



Hope

So too, you also
must be prepared,
for at an hour
you do not expect,
the Son of Man
will come.

Matthew 24:44

First Sunday of Advent



St. Gertrude Parish

6543 Miami Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45243



MISSION STATEMENT

St. Gertrude is a Roman Catholic Parish in the Dominican heritage of prayer, preaching, and teaching. Under our Lady's mantle, gathered as the Body of Christ, we celebrate Him in Sacraments, Sacred Scripture and in Catholic education. Serving our brothers and sisters in the New Evangelization, we seek to grow in love as we journey with Jesus to God the Father.

PARISH STAFF

Dominican Friars Pastor: Rev. André-Joseph LaCasse, O.P.
 Prior: Very Rev. Allen Moran, O.P.

Parochial Vicars Rev. Gabriel Torretta, O.P. Rev. Clement Dickie, O.P.

In Residence Rev. Paul J. Keller, O.P. Rev. Joseph Alobaidi, O.P.
 Rev. Giles Dimock, O.P. Rev. Michael Mary Dosch, O.P. (Novice Master)

Parish Office/561-5954 (parishoffice@stgertrude.org)

Receptionists Susan Kane and Teri Forlini

Business Office Mike Muse /ext 2102

Asst. Business Mgr. & Safe Environ./Child Protection Mary Tappel/ext 2103

Music Director Catherine Fishlock/ext 2116

Bulletin Coordinator (bulletin@stgertrude.org) Gayle Bibisi

Office of Evangelization:

Director of Adult Evangelization/Pastoral Services Lawain McNeil/ext 1123

Director of Primary Youth Evangelization Shari Siebert/561-8369

Director of Jr. High Youth Evangelization Bryan Wells/ext 2110

Director of High School Youth Evangelization Megan Dickert/ext 2109

Wedding/Bereavement Coordinator AnnaMaria Spurgin/ext 1124

St. Gertrude School/561-8020 (stgertrudesch.org) Sr. Mary Aquinas, O.P.

Vocation Directors

Archdiocese of Cincinnati Fr. Dan Schmittmeyer/421-3131

Dominican Friars Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P., DominicanFriars.org

Nashville Dominican Sisters Sr. Peter Marie, O.P./615-256-5486

PARISH MINISTRIES

Athletic Boosters/Sports Leaders Marc Gerwel/774-7779

Baptism Coordinators Mike & Mary Clare Peck/497-4783

Benedictine Oblate Clyde & Pat Dorn/791-0988

Catholic Men's Fellowship Chris Nachtrab/312-7841

Choir Catherine Fishlock/561-5954

Cincinnati Frassati Fellowship John Dumas IV/contact@cincinnatiassati.com

Circle of Prayer Barbara Rose/prayercirclesg@gmail.com

Communion to the Sick Judy Hartmann/984-8003

Dominican Laity: Bishop Fenwick Jonathan Ring/ringjp@gmail.com

Dominican Laity: Our Lady of Peace Patty Connelly/793-2246

Ex. Ministers of Holy Communion Rob Lockwood/319-0543

Familia Anita Pappalardo/248-8237

Ferro Acuitur Rick Sammons/675-1122

Finance Council Tim Paulin/248-0441

Gertie Moms Leslie Stahlberger/250-8480/jstahlbergerfam@att.net

Holy Family Prayer Group Malissa Frohlich/519-5197

Knights of Columbus Tom Hahn/702-9354

Ladies of Charity Jean Wilkinson/498-5085

Lectors Casey Huber/675-7375

Little Flower Library Susan Santos/504-0205

Mater Filius Queen City Maria Resendiz/260-8055

Natural Family Planning Dave & Ann Stein/561-5751

Parent/Teacher Organization Sarah Holt/677-2122

Parish Health Jeanne Palcic/317-4123

Pastoral Council Dwight Stephenson/351-1769

Perpetual Adoration 561-5954, ext. 2136

Prayer Ministry for the Dying Pat Collins/265-1897

R.C.I.A. Rev. Gabriel Torretta, O.P./561-5954

Regina Veritatis Healing Prayer Cornelia Mechley/340-4586

Respect Life Debbie Graham/984-4766

Rosary Makers Larry Ball/646-8523

School Advisory Council Leah Naumann/260-5441

Scouts Jim Pappalardo/248-8237

Soup Kitchen Andy Cordier/248-1005

St. Vincent de Paul Larry Ball/646-8523

Stewardship Committee Brad Schueler/386-8935

Ushers Douglas Postler/791-6298

Website Sal Forlini/831-9265

Women's Group Anne Marie Schmidt/859-486-3183

Pregnancy Center East (for all pregnancy needs) 321-3100

MASS, CONFESSION AND DEVOTION SCHEDULE

Monday, December 4, Weekday

7:00am Susan Reckers
 8:00am Barbara Carrillo/ Elvira Carrillo
 11:30am Deceased Members of the Order of Friars Preachers
 12:00pm Midday Prayer
 7:00pm Healing Rosary

Tuesday, December 5, Weekday

7:00am Barry Doyle/ Marylyn & Ray Clark
 8:00am Patsy Scalo/ Jim & Darla Wainscott
 11:30am Joseph Pope/ Kathy Balbach
 12:00pm Midday Prayer

Wednesday, December 6, Weekday

7:00am Catherine Abele/ Marifran & Bill Dirkes
 8:00am Richard Hill/ Anne Collins
 11:30am Bill Keating, Jr./ Robert Gerwin
 12:00pm Midday Prayer
 7:00pm Vocations, Holy Hour, Confessions, & Benediction

Thursday, December 7,

7:00am Daniel La Casse/ Mike & Ellie Kenny
 8:00am Intentions of Don & Joan Schmitt/ Dan & Debbie Staresinic
 11:30am Edward Griesser/ Dennis Schone
 12:00pm Midday Prayer
 7:30pm Jeanne Koritansky/ Ed & Catherine Geiser

Friday, December 8

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin

7:00am Marjorie Schirmer/ Joe Schirmer
 8:00am Margaret Mary Holt/ Andy & Sarah Holt
 11:30am Mary Grace Schlie/ Nancy De Brunner
 12:00pm Midday Prayer
 1:45pm School Mass
 7:30pm For the people of the United States

Saturday, December 9, Weekday

8:00am Marilyn Clavenna/ Linda & Kim Burke
 10:30am Confessions
 11:30am Intentions of Judy Bayer/ Tartaron Family
 3:30pm Confessions

Dec. 10-11 Second Sunday of Advent

Sat. 4:30pm Meg Crall/ Shari Siebert & Rel. Ed Program
 Sun. 8:00am People of St. Gertrude, Living and Deceased
 9:30am Eleanor Kohus/ John & Hilda Bough
 11:00am Thomas Moehringer/ Linda & Tim Armstrong
 12:30pm Janet Tappel/ Mary & Jim Tappel
 6:00pm Rocco Izzo/ Elaine & Jeff Parker

BULLETIN DEADLINE
December 17 bulletin • Wednesday, December 6 Noon
 Please submit your Mass announcements
 and bulletin articles to: bulletin@stgertrude.org
 6543 Miami Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45243
 (513) 561-5954 • FAX (513) 561-7184 • www.stgertrude.org

First Sunday of Advent

I wish all of you a blessed beginning of the Season of Advent. We have begun a new liturgical year. It is with prayer and hope that God will continue to bless our parish as we embark on another year with Jesus Christ.



I am not here this weekend. I am in Maine checking on my parents and will return on Dec. 9th. This is my last trip to Maine before winter sets in. I do not plan on going to Maine during the winter unless I have to go up for an emergency or if my parents pass away. So many of you continue to pray and ask about my parents. Thank you. I am amazed at their resilience, especially my mom with her advanced Alzheimer disease. I will again pick up my dad and we will spend time at our family camp in Poland, ME. Lots of leaves to pick up, wood to stack and keep the camp warm, and hopefully a late Thanksgiving meal with the family.

The word Advent is from the Latin *adventus* for "coming" and is associated with the four weeks of preparations for Christmas. Advent always contains four Sundays, beginning on the Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, (November 30) and continuing until December 24. It blends together a penitential spirit, very similar to Lent, a liturgical theme of preparation for the Second and Final Coming of the Lord, called the Parousia, and a joyful theme of getting ready for the Bethlehem event. Since the 900s Advent has been considered the beginning of the Church year. This does not mean that Advent is the most is the most important time of the year. Easter has always had this honor. The traditional color of Advent is purple or violet which symbolizes the penitential spirit. Religious traditions associated with Advent express all these themes.

Customarily the Advent Wreath is constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which are inserted four Advent candles. According to tradition, three of the candles are violet and the fourth is rose. The rose candle is lit the third Sunday of Advent, for this color anticipates and symbolizes the Christmas joy announced in the first word of the Entrance Antiphon: "Rejoice" (Latin, *Gaudete*). For this reason the Third Sunday is also called *Gaudete Sunday*, and rose color vestments are permitted.

The Advent Wreath represents the long time when people lived in spiritual darkness, waiting for the coming of the Messiah, the Light of the world. Each year in Advent people wait once again in darkness for the coming of the Lord, His historical coming in the mystery of Bethlehem, His final coming at the end of time, and His special coming in every moment of grace.

During Advent, family and friends can gather around the Advent Wreath lighting the appropriate candle(s), read from daily Advent meditation and sing songs.

As we begin the season of Advent, we especially welcome our RCIA Catechumens and Candidates in the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome at the 9:30am Mass this weekend. Please pray for all eighteen of them as they continue their journey into the Catholic Faith.

This coming Friday, Dec. 8th is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Our Lady under this title is the Patroness of Our Country, and it is a Holy Day of Obligation for all Catholics. Please see the schedule of Masses for the Solemnity.



"Hail Mary, full of grace." For thousands of centuries, millions of times per day the Virgin Mary is greeted by the faithful with the greeting of the Archangel. We learn from the words of the Archangel Gabriel that the fullness of the mystery of God's grace was realized in Holy Mary. St Paul the Apostle teaches us that the Father made all fullness dwell in His Incarnate Son which overflows from Christ's head and spills out on His Mystical Body that is the Church. Before descending in Body, Christ's fullness was spread in a unique and unrepeatable way on Mary, predestined from eternity to be the Mother of God.

Significantly Sacred Scripture recalls the figure of Eve, the mother of all the living. The Fathers of the Church saw in Mary, the new Eve that unties the knot bound by the first woman. The knot of disobedience tied by Eve, was untied by the obedience of Mary. As Eve was created in purity and integrity, also the new Eve was miraculously preserved from the contamination of original sin because she had to give humanity the Word, who was incarnated for our ransom.

Blessed Pope Pius IX on the 8th of December 1854 proclaimed the infallible dogma of the faith revealed by God that the Blessed Virgin Mary "in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin" If the official proclamation of the dogma is relatively recent, the profession of faith by Christians and the liturgy is very ancient in this regard. Furthermore, four years later the same Virgin Mary, appearing in Lourdes to St Bernadette, confirmed the truth of the doctrine by presenting herself with the title 'I am the Immaculate Conception'.

God, One and Triune, had foreseen from the very beginning the future incarnation of the Word culminating in the redemption of human nature that had fallen into sin. He therefore predestined pure Mary, so that He could draw from her uncontaminated humanity, which the Son could adopt in order to re-establish in Himself the original purity of creation and reorientate it to eternal glory.

Mary's Immaculate Conception is a direct consequence of her Divine Maternity. St Anslem of Aosta wrote: "Assuredly, it was fitting that the Virgin be beautified with a purity that which a greater cannot be conceived, except for God's. For, toward her, God the Father was so disposed to give His only Son who was naturally one and the same common Son of God the Father and of the Virgin." (Continued next week)

God bless you, and a blessed 1st Advent Week to all,

Rev. André-Joseph LaCasse, O.P.

Rev. André-Joseph LaCasse, O.P.,

Dear Parishioners,
Please find printed this weekend, the 2016-17 Annual Financial Report. This report covers our income and expenses from July 1, 2016-June 30,

2017. I am presently in the Silent Phase of meeting with families concerning the Archdiocesan Capital Campaign which will be coming to the parish in March 2018. I decided it is not necessary for me to come and talk about money from the pulpit since we will have enough of that coming in March. So please allow **this Pastor's Column to address the Annual Financial Report.**

I again give great thanks to our Finance Council, the Business Office, and The Stewardship and Development Committees for their hard work, guidance and fiscal responsibility. As these groups can attest, this has been an exciting and very productive year. As you all are very well aware, we have successfully paid off the debt that funded the building of our new school, renovations of the church and parking lot, and purchase of the convent. On February 1, we paid \$3.2M towards the debt with the final payment of this debt made in September 2017. The parish is finally debt free! Praise God! The paying off of our debt is an amazing accomplishment as it shows the love and dedication our parishioners have for St. Gertrude Church and School.

As you also know, the organ has been installed and is making beautiful music during our liturgical celebrations. The purchase of the organ, and its installation was a very long and challenging process where numerous engineers and contractors were involved in making the installation a success. Jeff Plate was at the forefront of this coordination effort, and I remain grateful for his work on this project.

Our campus infrastructure is doing well and continues to **serve our parish community's need for contractors and suppliers** in place to provide the services and materials needed to operate the church and school. We continue to improve the landscaping around the campus to ensure that the campus remains a safe, inviting, and attractive place for worship and fellowship.

Our balanced budget depends mainly on us reaching our offertory goal for the year. Our progress towards this goal is published in the bulletin each week. As you know, we are completely dependent on your weekly contributions through the use of your envelopes or electronic giving to balance our budget and to provide resources for our many ministries. Please be assured that every budget in the parish is scrutinized by me with the directive that everyone who has responsibility for running programs trim

their budgets and spend only what is absolutely necessary. We still need to keep the offertory as needed each week to make ends meet. The parish cannot run a deficit each year or we will have no savings for emergencies.

This fourth week of November 2017 as I am preparing this financial report for you, the parish is unfavorable to budget by \$59,366. Please prayerfully consider putting in an extra offering to help us balance our budget and continue to fund the many programs and ministries here at St. Gertrude. Any weekly increase of \$5, \$10, \$20, or more would greatly increase our financial stability.

As you will see in the Financial Summary, the Parish was over budget by \$120,351 last year. Though this may appear to be a significant amount, the results are very positive in light of paying off our debt and the organ installation. The organ project was funded through our savings, which is considered a parish expense. We continue to manage costs and look for ways to reduce expenses. Our focus and goal is to reduce our operational expense.

Since July 2017 we have a permanent learning atrium in the school for the *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)*. We have made improvements to the convent. We have put up a wall in the St. Joseph Room of the Parish Center allowing more soundproofing for the Adoration Chapel. We have sealed and stripped the parking lot (which we do every three years).

Big projects on the horizon will be the installation of a new boiler for the church. The boiler we presently have in the basement is the original boiler when the church was built. This boiler is failing and inefficient. All the doors, jams, and thresholds in the church and Parish Center are in bad shape and are in need of changing. We are looking to reconfigure space in the school to build a second atrium for CGS. As we anticipate the Archdiocesan Capital Campaign in March 2018, the \$2.6 that we are being asked to raise, one half million of this will come back to the parish for these big project expenses.

Finally, for those who are able, please consider electronic giving, and also remembering St. Gertrude in your will, or by naming St. Gertrude as a beneficiary on an insurance policy. These are relatively painless ways to give back to your parish.

Thank you again to our many contributing families and parishioners who make sacrifices to keep our parish financially stable. Our parish is successful due to the giving of time, talent, and treasure. **God's blessings to you all,**

Rev. André-Joseph LaCasse, O.P., Pastor

PLEASE PRAY FOR ...

The Sick

Anthony Alvarez, Lisa Bertke, Lynne Blake, Mary Lou Brockman, Bettie Caudill, Frank Cianciolo, Marguerite Crema, Triset Defonseka, Agnes Dryer, Kathy Elsbernd, Peggy Eshman, Joe Holly, Hummel Family, Erin Kelly, Peggy Kindt, Cecilia Lemming, Ann Lukey, Linda Merkley, Leo Napuri, Marlene Ney, Bill Quattrone, Therese Rieger, Jane Sansalone, Richard Seifert, Patricia Scherer, Joe Schirmer, Pegge Schuermann, George Sullivan, Judy Sullivan, John Sweeney

Those in the Armed Forces

Chris Babcock, Adam Benvie, Patrick Burke, Cole Foster, Dominic Geraci, Daniel Holian, Mike Huber, Aaron Jacobson, Jacob Kramb, John Kramb, John Oscar, Drew Pearson, Ian Tester

The Deceased

Harold Christian Schafer, husband of Geraldine

If you know of anyone who should be added or removed from the Prayer Column, please contact: bulletin@stgertrude.org.

Ladies of Charity

Annual Christmas Giving Tree sign ups are this weekend November 25-26. Many families throughout our area have a very special Christmas because of our parishioners generosity. Please stop by the Christmas Giving Tree and pick a tag off the tree and help us fulfill the wishes of some very special people. Drop off for the gifts is December 2 and 3.

Thank you for helping with our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, it was a huge success!

URGENT — Adorers Needed!

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 3:00am; Wednesdays from 12:00-1:00am and 1:00-2:00am; Saturdays from 12:00-1:00am and 1:00-2:00am. To sign up for these hours, please contact Anita Pappalardo at 248-8237 or pappacinci@gmail.com.



CHRISTMAS NOVENA OF MASSES:

Remember your family and friends, both living and deceased, in a special way for Christmas by enrolling them in our Christmas Novena of Masses.

This 9 Day Novena of Masses will begin on Christmas Day. Novena cards are available at the entrances of the church and in the church office in the school. You can return your novena offering envelope in the collection or send it to the church office.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Monday, December 4

7:00pm Healing Rosary: Church
7:00pm RCIA: St. Dominic Lobby

Tuesday, December 5

3:00pm Children's Choir: PC Music Room
3:00pm SGS Player Practice: St Dominic Lobby, PC St Joseph
4:30pm Religious Ed: School Classroom
6:00pm Boy Scouts Patrol Leader Council: School Cafeteria
7:00pm Boy Scouts: School Cafeteria
7:00pm Adult Faith Formation Advent Series: PC Gym, PC St Dominic Lobby
7:30pm St. Vincent De Paul: St Joseph Meeting Room

Wednesday, December 6

3:00pm SGS Player Practice: St Dominic Lobby, PC St Joseph
3:30am Gertie's Moms: PC Music Room
5:30pm Mater Filius Prayer Group: Church
6:00pm Adult Choir Practice: PC Music Room
8:00pm Angelic Warfare Enrollment:: Church

Thursday, December 7

7:00pm Cincinnati Frassati Fellowship: St. Dominic Lobby
7:00pm Gerties Moms: PC St Joseph room

Friday, December 8

9:30am Familia Year 2: St Dominic Lobby, PC St Joseph
1:45pm School Mass: Church
3:00pm SGS Player Practice: St Dominic Lobby, PC St Joseph
7:30pm Communion & Liberation: St. Dominic Lobby

Saturday, December 9

7:30am Catholic Men's Fellowship: School Cafeteria
8:00am Sports Leader Training: PC Music Room
9:30am Bible Study: School Cafeteria

Sunday, December 10

8:00am Religious Ed: School Cafeteria
8:00am Parish Coffee: PC Gym, PC Kitchen
9:00am Little Flower Library open until 12:30pm
1:45pm Baptisms: Church

OFFERING

Offering for Sunday, November 19, 2017

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Collection: | \$40,183.00 |
| Year to Date (starting July 1): | \$765,931.30 |
| Year to Date Budget: | \$767,000.00 |
| Offering <i>Deficit</i> : | (\$1068.70) |
| Children's Collection: | \$5.36 |

Offering for Sunday, November 26, 2017

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Collection: | \$33,528.06 |
| Year to Date (starting July 1): | \$799,459.36 |
| Year to Date Budget: | \$807,000.00 |
| Offering <i>Deficit</i> : | (\$7540.64) |
| Children's Collection: | \$5.00 |

The year to date totals include stock and other large donations.



New Album From the Student Brothers of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph

The student brothers of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph have produced a new album of folk music, *The Hillbilly Thomists*. Following upon four previous albums of sacred music, including last year's Christmas album, *Christ Was Born to Save*; this new album features friars sharing their Gospel joy through Americana music. Your support of this album will aid the formation of the many Dominican student brothers in Washington, DC (including Brothers Jonah & Simon Teller, sons of this parish). CDs can be purchased for \$15 from ---Br. Simon after Masses on December 31 or through the brothers' daily blog at <http://www.dominicanajournal.org/music/>. Thank you for your generosity

Trinity Dome

The Trinity Dome at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States has asked each diocese to take up a special collection for this dome. Please see the complete description of this project from the flyer in this bulletin. *The Trinity Dome is the central and largest dome of the Basilica. This "Crowning Jewel" will be adorned in mosaic and will depict the Most Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Immaculate Conception, and a procession of saints who have an association with America and the Basilica. The Nicene Creed will encircle the base of the dome, while the dome's pendentives will feature the four evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Trinity Dome will complete the work of the Great Upper Church according to its original iconographic scheme and bring to a close construction of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception as it approaches its centennial milestone in 2020.*

Archbishop Schnurr has asked that this Special Collection be taken up at all the Masses on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Special envelopes will be placed in the pews the weekend of December 2-3, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8, and finally on the weekend of December 9-10.

Music Matters Mass: Put More In, Get More Out

Here we are face to face with the season of Advent as another Church year begins. Just as the secular calendar's New Year inspires us to make resolutions to improve ourselves in some way, so too, the liturgical New Year stirs up such a desire. We hope to do something more or something different that will help us better prepare to receive the Infant King when Christmas comes. At this busy time, how can we make more room for Him in our hearts and in our lives?

Everyone is busy. We often feel we can't take on anything more, and sometimes we barely can cover our basic commitments. Especially during Advent (ironically, meant to be a quiet time of prayerful preparation,) we are consumed with *do-ing* things. Shopping, wrapping, baking, decorating, quarreling, eating, drinking ... but what about *pray-ing*? We all know the encouraging line, "Just take 5 minutes a day to pray!" Add that to the other ten dozen things we're trying to fit in, do the math, and we'll need 10 extra hours every day!!

One thought is to simply try and be more present to Jesus in the time we already have. This can be especially fruitful at Mass. By focusing our full attention on the prayer texts (both the prayers that the priest says as well as the ones we say,) we can move from *saying* to *praying*. When we are more genuinely engaged, we better internalize the prayer texts, which can then foster our spiritual growth. How is that, exactly? As we know, the Mass is constructed of many different biblical texts. Since these are the Word of God, and Jesus is the Word Incarnate, when we push ourselves to engage with the words we come to better know Jesus. Short phrases can be memorized and taken away with us, if we make the effort to do so. Many people can memorize words more easily if a melody accompanies them, so making a point of singing the appropriate Mass parts can be a great aid to this. We may even find that psalm response returning to mind during the week, and all of a sudden our prayer life is actually growing! All it took was to invest more of ourselves in the hour we already spent at Mass.

I am very pleased that this year's edition of the pew missal contains melodies for the entrance and communion antiphon for every Sunday and Feast Day. These are beautifully presented and easy to follow, as they appear on the same page with the readings of the day. Beginning this weekend, I invite you to sing the communion antiphon with the choir or cantor, responding after each verse, just like the responsorial psalm. I think you will find these melodies simple, yet beautiful and easy to remember. My hope is that this practice in our Sunday liturgies will prove helpful and rewarding for us all as we make our way to Bethlehem during this holy season of Advent.

Catherine Fishlock, Director of Music

STEWARDSHIP

Marriage Enrichment Program

St. Gertrude Parish is pleased to again offer “Discovering our Deepest Desire” or DoDD. This program is to promote and strengthen one of the church’s most fundamental Sacraments and enrich marriages in our parish community and beyond. DoDD has two key tenets: First, it helps couples renew their understanding of what their Sacramental Marriage means, and secondly, to rediscover each other by making their relationship and covenant a higher priority in the midst of busy lives. The weekly sessions can be a *date night* comprising of lecture, small group activities and one-on-one time with your spouse. The series is written by Greg Schutte, MSW, LISW-S. Greg is a Catholic husband, father and the Director of Marriage Works! Ohio. This year we are blessed to have the seminar presented by Mary LeGouellec, M.Ed., LPC, Andrea and Jon Patch, and Mary Kay and Jim Hochhausler. DoDD is comprised of 12 weekly sessions that begin on Thursday, January 4, 2018, and will continue every Thursday evening through March 22, 2018. The sessions are held in the St. Gertrude School cafeteria from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Class size is limited to 15 couples, so early registration is critical as we have a waiting list each year. There is no cost to attend, but we will collect a free-will offering at the end of the seminar. To learn more about DoDD, our Couple presenters, Andrea and Jon Patch, will give a brief presentation before all of the Masses on December 2 and 3. Registration will open after the 4:30pm Mass and continue through December 3 (after all Masses) at the DoDD registration table in the St. Dominic Lobby. You can also register online beginning December 3. Please see future bulletin announcements for online registration instructions. If you have additional questions, contact AnnaMaria Spurgin, Wedding Coordinator, at amspurgin@stgertrude.org or 561-5954, ext. 1124.

Online registration begins December 2 after 6pm.

In-person registration will take place after each Mass this weekend of Dec. 2 & 3rd in the St. Dominic Lobby. You may also register online at: <http://www.stgertrude.org/DODDJan2018>

Both in person and online registration will close when we meet our 15 couple limit. Thank you and God Bless!

Give Back to St. Gertrude

Use the AmazonSmile unique charity link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-0616477> where Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to St. Gertrude Church. When you sign up for AmazonSmile, you’re asked to select one of over a million charities to support. When you click on the unique link, you skip this charity selection process. Instead, you’re taken to smile.amazon.com and are automatically asked if you want to support St. Gertrude Church.



Baptism

Please congratulate this couple on the baptism of their child Sunday, November 19 2017 at St. Gertrude Church.



Patrick & Aisling Goff (Marguerite Eileen Goff)

GIFT OF LIFE LAYETTE

On behalf of the Pregnancy Center at Old St Mary’s in Over-the-Rhine and Sharonville Women’s center, a heartfelt thank you to St Gertrude’s Parish for your tremendous generosity! The Pack ‘n’ Play was filled many times over with much needed baby items. May Jesus and His Blessed Mother keep you in their care and abundantly bless your families!



Saint Andrew Christmas Novena



While a *novena* is normally a nine-day prayer, the term is sometimes used for any prayer that is repeated over a series of days. The Saint Andrew Christmas Novena is often called simply the “Christmas Novena” or the “Christmas Anticipation Prayer,” because it is prayed 15 times every day from the Feast of *Saint Andrew the Apostle* (November 30) until *Christmas*. The *First Sunday of Advent* is the Sunday closest to the Feast of Saint Andrew.

The novena is not actually addressed to Saint Andrew but to God Himself, asking Him to grant our request in honor of the birth of His Son at Christmas. You can say the prayer all 15 times, all at once; or divide up the recitation as necessary (perhaps five times at each meal).

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. (and Fr. André-Joseph adds) “and St. Joseph.” Amen.

Fresh-Cut Christmas Trees: Boy Scout Troop 18

BoyScoutChristmasTrees.com

For the 52nd consecutive year, Troop 18 will be selling fresh-cut Christmas Trees daily beginning Saturday, November 25 at noon, until Christmas, or until they are sold out. All varieties: Scotch Pine, Frazier Fir, Balsam, White Pine, and Douglas Firs. Pine roping and wreaths. The tree lot is located at St. Savior Church, Plainfield Road. Hours: Saturdays and Sundays: 9:00am-9:00pm; and weekdays: 3:00-9:00pm.



Christmas Trees for the Less Fortunate: Troop 18 is again offering Christmas Trees for the less fortunate. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, you can do so through our website: BoyScoutChristmasTrees.com, at the tree lot, or by sending a check made out to "Troop 18" to Troop 18 C/O 6249 Kenwood Hills Drive; Cincinnati, OH 45227. No donation is too small; any amount is appreciated. If you donate an entire tree and would like to be acknowledged, we will place a gift card with your name on the tree.

The Little Flower Library

The Little Flower Library is well stocked with inspirational, entertaining, and educational fiction and non-fiction books as well as CDs and DVDs. Stop by and check out our collection.

How to Listen When God is Speaking by Fr. Mitch Pacwa
Fr. Pacwa challenges Catholics to embrace their fundamental vocation: to be a listener. In the best of the Ignation tradition, he teaches us to hear God's voice – above the noise we encounter each day – and take it to heart. How does someone know whether God is speaking or whether they are hearing a little voice in their own heads? What is discernment of God's will? What are the basic principles of discernment? What are the goals and purposes of listening to God in the modern world? These are some of the questions this book seeks to answer. This book is a real gift for our spiritual lives.

Strangers in a Strange Land by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput
This book is a bold critique of today's America, a provocative look at the post-Christian public square and the gradual erosion of the religious faith and freedom that have marked it for so long. At the same time, Archbishop Chaput offers prophetic, empowering guidance on how Christians – especially Catholics – can successfully overcome these challenges and not merely survive but reclaim the joy, the beauty, and the grandeur of this life in the world.

Cancer: Now What? A Practical Guide for Those with Cancer and Their Loved Ones by Kenneth Haugh, Ph.D
This book draws on what the author learned as he supported his wife during her fight with cancer, as well as the wisdom and knowledge of over 3,500 cancer survivors, loved ones, and medical professionals. The result is a comprehensive, easy-to-read guide for navigating the medical, emotional, relational, and spiritual challenges that cancer brings.

A Giver's Guide book is also available which contains practical ideas for giving this book to those who could benefit from it.

The Apostles and Their Lives: Archeology, History, and Scripture Unveil What Life was Really Like During the Apostolic Age by Mike Aquilina
Relying on ancient documents and the latest archeological findings, the author takes you on a journey through the Apostolic Age, bringing to life the ancient streets and crowded marketplaces through which Mary and the Apostles journeyed as they built a Church that lasts even to our day. You'll also discover the beliefs of the early Christians, what they taught about the Eucharist and the divinity of Christ, how their church services resemble today's Mass, and how Rome became the spiritual center for Christianity. This book will bring you confidence that the Church is indeed Christ acting in the world, and that no matter how ruthless her opponents, she will endure to the end of time.

Champions of the Rosary: The History and Heroes of a Spiritual Weapon by Donald Calloway, MIC
This book is a rich treasure for the Church. Digging deep into history, Fr. Calloway presents those heroes of God who, at different times and in different places, emerged as champions of the rosary. The rosary is shown to be a spiritual sword that continues to be one of the most valuable means available for converting souls, transforming lives, and conquering evil. We, in the present time, are also called to become champions of the rosary by promoting this weapon throughout the world.

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