

# 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 ~ 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](mailto:Office@StAgnesShepherdstown.org)  
[www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org](http://www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org)

## **St. Agnes Chapel**

204 South Church Street, Shepherdstown

## **Sunday Readings**

Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17  
Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6  
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28  
Matthew 25:31-46

## Weekly Schedule

### Sunday Mass

Saturday, 5:30pm

Sunday, 8am

Sunday, 10:30am

### Weekday Mass

Monday & Wednesday at 11am

**Reconciliation:** Saturday, 4:30pm

**Parish Office:** Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm

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



## Mass Intentions

Sunday, 10:30am Mass for the intentions of  
**Maureen Maidhof**

## Remember in Prayer

Please pray daily for those serving in the Military, our veterans in recovery, and those recently ill especially Bill Seymour, Todd Hershey, Stef Hale (friend of Jackie Gore), Jim Keller, Joe Vernice, Maureen Maidhof, 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 December. 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 [jslilga8@gmail.com](mailto:jslilga8@gmail.com).

## Prayer Sponsors Needed

Calling all Prayer Sponsors!!!! We are looking for prayer sponsors. A prayer sponsor is someone who would like to show support and offer prayer for a child preparing to receive their First Reconciliation and 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.

Again, if you are interested in being a prayer sponsor, please call the parish center or contact Bill Donahue at [formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org](mailto:formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org). Thank you for praying for our youth during this time of formation.

Lena Abe

Emma Golden

Augustine Laverick

Roman Leuters

McKenna Pender

Dominic Scarano

Ian Walters

Frances Wilson

## Scripture Sharing

Our Scripture Sharing group continues to meet via Zoom (link found on website under events calendar) on Mondays at noon except for holidays. All are welcome!

## St Agnes Christmas Bazaar



### Raffle Items

Displayed in Narthex

\$2 each, 6 for \$5 or 15 for \$10

All proceeds benefit St. Agnes



### Christmas Bazaar

December 2nd

Parish Center, 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.

Craft Tables & Baked Goods  
Also serving, soup, cornbread  
& drinks to warm you  
after the parade



### JHS JROTC Collection for Shoe & Coat Fund

This weekend, St Agnes youth, members of Jefferson High School's Junior ROTC, will collect for the Jefferson County Schools Shoe & Coat Fund after each Mass. They will be outside the main church doors. This fund raises money for the purchase of clothing for less fortunate children in our county. 100% of the collection goes directly to buying clothes for them. A basic outfit costs roughly \$100, and this is not counting a good winter coat. Kids need more than one basic outfit, so the need is great. Cash or check only, and please make checks payable to Jefferson High School with Shoe & Coat fund in the memo line. This is their last collection.

Dear Parishioners,

We are in this period of discernment as a universal church before the upcoming meeting on the Synod in Rome October 2024. This is not idle time, but rather a time of open discussion in the local church—listening and prayerfully considering what came out of the report in October in the *A Synodal Church in Mission Synthesis Report*. You will see I have provided a link to this report below. I would like to point out one topic that is critically important, but possibly we could easily overlook. That is ecumenism. This is all about working for unity among the larger body of Christ represented in other denominations. Pope Francis made this intention central for the Synod by holding an ecumenical service at the beginning of the Synod. We in Shepherdstown work well together with the other churches, and I believe, in the diocese especially, we are prophetic in this call of working for Christian unity. I encourage you to try to participate in the ecumenical prayer opportunities we will be offering this Advent that are posted in the bulletin. Ecumenism starts with prayer in a world of war, division, and polarization; how important it is for us to come together in our diversity to pray for unity and work for peace.

One of the places in our church that ecumenism comes up is mixed marriages, whether married to a Christian, Jewish, Muslim, atheist, or agnostic. We live in a tradition that can honor and respect and learn from this diversity. I see this gift of diversity often in baptism

and First Communion. I always point out that as a church we don't proselytize which means force our faith on others. We also do not show triumphalism. Our liturgical rites make this clear. Even in the rites of Christian Initiation of Adults, we always affirm the body of Christ and church that people come from. I recently read a surprising statement by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger he made when he was head of Congregation of Doctrine of the Faith in 1993 where he emphasizes how important ecumenical dialogue is on the topic of Eucharist. This topic is part of discussion and discernment this year, but I give you this statement from Joseph Ratzinger, who would become Pope Benedict XVI, to think and reflect upon because it reminds us that we honor and respect the sacraments of our protestant brothers and sisters. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in a letter, writing to Lutheran Bavarian Bishop Johannes Hanselmann, "I count among the most important results of the ecumenical dialogues the insight that the issue of the eucharist cannot be narrowed to the problem of validity." "Even a theology of succession, which holds in the Catholic and Orthodox church, need not in any way deny the salvation granting presence of the Lord in a Lutheran Lord's supper."

Fr. Andy

[https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/assembly/synthesis/english/2023.10.28-ENG-Synthesis-Report\\_IMP.pdf](https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/assembly/synthesis/english/2023.10.28-ENG-Synthesis-Report_IMP.pdf)

### Longings of Advent: Praying for Peace and Justice An Ecumenical Contemplative Prayer Series

Each Wednesday in Advent, we will meet in the afternoon for prayer and contemplation, and, each Wednesday evening, we will meet for a form of evening prayer. We also have Taizé on the 3rd Sunday of Advent.

**December 6, 1pm:** An introduction to the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola led by Denis Woods  
St Agnes Catholic Church

**December 6, 7pm:** Evening Prayer  
St Peter's Lutheran Church

**December 13, 1pm:** Lectio Divina  
St Peter's Lutheran Church

**December 13, 7pm:** Evening Prayer  
St Peter's Lutheran Church

**December 17, 4pm:** Taizé  
St Agnes

**December 20, 1pm:** Contemplative Prayer Stations  
New Street Methodist Church

**December 20, 7pm:** Lessons and Carols  
New Street Methodist Church

These may be new experiences for some, but they are a great way to enter this beautiful season!

### Jesse Tree Project

This Advent season, St. Agnes will be working with twelve different agencies in our local community to provide gifts for young and older people that are less fortunate. Beginning on November 18, a Jesse Tree will be located in the Narthex of the church which will be decorated with gift tags. A red velvet trimmed basket will be located under the tree for envelope donations. If you are interested in participating, please take a tag or more. Each tag will have information about a suggested gift and may include information about the person. If you select a gift tag for a gift card, please bring cash or check and place your donation, along with the gift tag, in the basket or bring them to the parish center or place in the collection basket during Mass. St. Agnes volunteers will purchase the gift cards. Please indicate "**Jesse Tree GIFT**" on the memo line of the check or on the envelope if your offering is cash. If your tag is for a specific gift, please wrap it and attach the gift tag to the outside and bring it to the **Church or Parish Center** no later than **12:00 noon, Sunday, December 3**. Any questions? Please contact **Steve Bledsoe at 678-447-1343**. Many thanks in advance for your generosity!

## The Potholder Plus Sale Update!

The first weekend of the Kolofata Potholder Plus Fundraiser was a HUGE success! We sold out of potholders – all 60 of them – and made a big dent in all the other items on sale. We raised **\$665** and received \$135 in Kolofata donations. Our next and final sale dates are December 2 & 3. We'll have more potholders – but only 40 this weekend – and more of all the other items. Come early if you want to be sure to get a potholder. Items will be available starting at 4:30 on Saturday and after all the Masses on December 2 & 3. All items are still \$5 or \$10 and make great Christmas gifts.

100% of the proceeds are used for the educational expenses of the girls in Kolofata. This year we have a match of \$1 for every \$2 we raise which enables us to do even more. Here's your chance to buy lovely homemade gifts and help girls half a world away have a changed future. Thanks for your support!

## 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. If you are interested in learning more or joining the group, please call the office at 304-876-6436.

## Stormwater Management at St Agnes

It is no secret to anyone who has passed through town during a downpour that all of Shepherdstown has a stormwater management issue. The town has acquired a grant to pay for a "Shepherdstown Green Infrastructure Concept Plan" and have contracted with Downstream Strategies. They have decided to concentrate this initial phase on two areas, one of which is our church property. One of the yards across Back Alley from the church property is the low point for the entire area on either side of the alley and floods when there are heavy rains. Additionally, Shepherdstown is part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, so we have an opportunity here to improve the water quality downstream.

The goal for our property would be to enhance the stormwater management infrastructure St Agnes already has in place while being good stewards of the environment. A few of us met with Matt Pennington of Downstream Strategies in September to walk the property and toss around ideas. At the end of October, Matt presented his ideas for St Agnes to the town, the Chesapeake Bay Trust (who provided the grant money), a representative from the WV Department of Environmental Protection, and representatives of St Agnes. Of note is that there is much grant money available for these kinds of projects. We are in the process of digesting the information and will keep you posted.

## Fr Mat's Kolofata Fundraising Dinner Q&A & Our First Winner

We have our first winner! We'll announce the names of all the winners on December 3, with the total combined amount of all the winning bids. As promised, we won't announce the exact amount of this week's bid but will say that it was more than \$175. That doesn't mean that all the remaining bids need to top this – but then again, if you want to win think long and hard about your bid!

Six, two-person dinner packages will go to the highest bidders. Closed bidding starts on November 18 and ends on December 3. Minimum bid is \$100 per "package." One "early bird" Dinner Package will be awarded on November 19 from the bids received by that date. The remaining bids are included in the bidding for the remaining five dinner packages awarded to the highest bidders on December 3.

### How and where do I bid?

*There is a wooden locked box for bids located on the table where the Potholder+ items are paid for.*

*There are bidding forms in the pocket on the front of the box.*

### May I bid on more than one dinner package?

*You may bid on as many dinner packages (up to 6) as you wish. Just indicate on the bid form that this is a bid on "1<sup>st</sup> dinner package," "2<sup>nd</sup> dinner package," etc.*

### May I increase my bid on a dinner package that I have already bid on?

*Yes, you can increase your bid. Just note on the later bid you submit that it is an increased bid for the dinner package you previously bid on.*

### The date (February 4, 2024) and location (Parish Center) of the dinner are listed, but not the time. How come?

*Once the high bidders are determined, they and Fr. Mat will mutually agree on a time – afternoon or evening.*

### The Menu

*Beverages – wine, beer and non-alcoholic – and Hors d'oeuvres*

*Two Soups in a Bowl*

*Each guest may choose one of the following 3 entrees:*

*Charbonneau's Beef Bourguignon (meat)*

*Coquilles Saint Jacques (seafood)*

*Fennel and Black Olive Risotto*

*Risotto ai finacchi con olive nere (vegetarian)*

*Dessert*

*Coffee or Tea*

## 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).

## CFF, AFF, Youth Group & Family News

**CFF:** There are no CFF classes Thanksgiving weekend. Take this opportunity to be thankful for all the blessings each of us have. **Saturday December 2 is Decorating Fr. Andy's Tree!** We will be meeting in the parish center after the Shepherdstown Parade Festivities (12:30—1PM) to make decorations for and to decorate Fr. Andy's tree. This is the 2nd annual occurrence for the event! Come make decorations for the tree and enjoy snacks, music, and hot chocolate. Also occurring in the Parish Center on Dec. 2 is the Fall craft show. You might be able to get a little Christmas shopping done, too.

**Youth Group:** The Youth Group will not meet today. However, if the youth group would like to help to run the "Decorating Fr. Andy's Tree" event, please feel free to join. Also, Youth Group will meet Dec. 3rd to plan activities for December.

**ADULT Classes:** Adult Growing in Faith class will not meet today. Enjoy the holiday. Reflect on the things to be thankful for during the past year. Next week we begin our Advent season.

**Parents of Children in First Reconciliation:** The final parent meeting for First Reconciliation occurs next week, Dec. 3 at 9:15 AM in the parish center. At least one parent is asked to be there with your First Reconciliation child. **First Reconciliation will occur for the children, Saturday, December 9th at 4 PM in the Church.**

**RCIA and RCIC** will meet today at Noon in the Parish Center today.

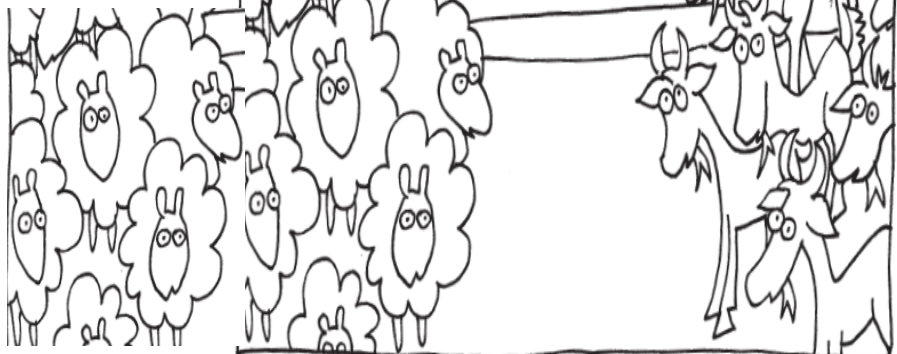
**Interested in being part of the Intergenerational Winter Musical?** Contact Joe Yates, our resident director, at [joeyates47@gmail.com](mailto:joeyates47@gmail.com). Rehearsals just started so it is not too late to join in. The shows will occur in February.

**Keep watching the 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.

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

You won't be able to find Our Youth Facebook Page any other way!



# THE YOUTH CORNER

This Week's Gospel:  
*Matthew 25: 31-46*

November 26, 2023

Thirty-Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time



# CROSS OFF THE LETTERS

Cross out every other letter. Write the remaining letters on the lines below to reveal the hidden message.

T Q H P E T S Q H U E L E S P Q  
G H O S D V W K I J L H L D K  
A E V E I P

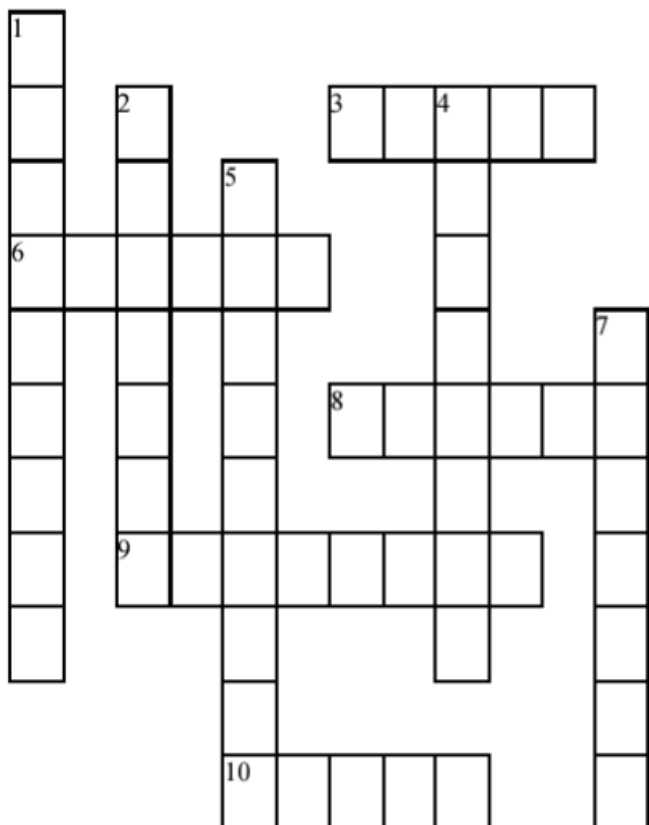
T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_!



## The Sheep and the Goats Matthew 25: 31-46



### Across

3. They will be on the left of the king.
6. Complete: "Lord, when did we see you \_\_\_\_\_ or thirsty or a stranger..."
8. The Son of Man will be seated on this.
9. The goats did not do this for those in need: \_\_\_\_\_ to them.
10. They will be on the right of the king.

### Down

1. The sheep are also called the \_\_\_\_\_
2. The sheep's inheritance.
4. The king calls the goats " \_\_\_\_\_ ".
5. Who did the sheep visit?
7. The goats did not \_\_\_\_\_ strangers.

listen

compliment

visit

forgive

give food

lend bike

clean

help

love

baby-sit

pull weeds

encourage

shovel snow

sweep

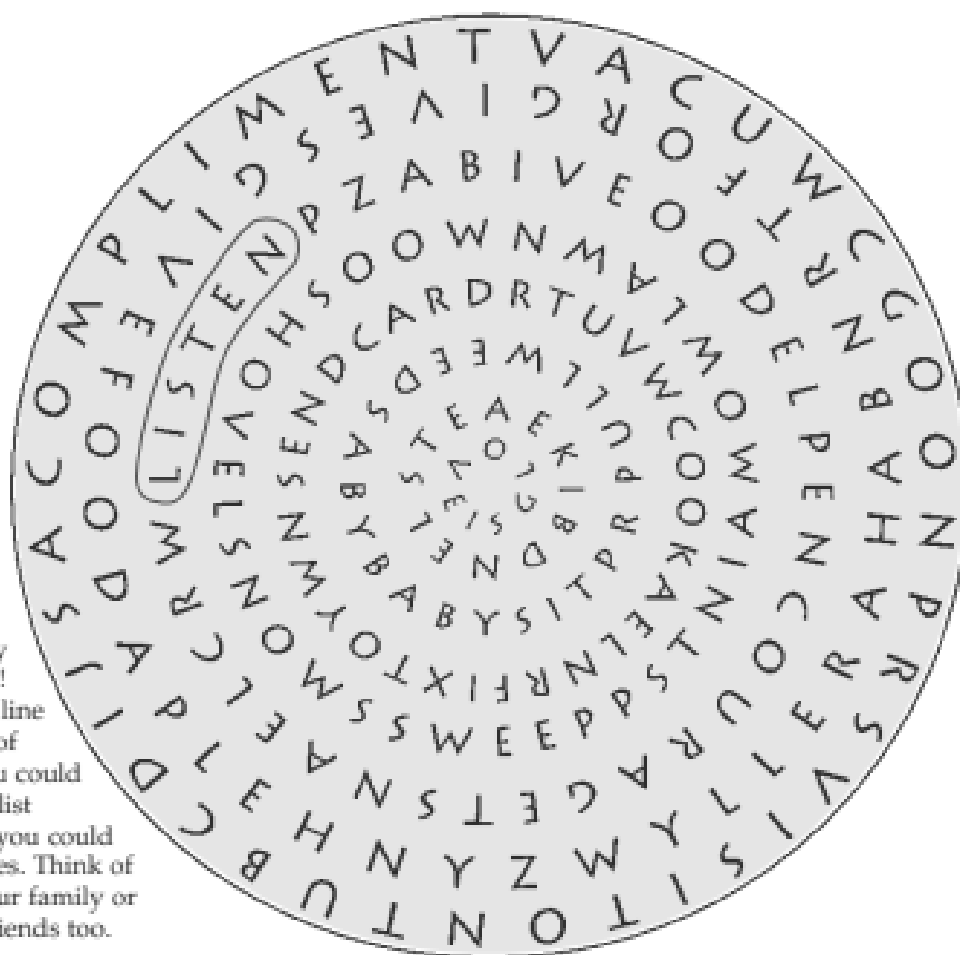
mow lawn

# Help is on the Way

There are lots of hurting people all around. Your acts of kindness can make a difference in their lives.

Find and circle all the acts of kindness in the word search. The words you are looking for are written along the edge of the page. One has been done to get you started. Some answers contain two words. Words run in circles—backward and forward.

Our good intentions don't mean much unless we get busy and do something! Use another color line to circle the "acts of kindness" that you could actually do. Then list people for whom you could do these kindnesses. Think of people outside your family or regular circle of friends too.



## The Gospel at Home

### This Sunday's Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

This Sunday, we hear Jesus' great parable of judgment. The parable clearly states that all will be judged on the Works of Mercy described in it. We are called to build God's reign on Earth and to share in that reign forever. But to do so, we need to care for the least of God's children and provide food and drink, clothing and shelter, comfort and companionship in order to live full lives. The requirement of God's kingdom is love—love for God that is shown in the way we treat one another.

### Exploring the Gospel Message

**Promise** (Grades K-1): Your child learned about the Works of Mercy. Remember that children at this age learn best by imitating the actions of those around them. The more the members of your family perform acts of kindness and generosity, the more those habits are formed in your child. Talk about how your family celebration of Thanksgiving involved sharing with people in need.

**Good News** (Grades 2-3): This week, your child learned that God judges us by how we show love to others, especially through the Works of Mercy. To help the children understand the Works of Mercy mentioned in the Gospel, they played a board game about doing the Works of Mercy. Have them explain the rules and play the game with your family. Talk about how to see Jesus in the people we meet.

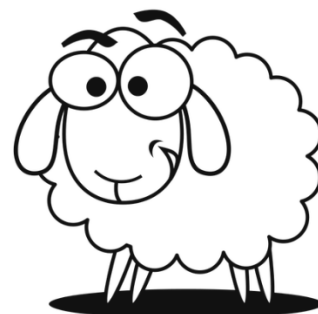
**Venture** (Grades 4-6): The last Sunday of the Church year is the Feast of Christ the King. The lesson of the feast shows that Christ's kingdom is very different. The recipe for entering the Kingdom for all eternity is to recognize Jesus in everyone we meet. Talk together about the Works of Mercy and how you as a family can recognize Jesus and reach out to those who are hungry or thirsty or who need our love and kindness.

**Visions** (Grades 7-9): This week, your young person learned some very specific examples of the works mentioned in Sunday's Gospel. He or she learned to look at Christ's kingship by finding him in others. Let your young person lead the family in looking for some specific ways you all perform the Works of Mercy—and make plans to do more. Ask your teen to share with the family how Catholic social teaching helps people live to serve others.

### Pray Together

In the Gospel, the people asked Jesus, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or naked or in prison?" When you complete your conversation about the Gospel lesson, pray in your own words to answer that question together. Conclude with this simple prayer: "Lord, whatever we do for people in need, we are doing for you."

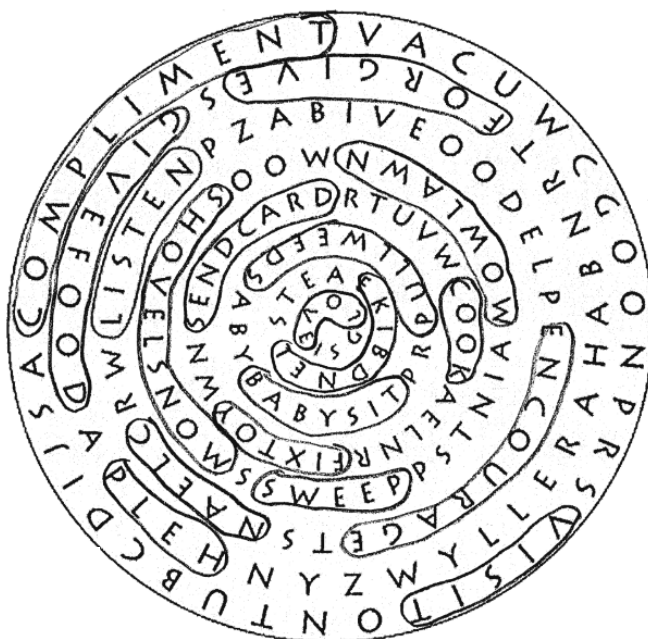
Scan here for  
parent resources  
or visit [gospelweeklies.com/family](http://gospelweeklies.com/family)



T H E S H E E P  
G O D W I L L  
K E E P!

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

**SOLUTIONS:**





## Advent 2023 (First Sunday of Advent December 3)

### **Advent Reconciliation/First Reconciliation**

Our Advent Communal Reconciliation will be on Saturday, December 9, at 4pm.

**Advent Reflection Books\*\*** have been carefully crafted to help you explore the depths of Scripture and deepen your relationship with Christ. They help us to spend some quiet time with the Lord each day. These Little Blue Books can be found in the Narthex. The books can also be downloaded onto your phone or e-reader. Check out their website at <https://littlebooks.org/seasonal-books/advent-christmas-season>.

### **At Home with the Word\*\***

This is your guide to a deeper understanding of the Sunday scriptures. It provides the readings for this liturgical year, along with insights from scripture scholars, and action steps. It also includes prayers, citations for weekday readings, and other resources for scripture study. You can pick up your copy of At Home with the Word in the Narthex or at the Parish Center.

### **Advent Wreaths & Candles\*\***

Advent wreaths and candles are available for purchase in the Narthex.

**\*\*A donation envelope is included with each item which can simply be placed in the offertory basket.**

## St Agnes Racial Justice Initiative News

In the gospel reading from Matthew for this final Sunday of the Church year, Jesus tells us where he may be found and loved: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me." In honesty and humility, we, as Catholics, need to acknowledge that, in regard to Black Catholic Americans and all Black Americans, the Church in America failed to live up to Jesus' words, supporting the institution of slavery well into the 19th century, and continuing segregationist and racially discriminatory practices well beyond that, with effects even to this day. The Church owned and sold slaves, and through their purchase and sale, at times separated Black husbands and wives from their spouses, Black fathers and mothers from their children, and Black sisters and brothers from each other. In spite of this many Black Catholics continued to be faithful to the Church, adhering ultimately to their faith in the Jesus who spoke the words cited above. Their enduring faith should inspire us all.

There is an enlightening video on this subject, entitled "Slavery, Catholic-family Separation, and the Catholic Church in the United States" sponsored by Georgetown University's Collaborative on Global Children's Issues available online at <https://bit.ly/45uZq2d>. It is part of Georgetown's own attempt to deal honestly and justly with its own slaveholding history.

## Shepherdstown Shares Toy and Gift Collection

It's that magical time again! Shepherdstown Shares is collecting toys and gifts for our clients and their families: Toys, hats, gloves, scarves, etc. Toy collection boxes can be found at Greentree Realty, Shepherdstown Public Library, St. Agnes Parish Center, Shepherdstown Dollar General, and the Shepherdstown Sweet Shop. Unwrapped toys can be dropped off until December 18th! Thanks! For additional information check out their Facebook page.

## Blessing of an Advent Wreath

The use of the Advent Wreath is a traditional practice which has found its place in the Church as well as in the home. The blessing of an Advent Wreath takes place on the First Sunday of Advent or on the evening before the First Sunday of Advent. When the blessing of the Advent Wreath is celebrated in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another member of the family.

All make the Sign of the Cross as the leader says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Response (R/.) Who made heaven and earth.

Then the Scripture, Isaiah 9: (lines 1-2 and 5-6) or Isaiah 63 (lines 16-17 & 19) or Isaiah 64 (lines 2-7) is read:

Reader: The word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

With hands joined, the leader says:

Lord our God,  
we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:  
he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,  
he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,  
he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God,  
let your blessing come upon us  
as we light the candles of this wreath.  
May the wreath and its light  
be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.  
May he come quickly and not delay.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
R/. Amen.

The blessing may conclude with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":

O come, desire of nations, bind in  
one the hearts of humankind;  
bid ev'ry sad division cease  
and be thyself our Prince of peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

## St Agnes on Social Media



## Cash Cards for Christmas Giving

There is a cash card for everyone on your Christmas gift list! While we don't routinely stock every possible gift card, we can order almost anything and have it here in time for Christmas. You can check out the list of available cards at <https://www.raiseright.com/brands>, and simply call the office with your order. You may order cards anytime, and they will be in within a week. In order to have your cards by Christmas, we will need to have your orders in no later than December 10th.

## What is the Purpose of VIRTUS Training and Why Is It Important?

**The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is requiring all volunteers to be VIRTUS trained.** This is part of the Diocese's Safe Environment policy that St. Agnes is required to follow. **All volunteers must be Virtus trained, even those who are not involved with the youth.** We must be in compliance by the end of 2023. **If you volunteer in any capacity at St Agnes, you must be Virtus trained.**

VIRTUS training is designed to help adults recognize the signs that indicate a child might be suffering abuse. It also helps adults by offering key points to help children, 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 is being abused. All this training is designed to help adults help children through a difficult situation.

Our Safe Environment Coordinator, Bill Donahue, can assist with verifying your training status and/or initiating your training. The training is 100% online. If technology is not your thing, he will be happy to help with that, too! For questions or concerns, contact Bill at 304-876-6436 or [formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org](mailto:formation@stagnesshepherdstown.org). Please help us achieve full compliance. The real purpose of the training is to keep our children safe, and that really does matter!

## Book Discussion Group

Our December Book Discussion Selection  
December 15, 2023 @ 11 in the Parish Center

A couple of years ago we decided that our December selection would be a "lighter" read, a book that would put us into the spirit of the Advent/Christmas season. This year's choice is not exactly "light" but it comes well recommended. Join us in reading *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan.

## 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](mailto:barbaramueller596@gmail.com).

## Community Safety Training

### FREE Community Safety Training Available

The Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency offers **Community CPR and Stop the Bleed training**: December 13. Class starts at 6 pm. To register and for more information go to : <https://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/county-agencies/icesa/community-cpr-first-aid>. Contact Michele Goldman with any questions, [mgoldman9797@gmail.com](mailto:mgoldman9797@gmail.com) or 540-539-0498.

## Parish Financial Activity

### Collections – Last Week

Offertory Collections	\$7,115
Monthly Mortgage Assistance	\$422
<b>Total</b> (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	<b>\$7,537</b>
<b>Weekly Target</b> (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	<b>\$11,900</b>
<b>Total Collections Compared to Target</b>	<b>↓ - \$4,363</b>

**Tithe to help those in need** \$712  
(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.

## CRISIS FOOD HOTLINE



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### 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.

For more information visit their website <https://sjsww.org/> under News & Announcements.

### Part-Time Math Interventionist Needed

SJS is seeking a great communicator with excellent interpersonal skills for the role of part-time middle school math interventionist teacher. The teacher will have solid classroom management skills, be responsible for developing learning activities and hands-on material, tending to individual student needs, and communicating regularly with co-teachers, administration and parents.

For more information visit their website <https://sjsww.org/> under News & Announcements.

### St Joe's Schools Seeks Both Full & Part-Time Teacher Aides

St Joe's School seeks both a full and part-time teacher aid for first grade. For more information on essential responsibilities, qualifications, and how to apply visit their website <https://sjsww.org/> under News & Announcements.

### Together in Holiness Marriage Conference

*Married and engaged couples are invited to the third annual **Together in Holiness** marriage conference on **February 10, 2024 from 10:45 am - 6:00 pm at St. James the Greater Catholic Church in Charles Town, WV.** This one-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 child-care. An Early Bird discount is available through December 11, 2023 as well as scholarships upon request. This conference is presented by the St. John Paul II Foundation and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. For more info, visit [togetherinholiness.org/wheelingcharleston](https://togetherinholiness.org/wheelingcharleston) or email [cameron@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:cameron@forlifeandfamily.org).*

### Evening of Prayer

As we close out this month dedicated to praying for those who have gone before us in life and in death, St. Joseph Holy Souls Group cordially invites you to an Evening of Prayer for the Faithful Departed on Monday, November 27, 2023, at 7pm, at Priest Field Center's All Souls Chapel (4030 Middleway Pike, Kearneysville, WV 25403). We will begin our prayers for the Holy Souls at 7 pm, then celebrate Mass. Fellowship and light refreshments will be offered afterward. If you would like, you may bring a small, framed picture of your loved one(s).



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