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Website: www.saintspeterandpaulionia.org
Email: parishoffice@ssppcatholic.com

December 8, 2019 Second Sunday of Advent

Pastor: Fr. Tom Brown
616-527-3610, ext. 12
616-755-1742 (evening)

Associate Pastor: Fr. Oscar Londoño, mxy
616-527-3610, ext. 14

Parish Office Hours
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Weekend Mass Schedule
Saturday: 4:00 p.m.
Sunday: 8 & 11:30 a.m., and 1 p.m. (Spanish)

Reconciliation Schedule
Wednesday: 6:00-6:45 p.m. (Spanish)
Saturday: 3:00-3:45 p.m. or by appointment

Daily Mass Schedule (subject to change)
(See inside cover for this week's Masses.)
Monday: 12:10 p.m. in the chapel
Tuesday: Communion Service, 7:30 a.m. in the chapel
Wednesday: 12:10 p.m. in the chapel
7:00 p.m. in the chapel (Spanish)
Thursday: 8:00 a.m. in the church (school days)
Friday: 7:30 a.m. in the chapel

Sacraments
For questions regarding Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, or any other sacrament, please contact our parish office.

Prayer Chain
If you have a prayer request for immediate need, please call 616-522-0279, or 616-527-0438.

The Immaculate Conception

December 8th is our Feast of the Immaculate Conception. However, because the 8th is also the 2nd Sunday of Advent, we will celebrate the Sunday Mass, not the feast day. Still, our feast day is important, so the Church has moved it to Monday the 9th. Masses will be at 9:00 a.m. at St. Edward, 12:10 p.m. at Saints Peter and Paul, 5:30 p.m. at Saints Peter and Paul, 7:00 p.m. at St. Edward, and a Spanish Mass at 7:00 p.m. at Saints Peter & Paul. Hopefully you will be able to make one of the Masses.

Although we celebrate this feast every year and have for many decades, I still come across people who insist it cannot be true. Mary, human like we are, needed a Savior. They see the dogma of the Immaculate Conception as, at best, meaning Mary had no need of Jesus, and, at worst, as raising Mary to the level of a goddess. First, Mary most emphatically is NOT a goddess. She was, is, and always will be human. She needed Jesus as her Savior. Indeed he IS her Savior. At the same time, it is an absolute truth of our faith that she was immaculately conceived and free from all sin.

How can this be? There are two ways of saving a person. For example, if I can't swim and fall into a deep pool, I need someone to rescue me or I am doomed. Likewise, if I were standing by the edge of the pool and lost my balance and was about to fall in, I also would need a savior. If someone were to grab me before I fell in, he or she would be my savior, even though I never ended up in the pool, never even got wet. Our Savior is Jesus Christ, who pulls us out of the pool of sin and death. Mary is the one Jesus rescued before she ever fell into the pool of sin.

Some object that this is impossible because Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was obviously born before he was. However, Jesus is not just fully man, but also fully God. Time is not an issue for God. For him, nothing is impossible. His saving death and resurrection did occur, in time, after Mary's birth, but God is not bound by time as we humans are. He applied the benefit of salvation, won by Christ, backwards in time to the moment of his mother's conception. He is indeed her Savior.

Our Church has believed, taught, and defended Mary's Immaculate Conception down through the ages. In declaring it to be a dogma of the faith in 1854, it did not become a truth. Truth is truth. The only change was in our recognition of it. One more interesting fact is that widespread rejection by some Christians of this truth of Mary's Immaculate Conception is a modern day detour from the road of truth. Martin Luther, the father of the Protestant Reformation, recognized and taught the Immaculate Conception of Mary!

This day is also our nation's patronal feast day. This means that the Church has chosen Mary as a role model, mentor, and helper for us. She who was declared by the angel to be "full of grace" is our mentor. She who responded in faith, "May it be done unto me according to your word," in submission to God's plan, is our role model. She who went to Jesus to ask his help for the bride and groom at the wedding feast of Cana is our helper as she prays for us.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

Fr. Tom

**One Lord, One Faith,
One Baptism**



**The
Week
Ahead...**

AH = Apostles' Hall **CH** = Church
CR = Cornerstone Room **PO** = Parish Office
SC = School **VR** = Veritas Room
BC = Basement Chapel **UP** = Upper Room

Sunday, December 8

9-11 a.m. Breakfast with Santa (AH)
9:15 a.m. RCIA (PO)
10:15 a.m. Faith Formation Classes (SC)
6:00 p.m. Advent Church Walk (begins here)

Monday, December 9—Immaculate Conception Holy Day

6:30 p.m. Scripture Study (PO)

Tuesday, December 10

6:30 p.m. English as a Second Language (AH)

Wednesday, December 11

7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (AH)

Thursday, December 12—Our Lady of Guadalupe

5:00 p.m. Life Fit (VR)
6:30 p.m. School Christmas Program (Theatre)
No ESL class today
8:00 p.m. Fiesta (AH) following 7 p.m. Misa

Friday, December 13

8:30 a.m. K of C Spelling Bee (SC)
2:15 p.m. Communion Service at SKLD

Saturday, December 14

10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Advent Retreat (AH)
8:30 a.m. Scriptural Rosary (CH)

Sunday, December 15

9:15 a.m. RCIA (PO)
10:15 a.m. Faith Formation classes (SC)
12:30 p.m. Sort food & pack baskets (PO)
3-5 p.m. Confessions (CH)



OUR PARISH OFFERING - Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, 2019

Adults	\$8,143.80
Students	1.71
Loose	461.10
Electronic Giving	4,712.00
Total	\$13,318.61
-5% Tithe	-665.93
Net Total	\$12,652.68

Budgeted Weekly: \$9,038.46

Surplus for the Week: \$4,280.15

Retirement Fund for Religious	\$255.00
Campaign for Human Development	\$115.00
Christmas Baskets	\$128.00

July 1, 2019-December 1, 2019 Fiscal YTD Offertory Collection

Year-to-Date: \$211,123.54
Budgeted Year-to-Date: \$207,884.58
Surplus Year-to-Date: \$3,238.96

Please pray for:

Grayson Edmonds	Maribeth Fritz	Richard Mackowiak
Jimmy Montgomery	Margo Burton	Chuck Stevens
Della Arbour	Ian Howe	Annette Krycinski
Vickie Lykins	Jo Wirtz	Barbara Bennett
Jeff Smejkal	Marian Gillette	Diane Wilson
Joe Drysdale	Maxine Fox	Nichole Munsell
Berta Martinez	Sherry Palmer	Jace Peterson
Rachel Cross	Phil Fox	Pat McKinstry
Colleen Goodman	Deb Jarous	Brian Lyons
Mike Swartout	James Schroeder	Dalilah Tubergen
Stan Krycinski	Sue Mitchell	Jean Barker
Jane Gazella	Joy Struble	Georgia Sibert
Fr. Joe Fix	Irene Kneale	John McKay
Pat Reinhardt	Margaret O'Malley	Ivan Stebbins
Tim Cook	Sarah Hill	Ian David Faist
Isaac Fletcher	Tom White	Deborah Kaminski
Cal Smith	Peyton Dennis	Sue Swinehart
Barbara Gibson	Glenna Miller	Mary Lou Greenhoe
Marilyn Rewa	Anne Lincoln	Larry Lafler
Margaret Stoj	Pete & Annie Ludwick	Larry Northrup
Alma Koch	Pam Coggan	Janet Beeman
		Marcia Cook

We continue to pray for all who need healing in body, mind, or spirit. If you would like to add or remove a name, please call the parish office. Be sure you have the consent of the person or a family member. Names will remain on the prayer list for three months and may then be removed. Requests may be renewed.

SS. Peter & Paul Parish Staff **(616) 527-3610**
 Permanent Deacon Zenon Cardenas 527-8942
 Secretary Cecilia Luke ext. 10
 Office Manager Adam Rewa ext. 11
 Pastoral Services Toni McKay ext. 13
 Music Director Whitney Crooks 527-3610
 Maintenance Dan Schmitz 527-3610
 Cemetery Sexton Aaren Perry 527-3610

SS. Peter and Paul School **(616) 527-3561**
www.ssppatholic.com
 Principal Jenny Leik ext. 18
 Secretary Diane Grummet ext. 23
 Pre-School Barb Voet ext. 20
 Daycare Audra Searfoss ext. 19

SS. Peter & Paul Parish - Pastoral Council
 Chris Brown, Chairman Yolanda Preston Karen Thelen
 Deb Campbell Alice Samani-Zozo Tim Wall
 David Fitzpatrick Deb Trierweiler
 Miguel Pilar (Youth Rep)

SS. Peter & Paul Parish - Finance Council
 Chris Christensen Matt Johnson Dave O'Mara
 Jane Hemenway John Klein Denise Peabody

SS. Peter & Paul School - Board of Education
 Tracey Bergeron Kevin Heimlein Kristi Wizorek
 Vanessa Booth Brian Siemen
 Nick Cusack Melissa Wall

Liturgical Ministers for Saturday & Sunday, December 14 & 15, 2019

Lector:	4:00 p.m. Mia Johnson	8:00 a.m. Amy Pung	11:30 a.m. Jamie Schafer
Ministers of Communion:	David & Madolyn Richardson, Dennis Hybarger	Barb Christensen, Veronica Meyer, Denise Peabody	Ron Drysdale, Darren Schafer, Volunteer
Altar Servers:	Adah Drown, Mylee Thelen	Sam Eppler, Connor Pung	Gracie Morgan, Emily Pilar
Hospitality:	Carol Cope, Mary Foy	Roger & Karen Thelen family, Eppler family	Chris & Pilya Christensen, Pamela Pontius

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VACUUMING: John & Kathy Curtin



The **Our Shepherds—Our Future** Capital Campaign has two main objectives: to build up a restricted fund for seminarian education, and to fully fund our priests' retirement. Our parish's targeted amount is \$570,000 over a 3-year period.

You should have received your capital campaign information packet in the mail. Please prayerfully consider what you can afford to donate over the next 3 years. You will probably receive a call from a fellow parishioner who can help to answer any questions you may have. (Feel free to call the parish office as well.) You may drop your pledge card in the Sunday collection, bring it to the parish office, or mail it to the diocese. We hope to have most of the pledge cards turned in before Christmas. Thank you for your support!

"Above all, let your love for one another be constant, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be mutually hospitable without complaining. As generous distributors of God's manifold grace, put your gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure you have received." (1 Peter 4:8-10)

The Witter and Crooks families would like to thank everyone, especially Fr. Tom, who attended or helped with the Baptism Mass for Nikolas and Ivan. We feel very blessed to be part of the SSPP family. Some of you broke the "no gifts" rule, but we do appreciate your generosity. A special thank you goes to the soup makers and anyone who brought something for the luncheon. It was a wonderful community celebration! Please keep our boys in prayer, that they will keep Christ in their life always.



Musical Notes from Whitney



SAVE THE DATE: December 16 is our annual parish Christmas caroling musical adventure! More details will come soon.

Choir Rehearsal will be in church on December 23 from 6-8:30 p.m. (Children practice from 6-6:45.)

Kids who would like to sing or play an instrument at 4 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve should plan on rehearsing on Sundays, Dec. 8, 15, & 22, from 10:50-11:20. Kids will also perform at our 12th Day of Christmas Concert on Jan. 5. If you want to participate but can't make the first rehearsal, please email wcrooks@ssppcatholic.com.

Our 2nd annual 12th Day of Christmas Concert will be on January 5. Come see what our awesome musicians have in store for this year's concert!

Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe

*God of glory,
to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary,
you changed Tepeyac's barren ground
into a fragrant garden of flowers.
Transform the rough places of our hearts
and of our world, so that our lives
may bear the imprint of Mary's faith and love.*
—from *Benedictine Daily Prayer*

Advent Church Walk—Please join us!

Sunday, December 8, is our community's annual Advent Church Walk. For 45 years, members of the community have walked from one downtown church to the next on the Second Sunday of Advent to hear scripture readings, sing hymns, and enjoy refreshments. The Walk will begin at SS. Peter and Paul at 6:00 p.m. and conclude at approximately 8:00 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church. Join us if you can!

Spiritual Adoption—Week 32

"I'm in the pink!" Your baby finally has enough fat to turn his or her skin from wrinkly red to a smooth, baby-soft pink—and to start looking chubby! He or she is up to 5 pounds now, about the size of a medium pumpkin. Immunities are developing, and fingernails have reached the tips of those tiny fingers. Please continue to ask God for his protection for this little bundle of joy.

Advent Confession Schedule:

Sunday, December 15 3:00—5:00 p.m.
Wednesdays, Dec. 11 & 18 11:00 a.m.—12 noon
Saturdays, Dec. 14 & 21 3:00—3:45 p.m.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

is celebrated this year on Monday, December 9. Masses that day will be at 12:10 p.m. & 5:30 p.m. in English, and at 7 p.m. in Spanish. All these Holy Day Masses will be held in the church.



There are MANY ways you can help and participate in this vital ministry! See the flyer at the entrance to church for more information. We have only a few families that still need to be adopted for Christmas. To adopt a family, please call our parish coordinator, Katherine Martin, at 616-308-5525.

Food collection

There are many people in our community who could use some extra help in making this a special time of celebration for their families. You are encouraged to offer donations of non-perishable food items, especially those listed below. You may place your donations at Mary's altar in the church through December 15. Delivery date for food totes and gifts for Adopt-a-Family is Saturday, December 21, from 10 a.m. to noon.

- Nov. 9/10 - beans, both canned and dried
- Nov. 16/17 - canned meat, fish, soup, stew
- Nov. 23/24 - cereal, pancake/muffin/bread mixes, rice/rice mixes
- Nov. 30/Dec. 1 - crackers, peanut butter, jelly, granola bars, honey, condiments
- Dec. 7/8 - Dried/canned pasta, pasta sauce, macaroni & cheese, noodle mixes
- Dec. 14/15 - Canned fruit, fruit cups, applesauce



We hope you picked up a copy of the bulletin last week, which included a calendar for the month of December. It highlights various activities around the parish in which you might like to participate. There are a few extra copies of the calendar on the table in the back of church. In addition, be sure to pick up a copy of "Jesus, the Coming One" from the table in the back of church or at the side entrance. It includes reflections by Pope Francis and Henri J. Nouwen for each day of Advent.

Advent Soup Luncheon

Wednesday, December 18, in the Parish Office following the 12:10 p.m. Mass

Come to Mass, and then share an Advent lunch with fellow parishioners! If you can donate soup or bread, please call Jackie Franz at 616-902-3590.



Breakfast with Santa

Join us for our annual pancake breakfast with Santa, hosted by the SS. Peter and Paul Family School Council. All are welcome!

When: Sunday, December 8, 9-11 a.m.

Where: Apostles Hall in our school

Cost: Your donation

Christmas Flower Memorials

The Christmas wreaths and poinsettias that adorn our church during the Christmas season are offered to honor the birth of Christ and to glorify God. You are invited to honor your loved ones, living or deceased, by offering a Christmas Flower Memorial. The names of those honored will be published in our parish bulletin during the Christmas season. Your donation will help to decorate the church not only at Christmas, but into the new year. The suggested donation is \$10 per name. To make an honorary or memorial offering, please pick up a request form near the main entrances to church. You can submit your request and donation in an envelope in the collection basket, or return to the parish office by December 15.



Real Presence: Christ With Us
An Advent Retreat

with presenter, **Fr. Tom Brown**

Saturday, December 14th

10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Apostles Hall
Lunch will be provided.

Opportunity to celebrate the
Sacrament of Reconciliation at 3 p.m.
and attend Mass at 4 p.m.

Please register by contacting the parish office.

In order to understand this subject of Real Presence properly, we need a sort of sixth sense. We need the spiritual gift of faith. Faith is a gift by which we come to know, with certainty, that the Eucharist is no longer bread. Rather, it is God. It is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of God the Son.

No amount of study, reasoning, or arguing will convince us of this truth. But faith will. In fact, faith will convince us so deeply that we can come to believe with our whole being. And this is a conviction and level of belief that we can never arrive at using only our five senses or reasoning ability.

If this is hard to believe then perhaps it's a sign that God wants to deepen your faith in the Eucharist. He wants you to meet His divine presence there in the depth of your soul. He wants you to know Him, love Him, adore Him and surrender your life to Him in this precious gift.

Christmas Card Exchange

Please drop your addressed greeting cards in the box in the back of church **from now through December**. Use first and last names when addressing the cards. Please do not place anything inside the cards/envelopes except your wishes. Cards in the mailbox will be sorted and placed in alphabetical order on the same table. Be sure to check each week for cards sent to you!

Our Parish Purpose Statement - Saints Peter & Paul Parish

Our Pastoral Council has been working intensely with Father Tom to develop a Pastoral Plan for our parish. Parish Pastoral Planning is a prayerful and participative process through which a parish characterizes itself as a particular community of faith by developing its own purpose statement, assessing its strengths and resources, as well as its limitations and needs. All of this leads to making recommendations to the pastor concerning establishment of priorities and goals, and devising ways to accomplish its mission. Parish Pastoral Planning helps to answer the questions: Who are we as a parish? What are we called to do? How are we best going to do it?

All of us are called to participate fully in the life and mission of the Church. The mission of the Church is rooted in the mission of Christ who commanded everyone - clergy, religious, and laity - to "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). From its earliest days the Church has responded to this mission in various ways depending upon the times and circumstances.

Creating this statement of our parish's purpose was a great challenge. The council could have simply quoted the parish purpose from the great commission of Matthew 28: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Jesus' commission rings loud, yet there is great need in the world for the Catholic faithful to be moved to a renewed zest for the gospel, both personally and in sharing it with others. By establishing a purpose statement for our parish, the council hopes to eliminate any question as to our parish's sacred purpose, and to ensure that the work of the parish, in all its forms, is directed toward this purpose.

Our parish purpose statement:

Our sacred purpose as Saints Peter and Paul Parish is to . . .

use our God-given gifts . . .

Every parishioner is called upon to exercise the divinely-inspired calling and gifts conferred in Baptism for a particular function in carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ.

to awaken faith, inspire discipleship, and trust in God's plan . . .

Being a member of Saints Peter & Paul Parish is not only aimed at one's personal sanctity. We are called to bring Christ out into the world, wherever our journey takes us, to affect the sanctity of all people. Each of us is to exude our Catholic faith as to rouse faith in others, to be an example of Christian discipleship, and to exemplify trust in God's divine plan in all things.

so that all who enter our doors may receive, believe, and share God's love.

Whether one "enters our doors" by simply coming into contact with a parish member, or physically passes through the doors of our church building, our purpose is the same: To stir the hearts of people, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to become open to receive all the Lord unconditionally offers to every person, to attain certainty in the Gospel message, and to share in God's love by embracing his love personally and becoming a vessel in bringing his love to others.



RECEIVE. BELIEVE. SHARE.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for always being present to us in the Church which you gave as the means for our salvation and that of the whole world. A Church through which life-giving and sustaining graces are poured into and over us by the holy Sacraments. A Church which is truly your "body" here on earth. We are members of that body, filled with the Holy Spirit and bountiful graces, and compelled to use the blessings, gifts, and favors which have been given us to build up that body.

Renew us with your grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we may give serious thought to how each of us can better use our time, talent, and treasure to build up your Church and to love better our brothers and sisters who make up your holy Church.

May the Parish of SS. Peter and Paul continue to be a community of believers who are willing to spend time learning about God's Word and will, about the words and works of Holy men and women who have loved Jesus and his Church, and may we then serve one another and our fellow human beings, in showing them God and his Holy Church.

This we pray, dear Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

The Stewardship Campaign Prayer was written by a Saints Peter and Paul Parishioner.

