene from this week's lesson. Don't forget to add the Magi from next week's lesson. Before you set it up, share the Christmas story that is on the back of the booklet or tell the story in your own words. Ask your child to tell the story that was shared by the cat who lived in the stable on the first Christmas night.

Good News (Grades 2-3): The lesson for the week covers both Christmas and the Feast of the Holy Family. Your family will be celebrating all the joys and wonders of the Christmas season. In addition to family attendance at Christmas Mass and Mass on the Feast of the Holy Family (the Sunday after Christmas), set aside some time to talk about what Jesus' coming means to your family. Talk about who Simeon and Anna are.

Venture (Grades 4-6): Because Christmas can be busy it may be difficult to find time to share as a family. Make an extra effort to talk about the Christmas story as a family. Be sure your child understands that Jesus Christ is the whole reason there is a Christmas feast. Talk about the journey to Bethlehem, the vision of the angels, the shepherds at the manger, the great star, and the visit of the Magi, which is next week's lesson. Discuss this question from this week's lesson: What if Jesus were born today?

Visions (Grades 7-9): Your teen learned how to "be Christmas" throughout the Christmas break and into 2024 by being a prophet, an angel, a shepherd, a wise person, and a disciple. Ask your son or daughter to share the commitments he or she made in class. Talk about ways each of the members of your family can "be Christmas" for others. Discuss who Simeon and Anna are from the Gospel passage.

Pray Together

Pick one of the feast days during the Christmas season to attend Mass together as a family. Use the opportunity to pay a visit to the Nativity scene at your parish church and pray that you will always bring the Good News to others and reveal the love God has for all people.

Scan here for
parent resources
or visit gospelweeklies.com/family

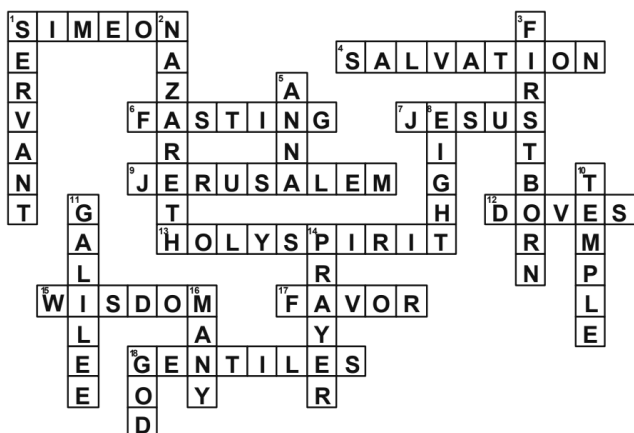


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Happy New Year!

Saints of Advent and Christmas

1-Nicholas; 2-Thomas Becket; 3-Immaculate; 4-Advent;
5-Holy; 6-Innocents; 7-Mary; 8-Andrew; 9-John;
10-Guadalupe; 11-Francis; 12-Lucy; 13-Stephen
Come, Lord Jesus.



New Virtual Learning Courses

Two 5-week courses are being offered through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF). These hybrid models are composed of both weekly live 2-hour zoom lectures as well as a rich variety of online course materials and discussion experiences. 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. For further information or to register, please contact course instructor, Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu, at rodicastoicoiuphd@gmail.com.

Ecclesiology: Pilgrim Church (Begins Week of January 15)

This is the second in a series of courses on the theology of the Church and builds on the course The Beginnings of the Church. We will continue our exploration of the Church and how, as a living organism, it both maintains its continuity with Jesus and reshapes its own self-understanding. We will examine questions of authority, community and governance and look at social and political changes in the Church through the 15th century. This will then aid our conversation as we look at Vatican II and its understanding of the episcopal and papal offices and the models of Church presented by the Council. 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. The Zoom sessions will be held on Mondays at 7pm for 5 weeks, beginning January 15th.

Introduction to Scripture (Begins Week of January 15)

If you are new to studying the Bible, have questions about reading the Bible, want to learn more about the Bible but don't know where to start; or, if you are working towards your certification for catechesis, this course is for you!! Learn what the Bible is and where it comes from, understand how Roman Catholics read the Bible and what the differences are between a Catholic Bible and a Protestant Bible, start to build your Bible vocabulary by learning about the synoptic Gospels, what is inspiration, and much more. 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. The Zoom sessions will be held on Wednesdays at 7 pm for 5 weeks beginning January 17th. This course is part of the course sequence for level one catechist certification.

Glass Recycling

St Agnes is very fortunate to have a partnership with Jim King so that we can offer glass recycling to our parishioners. You will find the black recycling bin behind the parish center at the north end of the parking lot. It is helpful if you secure your glass in bags before placing in the bin.

Spotlight on Ministry

Who does the Liturgy? The rituals that shape and change human life and the life of the world happen when people of faith come together. They just don't happen when we are alone. We bring to the rituals what we have: needs and gifts.

In the great rituals of our tradition, especially the Eucharist, the various elements—the Scriptures to be read, the Psalms to be sung, the Communion to be shared, the meeting, greeting and seating of parishioners by Hospitality—call for many gifts from many different people acting together. The important duties of the Altar Servers, young and old, assisting the presider throughout the Mass. The Mass Coordinators who make certain everything is in its place and ministers are present. The Art and Environment—who decorates the worship space so beautifully and ready the space for worship. There are so many volunteers behind the scenes.

Good ritual is not magic; it is not automatic. Thanks to all of you who make our celebrations here at St Agnes beautiful, uplifting and spiritual. **IT NEEDS WHAT ALL OF US TOGETHER CAN GIVE TO IT.**

Please consider joining one of our ministries at St Agnes. There're so many ways to get involved and grow in your faith. Adult/youth Altar Servers and Ministers for 5:30pm Mass desperately needed. Please contact me, Helen Harris, at liturgy@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

JCCM Food Pantry Current Needs

Your donations for the Jefferson County Community Ministries Food Pantry can be dropped off either at the church or the parish center. From there, our team of dedicated volunteers transports the donations to JCCM. Here are their current needs:

Canned meats (especially chicken)
Mac and Cheese
Soup (tomato and hearty soups)
Canned Beans
Rice
Jelly
Syrup
Pancake Mix
Crackers
Coffee (Instant and Ground)
Canned fruit
Canned pasta
Cooking Oil
Razors
Shampoo
Conditioner
Paper towels
Dish Soap
Laundry Detergent
Cat and Dog Food

IRA Charitable Gifts

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 2023:

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.

Catholic High School Survey

With Bishop Mark Brennan's blessing, we are exploring the possibility of expanding Saint Joseph School to include a high school (at least grades nine and 10). Please take part in this survey regarding the potential for a Catholic high school to service the educational needs of high school-aged students in Berkeley County and the surrounding area.

Because time is of the essence, please complete this survey as soon as possible by going to <https://forms.gle/nJ4t1BvZp3nkQMPC9> or scanning the QR code shown here and share it with anyone who might be interested. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.



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!

Homebound Ministry

For any parishioners who have needs (groceries, rides to doctors or pharmacies, etc,) our **HOMEBOUND MINISTRY** is willing to help. Please call Claire Williamson (304-876-1357), or Judy Lilga (301-432-2276).

Parish Financial Activity

Collections – Last Week

Offertory Collections	\$18,513
Monthly Mortgage Assistance	\$855
Total (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	\$19,368
Weekly Target (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	\$11,900
Total Collections Compared to Target	↑ +\$7,468

Tithe to help those in need \$1,851
(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 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. **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, 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.

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Come to me, all who are
weary and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.

—Matthew 11:28



Together in Holiness Marriage Conference

*Married and engaged couples are invited to the 3rd annual **Together in Holiness** marriage conference, presented by the St John Paul II Foundation and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, on **February 10, 2024 from 10:45 am - 6:00 pm at St. James Catholic Church in Charles Town, WV.** This 1-day conference will help you strengthen your relationship with your spouse and discover God's plan for your family. Registration: \$32/couple and \$5/child for on-site childcare. An Early Bird discount is available through December 11, 2023 as well as scholarships upon request. For more info, visit togetherinholiness.org/wheelingcharleston or email cameron@forlifeandfamily.org.*

St Joe's Seeks Pre-K Aide

St Joe's School is seeking a teacher's aide for a classroom of toddlers. Aides support teachers in planning and implementing daily programs. Job responsibilities include ensuring the daily care of every child by following all licensing guidelines and the school's standards of care. Aides also help maintain a fun and interactive environment that is clean and organized.

Job requirements include: Must be at least 21 years old and have a high school diploma, 2 years PK or elementary education experience preferred, ability to meet state licensing requirements, scheduling flexibility, certification in ACDS (Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist) preferred. If interested, please send a résumé to Katie MacKinnon, PK director, at kmackinnon@sjswwv.org.

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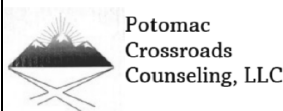
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