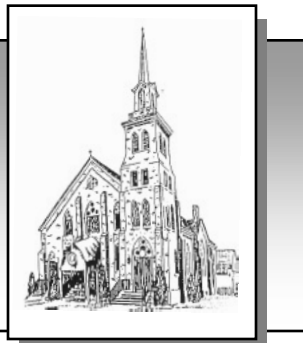


Saint Mary's Parish

A Welcoming Oasis of Love, Peace, and Outreach

The First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2006



Our Parish Office

32 East Morris Street
Bath, NY 14810
Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Other times by appointment
Office: 607-776-3327
Fax: 607-776-3409
Email: bstmaryc@dor.org

Our Parish Staff

Deacon Ray Defendorf

Pastoral Administrator
E-mail: RDefendorf@DOR.org

Rev. Peter Anglaere

Regional Parish Priest
Fr. John Wydeven

Weekend Assistance

Deacon Ed Wight

Parish Deacon

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Parish Bookkeeper/Secretary

E-Mail: BBailey@DOR.org

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Parish Secretary/Bulletin Editor

E-Mail: MFerrara@DOR.org

Betty Gerych

Choir and Bell Choir

Bill Grimmer

Music and Liturgy

E-mail: Williamgrimmer@hotmail.com

Karen Grimmer

Parish Life/Social Ministry Coord.

E-mail: Kgrimmer@DOR.org

George Hoffman

Custodian

Mary Carol Wall

Youth Ministry and

Religious Education

Coordinator - 776-6944

E-Mail: Avocawals@usadatanet.net

Our Parish Council

William MacNamara

Chairperson

Rosemary States

Vice-Chairperson

Mary McConnell

Secretary

Maryann Aston

Jim Gallagher

Sean McKinley

Barbara Perry

Kathy Warren



Scripture REFLECTIONS

First Sunday of Advent



Every minute of every day since July 1, 1937, they have been there. The Old Guard, as they are known, crisply and cleanly march twenty-one steps, turn and face the seamless granite of the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery, and with another turn, march the twenty-one steps back. The last line of the Sentinel's Creed reads: "Surrounded by well meaning crowds by day, alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance."

Be vigilant at all times. Today's Gospel reading from the Gospel of Luke foretells the days when humankind will be witness to many inexplicable signs, both from the sky and here on Earth. But even though the events of these days will be unlike any we have ever witnessed, we are to stand tall, ever prayerful, ever vigilant, in anticipation of the coming of the Son of Man.

Within the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we are taught that prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort. Prayer is, in fact, a battle against the possessive and dominating self, which requires a strong vigilance on our part (CCC 2725, 2730). Though we face many distractions in our lives, distractions which interfere with



our prayer lives, to be truly vigilant we need only turn to our hearts and resolutely offer them to God for purification. With the light of faith, we look beyond the trials of this earthly life to the glory of our redemption.

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St. Mary's Giving Tree is set up in the front of the church. These gifts are to help our areas working poor with clothing and household items that are needed. Please take a tag from the

tree and return a wrapped gift to the church by Sunday, December 10th. Please attach the tag to the gift so we know who it's going to. Gifts can be dropped off in the back of the church, or in the rectory office. Your stewardship is greatly appreciated to help these families have a better Christmas.

REMINDER: Friday, December 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation.
VIGIL MASS - THURSDAY at 5:00 p.m.
HOLY DAY MASS - FRIDAY at 12:10 p.m.

Mass/Communion/Reconciliation Schedule

Parish Celebrations of the Lord's Day

Saturday - 4:00 p.m. ♦ Sunday - 9:00 a.m.

Weekday Masses:

Tuesday ♦ Wednesday ♦ Thursday ♦ Friday - 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday - 5:00 p.m.

Scripture/Communion Services
Monday - 9:00 a.m.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation
1st and 3rd Saturdays at 3:30 p.m.



A member of the
**Central Steuben
Catholic Parishes**
Diocese of Rochester



LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- SUNDAY** December 3, First Sunday of Advent
9:00 a.m. In Memory, Janet Beyea
By Mary Fisher
- MONDAY** December 4, Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m. Communion Service
- TUESDAY** December 5, Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m. In Memory, Dennis Holzer
By his father, Cy Holzer
- WEDNESDAY** December 6, Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m. *To schedule this Mass as a memorial for your loved on. Please call - 776-3327*
5:00 p.m. For the parishioners and benefactors of St. Mary's
- THURSDAY** December 7, Holy Day Vigil Mass
5:00 p.m. In Memory, Paul Kimball
By Marcia Shaver
- FRIDAY** December 8, Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
12:10 p.m. In Memory, Jim Harvey & Pete Luta
By Agnes and Family
- SATURDAY** December 9, Advent Weekday
4:00 p.m. In Memory, Joyce McUmber
By her sisters Pat and Amy
- SUNDAY** December 10, Second Sunday of Advent
9:00 a.m. In Memory, Jeff Briggs
By Agnes Harvey and Janice Luta

There are many Mass intentions available in the upcoming months. (Stipend is \$10). Please call the office to schedule.



SAINT MARY'S PARISH "A Parish of Very Good Stewards"

Thank you for - Making Parish a Priority!
November 25/26 2006



Liturgical Assembly Schedule

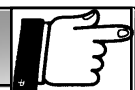
Dec. 9- Sat. 4:00 p.m. - Willing Hearts
Dec. 10- Sun. 9:00 a.m. - Precious Blood I
To form or join an assembly, call 776-3327



YOUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS

Upcoming Second Collections

December 2/3 - Catholic University
December 9/10 - Insurance
December 16/17 - Can & Quarter



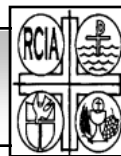
PARISH LIFE CALENDAR

- SUNDAY** December 3
10:00 a.m. Coffee Hour hosted by the Boyd Family
10:30 a.m. Religious Education
1:00 p.m. Sunday Supper, O'Malley Hall
7:00 p.m. AA, Room 101
7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Taize Prayer - Church
- MONDAY** December 4
6:00 p.m. Bell Choir - Church
7:15 p.m. Choir Practice - Church
- TUESDAY** December 5
6:00 p.m. Quota Club Christmas Party, O'Malley Hall
6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts, Room 101
6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts, Room 202
7:00 p.m. Finance Council, Room 205
7:30 p.m. Charismatic Prayer Group Rectory
- WEDNESDAY** December 6
7:00 p.m. RCIA, Rectory Dining Room
- THURSDAY** December 7
5:30 p.m. Weight Watchers, O'Malley Hall
6:00 p.m. Scrap booking, Room 101
6:30 p.m. Bath Rotary Christmas Dinner
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts, Room 202/203
- FRIDAY** December 8
- SATURDAY** December 9
8:00 a.m. North East Elite Pancake Breakfast, Hall
- SUNDAY** December 10
10:00 a.m. Coffee Hour hosted by the Czajkowski,
Martin and Russell Families
Religious Education
10:30 a.m. Religious Education



Happy Birthday To You!

12/04 Edward Kuhn	12/08 Mitchell Muller
12/06 Felicia Clayton	12/08 James Galvin
12/07 Jeanne Glass	12/09 Katherine Fiedler
12/08 Phillip Maro	12/09 Joseph Kish



Becoming a Roman Catholic

Next RCIA Session - December 6

This Sunday at the 9 a.m. Mass, we will introduce our Candidates and Catechumen and ritually request your acceptance of them into our parish community.

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) welcomes those who have not been baptized and baptized Christians who wish to become full members of the Catholic Church to a Journey of Faith. RCIA Sessions will take place on Wednesday evenings through Easter. Our next Inquiry Session is Wednesday, December 6 at 7 p.m. in the Church. Our topic will be "Understanding The Mass"

There is still time to join the RCIA process. For more information, please contact Deacon Ray: 776-3327.



Sent to Serve

Notes from Deacon Ray Defendorf

Advent - Let's take a Hiatus and Enjoy the Season

I am writing this column for the First Sunday of Advent on the Friday after Thanksgiving. It's a "slug day" for me - one of those rare days when there is nothing on the calendar that requires me to even get out of bed. I did get out of bed of course - and only an hour or so later than usual. This day is known by merchants as Black Friday—the busiest shopping day of the year. But if my past history is any indication, I won't start shopping until a few days before Christmas.

As is often on my "slug days" I am in fact at work, though not in the parish office. Instead, I'm ensconced in my oversized easy chair, "office" - laptop computer open and connected. The need to address parish obligations, including writing this column – have once again taken precedence over relaxation.

In the background, a CNN newscasters repeat over and over the breaking news of the day: another day of horrific bloodshed in Iraq, a former Russian spy dies of radiation poisoning, a disgruntled gunman terrorizes the staff of a Miami newspaper.

There is so much to be worried about. So much chaos in our troubled world. O Come O Come Emanuel! Come Prince of Peace!

My worries pale those of so many others. Mine involve the burdens of the leadership of a wonderful parish during an extended time of uncertainty. First among these burdens is finding a way to bring closure to our church renovation trial and permanently bring our choir from the loft it has occupied for generations.

Since long before my coming to St. Mary's, parish liturgists and choir members have advocated this move for what I believe to be compelling liturgical and safety reasons. Church documents supporting placing the choir in a position of leadership within the assembly of worshipers have been distributed and discussed for over five years. The concerns of aging choir members who are no longer able to climb the narrow steep steps to the loft and others who are concerned by the potential danger and difficulty of removing a sick or injured person down those narrow steps have been communicated and discussed at Town Meetings, Parish Discussions, and in this column more times than I can count.

Throughout this trial period, I have requested your assistance in finding a place for our choir within the main body of the church. A few parishioners responded to my request in writing. Some were supportive of our attempt to move the sanctuary area (altar, ambo and chair) forward and the choir into the space vacated by the move.

Other signed letters and comments expressed personal concern for the impact the move would have on their worship experience during Mass.

Within the last few weeks, however, I've received a few unsigned written comments that have been far different and quite troubling to me. One expressed dismay that we have "ruined her church" and another expressed frustration at the way that I've "dragged this out even though the final result was long pre-determined."

At every stage of this process, beginning way back in May when we held our first Town Meeting on the topic, I have tried to communicate openly, continually and transparently my desire that a solution could be reached through prayerful, constructive and respectful dialogue. Within the constraints imposed by the architecture of

our church we have tried to address every issue brought to us. We have experimented with the placement of the ambo, presidential chair and altar to assure that these places of essential liturgical importance are visible to even those worshipers who choose seats in the rear of the church.

Two week's ago, following requests by three parishioners who attended their meeting, the parish council recommended that the trial period be extended to provide opportunities for other options to be explored. In deference to the reflective season of Advent, I have decided to keep the latest configuration (with minor alterations to the sanctuary platforms) in place for the Advent and Christmas liturgical seasons. When Ordinary times returns, I will again engage the Parish Council and Renovation Committee in a reconsideration of other options.

It is my prayer, that this hiatus will allow us all to concentrate on the prayerful observance of Advent and Christmas. May the peace of Christ live in our hearts and minds and bring us peace.

Have a prayerful Advent. Serve one another well.

PS: On Monday, aware that the busy-ness and stress of the last few weeks was "getting to my spirit" - I made my day off a mini prayer retreat. The day included a visit with my Spiritual Director, a few hours of prayer and letter writing at Mount Savior Monastery, and a visit with infant Lillian Elizabeth Stuart at the Arnot Ogden Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Lillian, the daughter of parishioners Joshua and Amanda Stuart has grown from her birth weight of 1.5 lbs. to her current weight of about 8 lbs. and will hopefully be heading home for the first time very soon. The day refreshed my spirit and perspective. God is good!

Church Name: St. Mary's Church

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File Name: 06-0323

Phone: 607-776-3327

Contact/Editor: Michele Ferrara or Deacon Ray Defendorf