

# ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

*The Beacon of Ambler—Where Faith and Family are One*

Main and Poplar Sts. Ambler, PA 19002

CONTACT: 215-646-0494 EMAIL: [stjoeambler@gmail.com](mailto:stjoeambler@gmail.com) [www.stjoeambler.org](http://www.stjoeambler.org)

Rectory Address: 16 S. Spring Garden St. Ambler, PA 19002 FAX 215-643-6389

Father James T. Mc Guinn- *Parochial Administrator*

Father Michael J. Saban- *Parochial Vicar*

Father Charles J. Mc Elroy- *Retired Resident* Deacon Mark Kuhn (Spanish speaking contact - 484-746-3414)

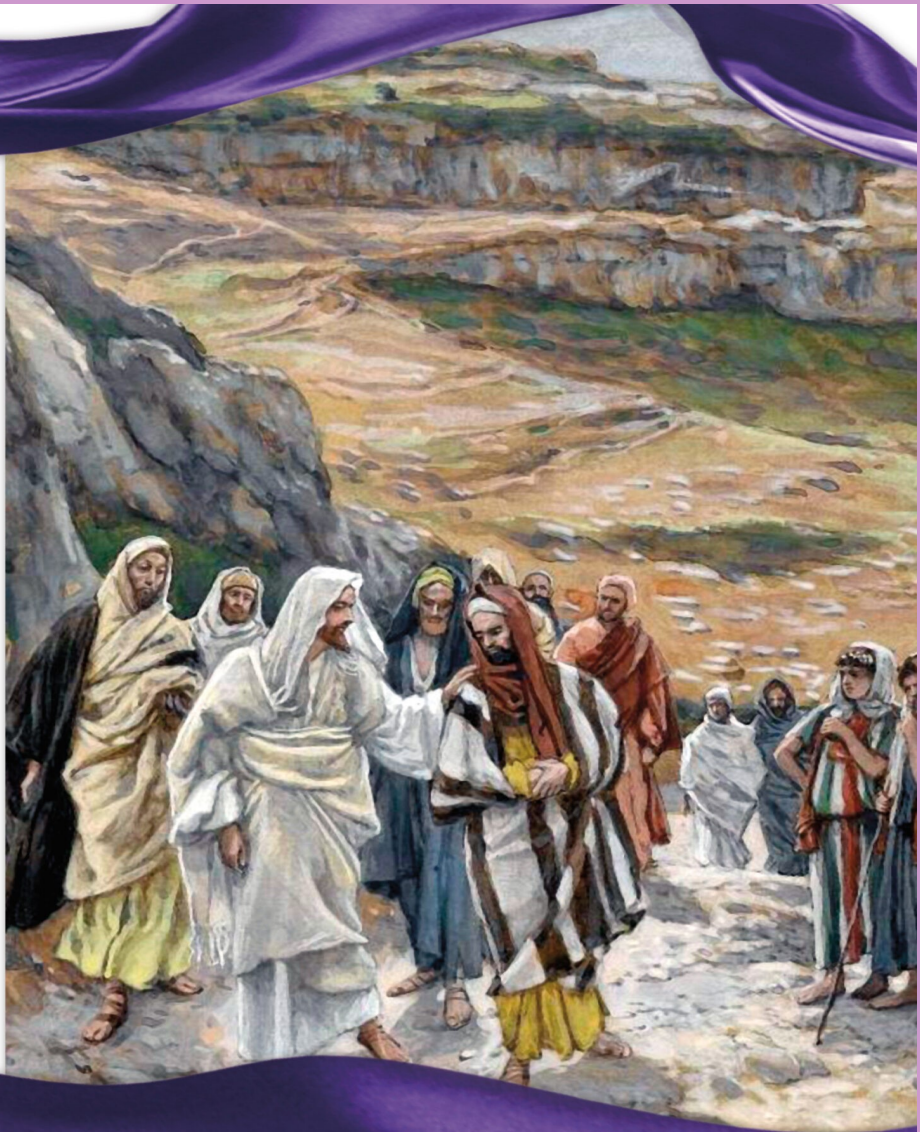
Mrs. Lisa Gallagher- *Parish Secretary, Music Ministry*

Mrs. Suzanne Kuhn- *Director of Religious Education* ([stjosephamblerdre@gmail.com](mailto:stjosephamblerdre@gmail.com))

“The hour has  
come for the  
Son of Man  
to be glorified.  
Amen, amen,  
I say to you,  
unless a grain of  
wheat falls to the  
ground and dies,  
it remains just  
a grain of wheat;  
but if it dies,  
it produces  
much fruit.”

*John 12: 23,24*

Jesus Discourses with His  
Disciples by James Tissot  
Circa 1886-1894



5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF  
**Lent**

©Diocesan

**March 17, 2024**



**MASS SCHEDULE!**  
**DAILY: MONDAYS-COMMUNION**  
**SERVICE ONLY @ 6:30 AM**

**TUESDAY TO FRIDAYS MASS—**  
**6:30 AM AND 12:05 PM.** Miraculous Medal  
 Novena Devotion takes place every Friday at the  
 6:30 AM mass and at the 12:05 Mass. The rectory  
 chapel is also opened daily during business hours—  
 9AM TO 4 PM (Mon.-Thurs.) for visitation.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**  
**Saturdays- 3:00 PM- 3:30 PM**

**WEEKEND MASSES—**  
**SATURDAY VIGIL— 4PM**  
**SUNDAY— 9 AM AND 11 AM**

**HOLYDAYS— 6:30 AM AND 12:05 PM**  
**(NO EVENING MASS)**  
**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH— 7 pm mass**

**RECTORY OFFICE HOURS—**  
 MONDAY-THURSDAY 9:00AM-4:00PM  
 (Closed for lunch from 12:30PM to 1:30PM starting in January)  
 FRIDAY— 9:00AM TO 12:00PM  
 OFFICE IS CLOSED ON ALL HOLYDAYS/ HOLIDAYS

*All those who are in need of our prayers,*  
*Rachel Barboni, Victor Balten, Jimmy Cowman,*  
*Anthony D'Acunto, Diane Camasso, Clare*  
*Di Donato, Kathleen Hart, Donna McMullan lives of*  
*the Unborn, all who have been killed by unnecessary*  
*violence, people of the Ukraine, people of Israel and*  
*all those in our hearts.*

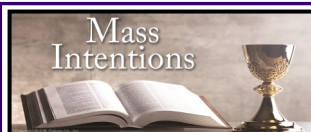
**\*\*Please continue to pray all who are ill or in need of**  
**prayers. Names of the sick will be removed at the end of**  
**the month unless notified. If you know anyone who**  
**would like to be on our prayer list, due to privacy issues,**  
**they or a family member must call the rectory. Let us**  
**know if they can be removed from the list. It is so good to**  
**know that prayers are answered!**



**Sunday collection:**

March 10TH- \$4734.00

**Anyone needing their 2023 contribution**  
**information please contact the office by**  
**phone or email. Thank you!**



**St. Joseph Our Patron**  
**Pray for Us!**  
**March 16-17**

**Saturday Vigil**

**4:00 PM Father Eugene Tully Eileen Chilberti**

**Sunday**

**9:00 AM Father Tully St. Joseph's Music Ministry**

**11:00 AM John Tangi Ciavarelli family**

**1:00 PM Jose Castillo Torres family**

**WEEKDAY**

**Monday COMMUNION SERVICE at 6:30 AM**  
**(no intentions taken)**

**12:05 PM Rosemary Degnon Joan/Ken Sheedy**

**Tuesday Feast of St. Joseph**

**6:30AM All Parishioners**

**12:05 PM All Parishioners**

**7:00 PM Mass and Closing of 40 hours**

**Wednesday**

**6:30 AM \_\_\_\_\_**

**12:05 PM Father Eugene M. Tully Sue/John Hill**

**Thursday**

**6:30 AM \_\_\_\_\_**

**12:05 PM Peter Hahm (living) Marianna Yun**

**Friday**

**6:30 AM Betty Lipp**

**12:05 PM Esther/Elio Colussi Carol Menciano Family**



**Candle Memorials/Intentions**  
**Remembering**

**The Sanctuary Candle**  
**Rachel Barboni**

**The Mary Candle**



**The St. Joseph Candle**  
**Father Tully**



**Liturgical Schedule for March 23-24**

**Celebrants: (subject to change)**

**PALM SUNDAY**

**4:00PM VIGIL**

**FATHER Saban**

**9:00 AM FATHER Saban**

**11:00 AM FATHER Saban**

**1:00 PM N/A**

**TAKE THREE**  
**SECONDS RIGHT**  
**NOW AND PRAY**  
**FOR YOUR**  
**PARISH PRIESTS.**



## Fifth Sunday of Lent

Reading I **Jer 31:31-34**

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD.

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evil-doing and remember their sin no more. The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm **51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15**R. *Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.

R. *Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R. *Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall return to you.

R. *Create a clean heart in me, O God.*Reading II **Heb 5:7-9**

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

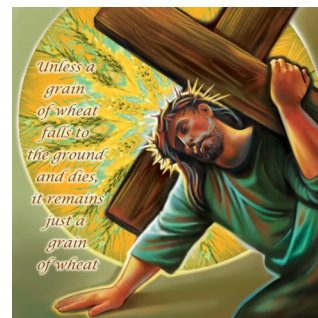
The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel **Jn 12:20-33**

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again." The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*



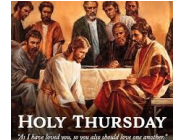


## EASTER 2024 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

### PALM SUNDAY-PASSION OF THE LORD

Saturday, March 23rd: Vigil: 4:00 PM Sunday, March 24th: 9:00 and 11:00 AM  
**ADDED CONFESSIONS:** March 21st: Following Stations of the Cross and  
 Saturday, March 23rd: 2:30-3:30 PM

**HOLY THURSDAY: March 28th** Mass of the Lord's Supper: **7:00 PM** Church will be opened until **10:00 PM** for visits to the Repository. Traditional bus Pilgrimage to neighboring churches will begin



**GOOD FRIDAY: March 29th** 9:00 AM Church open for visit to the Repository.  
 3:00 PM Solemn Liturgy of the Passion of Jesus: Liturgy of Word - Veneration of the Cross - Communion



**HOLY SATURDAY: March 30th** NO CONFESSIONS  
 7:00 PM: Easter Vigil **EASTER SUNDAY: March 31st** Masses at 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

HELP CONTINUE OUR TRADITION WITH OUR 17TH YEAR OF OUR HOLY THURSDAY BUS PILGRIMAGE. WE WILL HAVE OUR 2 BUSES (if needed) TO VISIT OUR NEIGHBORING CHURCHES WHILE SAYING A DECADE OF THE ROSARY AT EACH PLACE. WE WILL LEAVE SAINT JOSEPH'S AFTER THE 7PM MASS. SIGN UP SHEETS ARE ON ALL THE ENTRANCE TABLES. CHURCH SCHEDULE TO BE DETERMINED.

### Father, Forgive Them

The promise made by the LORD in the first reading is very bold. He says that all people shall know him, without having to be taught by others. He doesn't restrict the promise to only the holiest people: He says that the way people will know Him is through forgiveness of their sins. Remember, he is speaking to the Israelites, who had so many laws and commandments, they needed scribes and Pharisees to keep track of them. When they broke a commandment or law, they were isolated from the community. So the promise that God would place his law in their hearts meant they would be free to do God's will because they want to, not because they were feared punishment or rejection.

Jesus says something similar in today's gospel. He tells the disciples that his crucifixion would draw everyone to him. Now, Jesus' death showed that he took on the punishment for sins in place of us, who deserve it. In Luke's gospel he even prays for those who crucified him, asking God's forgiveness. (Lk 23:34) By dying on the cross, Jesus shows how much God loves us. By rising from the dead, he shows that we can rise from sin to a new life of faith and love.

Getting back to the first reading, we experience that promise when we bring our sins to God. When we forgive people who have hurt us, we also help them to experience that love. After all, if I can forgive someone, surely God will forgive them. We also help others to know God when we share or experience of being forgiven. Still not sure if God has forgiven you? The sacrament of Reconciliation gives us the assurance of God's forgiveness, as well as the experience. Along with the other sacraments, it helps us keep God's love in our hearts.

Tom Schmidt, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

### SAINT JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY March 19

Joseph, someone once joked, was indeed the perfect husband: the only major character in Jesus' story who never utters a word! But the Gospel recounts and the liturgy celebrates his silent witness of faith-filled deeds: "With a husband's love he cherished Mary, the Virgin Mother of God; with fatherly care he watched over Jesus" (Preface of Saint Joseph, *Sacramentary*). Catholic devotion, therefore, hails him as patron-protector of the universal Church. Some cultures set a festive "Saint Joseph's Table," welcoming the poor and strangers to feast with family and friends. Tradition keeps today as the anniversary of his death, which we presume was peaceful, with Jesus and Mary present. Thus, Catholics invoke Joseph as "patron of a happy death." Descended from David's house, which God finished "building" through Joseph's provision of a home for Mary and Jesus, he was, fittingly, a carpenter by trade; thus, patron of workers. Spring, nature's rebirth, begins between his feast and Annunciation (March 25), appropriately, since Joseph's silent obedience and Mary's "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38) usher in humanity's spiritual rebirth.

—Peter Scagnelli

**NOTHING  
COMPARES**  
*to Being There*



We are always happy to welcome new parishioners!  
If you are interested in joining our wonderful Parish family, please register after any of the masses or:

- register online at [stjoeambler@gmail.com](mailto:stjoeambler@gmail.com)
- visit our website at [stjoeambler.org](http://stjoeambler.org) or
- contact the rectory office at 215-646-0494.



## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Come and walk the journey of Christ together with us.

**THURSDAY,  
MARCH 21ST 7PM-**  
Please join us for  
*Mary's Way of the*

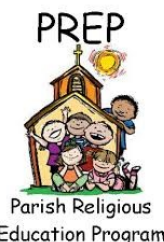
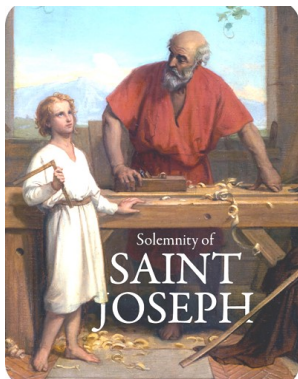
*Cross* This is Jesus' way to Calvary as seen through Mary's eyes and how she must have experienced it as the 'sword of sorrow' pierced her heart. Confessions will follow after this.

**Happy St. Patrick's Day Sunday, March 17th**



**Happy St. Joseph's Day Tuesday, March 19th**

We honor St. Joseph, our Patron Saint with our 6:30, 12:05 Mass and also evening Mass at 7:00 PM. Please join us for this beautiful feast to celebrate the husband of Mary and Jesus' foster father and our Patron Saint. Tuesday will also be the closing of our 40 hour Devotion. Join us! All are Welcome!!



This year, our school children are participating in a Lenten One-Can Meal Drive, and we invite all of our parish family to join in. The next time you are at the grocery store, pick up a meal in a can--for example chili, beef stew or ravioli. Starting next week, bring the can to church with you and place it in one of the boxes at the doors. There will also be a box in the corridor of the school. The cans will be used to stock Archdiocesan food cupboards, which have experienced unprecedented demand in recent years. The drive starts Ash Wednesday and runs through Easter Sunday, March 31st. Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity to the many hungry people in our local area!

### Scripture Readings For the Week of March 17, 2024

#### Sunday Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15; Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33

**Monday** Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; PS 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Jn 8:1-11

#### Tuesday Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22; Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a

**Wednesday** Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; Jn 8:31-42

**Thursday** Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Jn 8:51-59

**Friday** Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; Jn 10:31-42

**Saturday** Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13; Jn 11:45-56

### *The feast day of St. Joseph*

Let us Pray- O Blessed Saint Joseph, faithful guardian and protector of virgins, to whom God entrusted Jesus and Mary, I implore you by the love which you did bear them, to preserve me from every defilement of soul and body, that I may always serve them in holiness and purity of love. Amen.

### *Living Stewardship Now*

***"We should strive to keep our hearts open to the sufferings and wretchedness of other people, and pray continually that God may grant us that spirit of compassion which is truly the gift of God."***

—Saint Vincent de Paul (1580–1660), French priest, religious founder, servant of the poor



## AROUND TOWN.....

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### Martin Saints Classical High School

**Event:** Annual Fish Fry, online order (deadline to order is one week prior) & curbside pickup **Date:** Friday, March 15th.

**Location:** On the campus of Holy Martyrs Church, 121 Allison Road, Oreland PA 19075. [www.whymsc.org/fish-fry](http://www.whymsc.org/fish-fry)

### All St. Gen's Alum & Former Teachers Reunion

Saturday, April 13, 2024, 7-11pm Sandy Run Country Club \$45 per person includes appetizers, dinner, dessert and 1 complimentary drink Cash Bar Checks made payable to "St. Genevieve Reunion" are due by March 1 (please memo class year on check) Mail to: PO Box 31, Oreland, PA 19075 Any questions, please contact Heidi Brugman White hmw118@gmail.com

### Father Judge High School Class of 1974 50 Year Reunion

Saturday, April 27th from 6 - 10 PM at Father Judge Cost is \$80 per person Please contact [khuckel@fatherjudge.com](mailto:khuckel@fatherjudge.com) for more information.

### Hallahan - Class of '74 -

**50th Reunion** - Sunday, May 19, 2024 - 12:00 pm - Brunch at Panache - for more Details email: HallahanClassof1974@[gmail.com](mailto:gmail.com)

**Cardinal O'Hara High School** is planning a 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion for the **Class of 1974**. The reunion is October 19, 2024 at Llanerch Country Club. For more information or to update your email and mailing address, contact John Caramanico at [jccaramanico56@gmail.com](mailto:jccaramanico56@gmail.com) or 610.633.0783.

### Corpus Christi Lunch & Bingo

900 Sumneytown Pike, Lansdale Saturday, April 6, 2024 Doors open at 9:00am, Bingo starts at noon. \$35 (Includes Lunch and Bingo) Computers available for \$40 Guaranteed Jackpot \$1000 Door Prizes, 50/50 For advanced sales and table reservations: Contact Laurie Ponticello: 610-584-5694 [geraldponticello@comcast.net](mailto:geraldponticello@comcast.net)

St. Mary Polish American Society is accepting applications for the second annual Felicia Jemionek Rzeznik Memorial Scholarship, a \$1,500 scholarship to a qualified student of Polish ancestry residing within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia pursuing full-time undergraduate studies at an accredited college or university in the United States. Full information about the scholarship is included in the QR code. For any questions, please call Dorothy Swedkowski at 610-630-0861.



Experience G.F. Handel's Messiah as a modern arrangement!

Contemporary, Reverent, Powerful

**Sunday, March 24, 2024 7PM**

Pope John Paul II High School

181 Rittenhouse Road Royersford, PA 19468

**Tickets: Adults \$30**

**Children 12 and under \$5**

**online or at the door**

**[messiah-2.ticketleap.com/messiah-20/](http://messiah-2.ticketleap.com/messiah-20/)**

## The Dynamic of the Grain of Wheat

Have you ever noticed how the Scriptures are filled with people just like ourselves whose lives take unexpected turns and then blossom in ways that can only be described as flourishing in and for the Kingdom of God.

Take Jacob. His "before" was manipulating his father's blessing from his brother Esau and then serving his uncle Laban for many years, eventually marrying his daughters Leah and Rachel. His "after" was being the patriarch of the twelve tribes of Israel who escaped from Egypt, received the Law, and were chosen by God to be his covenant people. To this day, we can read in Revelation 21 that on the twelve gates that belong to the New Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The New Jerusalem itself sits on twelve foundations representing the twelve apostles who would reign over the twelve tribes of Israel.

Take Moses. His "before" was the life of Pharaoh's daughter's adopted son in Egypt. We all know the story. His "after" was the fulfillment of God's call to be the leader of his people to the Promised Land. Even now, the Christian understanding of the Paschal Mystery is rooted in the Exodus narrative. Between the "before" and the "after" of each of these biblical figures there is a point of struggle and epiphany. When Jesus says that the grain of wheat must fall to the ground and die if it is to be more than just a single grain, if it is to bear fruit, Jesus is talking about just this dynamic which plays out also in our own lives. Who we think we are, who we discover ourselves to be as we grow up and mature and try to figure out life, all this eventually needs to give way to the fullness of the way God lifts our lives up into his mighty and eternal plan. We each have a role to play in God's Kingdom. We each have a mission in life. We were each created for a purpose. It is in those "hinge" seasons of our lives between the "before" and "after" in which we feel the weight and sorrow of the grain of wheat dying. If you are in one of those "hinge" moments, know that this is one way God raises you up to bring you closer to the fullness of life and his glory.

*By Sr. Kathryn James Hermes*

## SAINT TORIBIO DE MOGROVEJO (1538-1606) March 23

In times of crisis, God always "surprises" the Church with unlikely saints, through whom Christ's light radiates beyond their local communities to illumine the universal Church. Charles Borromeo was such a saint: appointed Archbishop of Milan at twenty-one by his papal uncle, epitomizing the corruption that the Reformers condemned, Charles instead inspired a revival that reinvigorated a Church devastated by the Reformation. His less well-known contemporary, Toribio de Mongrovejo, was God's "saintly surprise" in the New World. Spanish-born lawyer, professor, head of the feared Inquisition, Toribio was still a layman when a grateful king appointed him Archbishop of far-off Lima. Once in Peru, however, Toribio was appalled at the abuse of indigenous peoples by the occupying *conquistadores*—his fellow countrymen—and by the complicity of the clergy. He became the natives' devoted advocate, building churches, schools, hospitals, and the first seminary in the Americas, publishing catechisms and prayer-books in the native languages he painstakingly mastered. Four hundred years later, whenever Pope Benedict welcomes Latin American bishops to Rome, he always invokes "the shining example of San Toribio." —Peter Scagnelli

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM and CONFIRMATION ROLE OF SPONSORS



A baptismal preparation evening class is mandatory for all parents who are requesting Baptism. The class is usually provided on the **third Thursday** of each month.

**Baptisms are scheduled with the**

**Deacon.** Please contact the rectory office for more information.

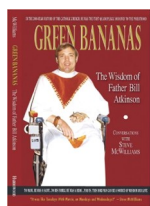
**Godparent or Sponsor Requirement-** You must be a practicing Catholic, in good standing, and attend mass regularly, (married validly if married), at least 16 years of age, and have received the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). Eligibility Certificates for another Parish- **\*We cannot issue certificates of eligibility to any parish if a person is not regularly attending Sunday mass and/or isn't properly registered in St. Joseph Parish.**



**SACRAMENT OF THE SICK** In case of serious illness, please contact the Rectory or call the emergency number if after office hours.

## SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Parishioners planning wedding dates must make an appointment to set a wedding date at least six months or more prior to that wedding date. They must also arrange for Marriage Preparation Class by contacting [www.philamarriageprep.com](http://www.philamarriageprep.com) or call **610-873-2017**. Saturday weddings cannot be scheduled any later than 2PM. Non-parishioner weddings are up to the Pastor's discretion. If a couple is not a member of this parish, they should request a letter of permission from their 'home' parish.



**Father Bill Atkinson's Cause for Canonization:** Please continue to pray for his intercession.. **For favors received or for more information, write Fr. Bill's Cause -Augustinian Provincial Offices PO Box 340- Villanova, PA 19085 610-527-3330 [www.augustinian.org](http://www.augustinian.org)**

As you know we continue to remember and pray for Father William Atkinson's 'call to Sainthood'. Father Atkinson has a beautiful story of his journey of faith and carrying his cross. Please continue to pray for Father Atkinson and all those whose lives were touched because of him.



Please continue to patronize all our advertisers who we recognize weekly and who supply our bulletins. Through their generosity we receive our paper and digital bulletin. Don't forget to also patronize all our local community stores and restaurants.



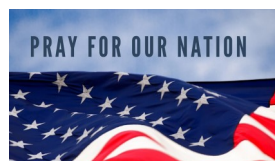
**Is God calling you to 'step out of your comfort zone'?**

**NOW IS**

**THE TIME**

**TO ASK YOURSELF... HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED AND HELP OUR CHURCH GROW? STEP UP AND CONSIDER BEING AN USHER, LECTOR, EUCHARISTIC MINISTER, ADULT SERVER, OR CHURCH SACRISTAN? SING WITH YOUR HEART AND BECOME A LEADER OF SONG.**

*The work is easy, but the benefits are out of this world! Please contact the rectory office if you hear the call.*



Our country, our military, police and first responders all need our prayers now! Please continue to pray for all in harms way who help protect us and our country. God bless and protect them all. Many have returned home and need both physical and emotional care. They cannot be forgotten. Pray for all those who have unselfishly given up their lives for our freedom. Jesus has said, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for a friend". May God give them strength and courage to continue to fight the battles they struggle with abroad and here at home!

## Universal Prayers for Peace in the Middle East

*We offer these special Universal Prayers for those affected by the violence in the Middle East: For an end to the tensions escalating in the Middle East, may they be transformed by the peace that comes from God; the peace that surpasses all human understanding, let us pray to the Lord. For those who have died in the violence in the Middle East, may they find perpetual peace and rest in the comforting arms of the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. For those who are mourning the deaths of friends or family members, and those whose loved ones are missing, may God console them in their pain and grief and grant them strength, let us pray to the Lord. For all innocent people in the Middle East harmed by violence or instability, may God's grace sustain and strengthen them and keep them from harm, let us pray to the Lord. Amen.*



**Living God's Word** Loving God, give us a new heart in these final days of Lent, a heart that carries within it your loving imprint, that we may always know your will and yield to it, even when it calls for a dying of some kind. In such dying, may we trust that you will bring forth new life.