

St. Mary's Messenger

St. Mary of the Assumption
Roman Catholic Church

Winter 2022
Volume 13 No. 4

Our Family of Parishes (Family #9)

St. Mary of the Assumption
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Lancaster, NY 14086
(716) 683-6445
stmarysonthehill.org

Our Lady of Pompeii
129 Laverack Ave.
Lancaster, NY 14086
(716) 683-6522
olpparish.com

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta
496 Terrace Blvd.
Depew, NY 14043
(716) 683-2746
blessedmotherteresaparishdepew.org

St. Martha
10 French Rd.
Depew, NY 14043
(716) 684-6342
stmarthadepew.org

Sacred Heart of Jesus
5337 Genesee Street
Bowmansville, NY 14026
(716) 683-2375
sacredheartshrine.org

St. Philip the Apostle
950 Losson Rd.
Cheektowaga, NY 14227
(716) 668-8370
spaparish.org



From Fr. Paul... Reflections on Matthew's Gospel

Each year in our weekly celebration of the Eucharist we are primarily guided by one of the three synoptic (Matthew, Mark, Luke) gospel authors. 2023's companion is Matthew. It is commonly held that this gospel was written for Christian Jews living in Antioch (Syria) sometime in the 80's AD. The text may have been authored in Aramaic although Greek is also a possibility. The community who received this work knew the Torah (the Pentateuch) the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures often referred to as "the five books of Moses." A common theory among Scripture scholars is that this gospel is constructed around five collections of sayings of Jesus: 1. The Sermon on the Mount (5-7); 2. The Sermon to the Apostles (10); 3, The Sermon on the Kingdom (13); 4. The Sermon on Leadership (18); and 5 The Sermon on the Last Things (22-23). The author of the Gospel shows that God's promise of salvation was meant for all nations, that Jesus was a truly universal savior and that all are invited to know God through his teachings. This year our reflections will explore how this gospel can help us better meet and live the challenges and opportunities of our times.

Please note in this issue some of the changes and patterns that are happening here at St. Mary's and the other parishes in our family. May we continue to join together in helping to create a truly vibrant Jesus presence in our communities.

Fr. Paul

Merry Christmas

Family of Parishes Family Christmas Mass Schedule



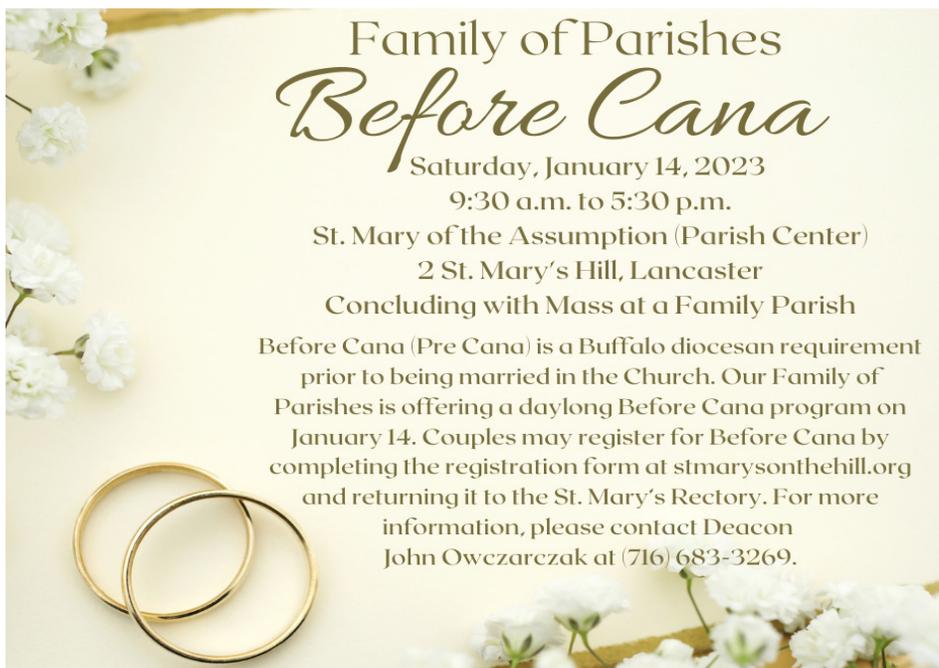
<p><u>Sacred Heart of Jesus</u> 5337 Genesee St. Bowmansville, NY 14026</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm</p> <p>Christmas Day: 8:30 am & 11:00 am</p>	<p><u>St. Philip the Apostle</u> 950 Losson Rd. Cheektowaga, NY 14227</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm, 4:15 pm (Parish Center), 7:00 pm, & 10:30 pm</p> <p>Christmas Day: 8:30 am, 10:30 am, & Noon</p>	<p><u>St. Teresa of Calcutta</u> 496 Terrace Blvd. Depew, NY 14043</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm & Midnight</p> <p>Christmas Day: 9:00 am</p>
<p><u>Our Lady of Pompeii</u> 129 Laverack Ave. Lancaster, NY 14086</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:30 pm & 10:00 pm</p> <p>Christmas Day: 10:00 am</p>	<p><u>St. Mary of the Assumption</u> 1 St. Mary's Hill Lancaster, NY 14086</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm (Church & Parish Center), 6:00 pm, & Midnight</p> <p>Christmas Day: 8:00 am, 10:00 am, & Noon</p>	<p><u>St. Martha</u> 10 French Rd. Depew, NY 14043</p> <p>Christmas Eve: 4:00 pm Family Mass, 10:00 pm</p> <p>Christmas Day: 9:00 am</p>

Family Updates

Over the past several months, our Family of Parishes has come together to worship as one faith community. We enjoyed the Life in the Eucharist retreat this fall, had a Communal Anointing Mass, shared Advent Penance Services, and will soon come together under one Family name. Watch the bulletin for updates on our Family name and upcoming Family events.



Nick Durkin, a St. Mary's parishioner, spoke at our Family of Parishes Life in the Eucharist retreat this fall.



Family of Parishes *Before Cana*

Saturday, January 14, 2023
9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

St. Mary of the Assumption (Parish Center)
2 St. Mary's Hill, Lancaster

Concluding with Mass at a Family Parish

Before Cana (Pre Cana) is a Buffalo diocesan requirement prior to being married in the Church. Our Family of Parishes is offering a daylong Before Cana program on January 14. Couples may register for Before Cana by completing the registration form at stmarysonthehill.org and returning it to the St. Mary's Rectory. For more information, please contact Deacon John Owczarczak at (716) 683-3269.



Angel Mass
In Remembrance of Deceased
Loved Ones Named on the 2022
Tree of Remembrance
Monday, January 9
12 Noon (Church)

Junior Ladies of Charity

St. Mary's Junior Ladies of Charity started off the new school year with an Ice Cream Social at their September meeting in the Parish Center. The girls discussed project ideas for the upcoming months, wrote pen pal letters to the new 2nd graders at Buffalo Public School #6, assembled a Garden Basket to donate to the Ladies of Charity upcoming fundraiser and donated toddler clothing to The St. Gianna Molla Pregnancy Outreach Center. Charlotte Miranda and Madison Hanaka volunteered as models at the LOC Annual Style Show and rocked the runway at the Column's Banquet Hall. They did a great job!



Charlotte Miranda and Madison Hanaka volunteered as models for the Annual Style Show.



On Columbus Day nine Juniors and two adults spent the afternoon at Symphony Manor entertaining the residents. The girls ran the bingo games, provided prizes and served homemade refreshments. They also taught some of the residents how to make reusable tee shirt bags.



The Junior Ladies of Charity volunteered at Symphony Manor, making tee shirt bags and running bingo.



At the October meeting the girls made 100 festive treat bags for Symphony Manor and another 15 for their pen pals at PS#6. They also decorated bags to be used to deliver Christmas gifts to Catholic Charities homebound clients.

In November the girls made Thanksgiving table favors for Symphony Manor and Thanksgiving treat bags for their pen pals. They also planned shopping assignments and formed teams for the two refugee families they are sponsoring for Christmas this year as well as gifts for the 14 Gerard Place residents and their 15 pen pals.



The Junior Ladies of Charity made Thanksgiving goodies for their pen pals and the residents of Symphony Manor.



On Veterans Day the Juniors met with the Ladies of Charity in the Gathering room to work on a joint Christmas project, assembling festive Christmas mugs filled with candy and beautifully wrapped for their friends at Symphony Manor. The girls also plan on spending an afternoon at the Manor over Christmas vacation entertaining the residents again.



Our Ladies of Charity and Junior Ladies of Charity teamed up to make 100 Christmas mugs with candy for residents of Symphony Manor.

The Junior Ladies of Charity is open to new members year round for girls from 6th grade to senior high school who are interested in giving back to their community! Contact Mrs. Snyder at (716) 681-2957 for more information.

“PRAYER, HUMILITY, AND CHARITY TOWARD ALL ARE ESSENTIAL IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: THEY ARE THE WAY TO HOLINESS.”

Pope Francis

©LPI

Marian Feasts

Question:

Why does Mary have so many feast days and names?

Answer:

Christians first began celebrating feast days in honor of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in the fifth century. That celebration (originally called the Feast of the Dormition and now known by Roman Catholics as the Solemnity of the Assumption) was celebrated on August 15. Very soon, however, other special days dedicated to Mary began to appear in Jerusalem, Rome, and other major cities of the Christian world. These days of feasting became important parts of the life of the community. But, more importantly, each of these unique celebrations became an opportunity to focus on a different facet of the Christian faith, as believers focused their attention on specific events or mysteries of the lives of Mary and her Son.

Over the centuries, some of these celebrations became universal (such as the Assumption on August 15, the Immaculate Conception on December 8, and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God on January 1). Other celebrations were more closely tied to certain religious orders (such as the Carmelites celebration of "Our Lady of Mount Carmel" on July 16 or the Servite Friars feast of the "Seven Sorrows of Mary," which is now celebrated as the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15).

In more recent times, Marian apparitions (like Guadalupe, Lourdes, and Fatima) have inspired special liturgical celebrations. Pope Francis has added two new celebrations of Mary to the Church's calendar: The Memorial of Mary, Mother of the Church (on the Monday after Pentecost) and the Commemoration of Our Lady of Loreto (on December 10). The various titles of Mary (like those we find in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary) help us to reflect on different aspects of Mary's faith and the ways that the Holy

Spirit is at work in her and through her, especially as the Mother of Jesus.

In the end, whatever the event or mystery being celebrated in a particular liturgy or the title of Mary being used, we are invited to always see Mary in connection with the saving work of her Son. She is, of course, a patroness and protector for every Christian, but she is also a model of discipleship and contemplation: "Having entered deeply into the history of salvation, Mary, in a way, unites in her person and re-echoes the most important doctrines of the faith: and when she is the subject of preaching and worship she prompts the faithful to come to her Son, to his sacrifice and to the love of the Father" (Lumen Gentium, 65). ©LPI

There are many upcoming memorials, feast days, and solemnities which provide opportunities for us to spend time with and honor our Blessed Mother this winter:

December 8:

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)

December 10:

Our Lady of Loreto

December 12:

Our Lady of Guadalupe

January 1:

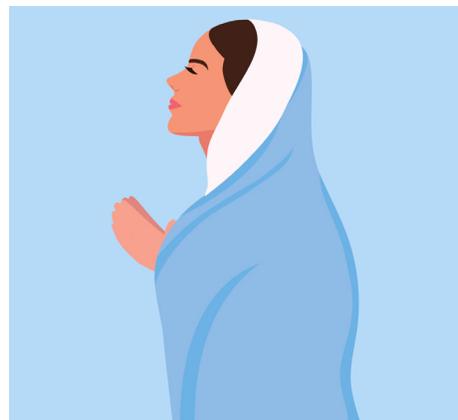
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation)

January 8:

Our Lady of Prompt Succor

February 2:

Presentation of the Lord



St. Mary's Parishioner Updates



Recently, these new families joined St. Mary's:

Matthew and Amanda Arnold and family, Kristen Drzewiecki and family, Michael and Anna Hofer and family, Dr. Megan Jacus and Michael Jacus II and family, Jacob and Kim Lewis and family, Mary Nowicki, Eric and Jessica Prescott and family, and James and Christine Zacharko.



These couples were married at St. Mary's:

Deonna Coleman and Cirro Nicoletti-Watson, Amanda R. Ciesielski and Michael J. Curran, III, Lilah Prestia and Brian Bibiak, and Emily Kowalski and Connor Jaszka.



These children became members of our parish family through Baptism:

Giavanna Alonso, Maizlee Hardy, Archer Howard, Jackson Lucarelli, Jack McMorrow, Jane Mecca, Evelyn Notaro, Blake Pempsell, Sloan Pempsell, and Keegan Przepiora.



These beloved souls were called home to the Lord:

David Domanowski, GERALYN Johnson, Alice Lewandowski, Karen Maile, Shirley Rinow, Norman Vogt, and Ernest Zablotny.

Ways to Support St. Mary's this Christmas

Calendar Club

We are once again running the Calendar Club fundraiser for the 2023 calendar year. With 365 days of prizes there is over \$10,000 to be won! Upon the receipt of your \$20 donation, your name and number will be registered for all drawings for the year 2023. Winning numbers will be physically drawn monthly at St. Mary's Rectory and will be published monthly on the parish & school websites. Order forms are available in the Rectory. Calendars make great Christmas gifts!

Amazon Smile

Shop on Amazon? Support St. Mary's while you shop! The next time you need to place an order, visit smile.amazon.com. Select St. Mary of the Assumption as your charity. That's it! With every purchase you make through Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate a percentage of the sale to St. Mary's - at no extra cost to you!

RaiseRight Gift Cards

When you purchase gift cards through our RaiseRight program, a percentage of every sale comes back to St. Mary's! Consider using our RaiseRight program for Christmas gifts including teacher gifts and stocking stuffers. You can also use RaiseRight for your regular shopping needs including Tops groceries, gas cards, coffee cards, and more! For the time being, orders can be placed and will be filled by completing the order form and dropping it with payment in the drop box at the school or in the rear of the church. We hope to have regular sales days in the school set up soon. Gift cards to Tops, Tim Hortons, and Kohl's will remain available in the Rectory, Monday-Friday from 9:00-4:00.



Confirmation Celebrated at St. Mary's



Congratulations and blessings to these young people, who were confirmed at St. Mary's on Sunday, October 23. Confirmation was celebrated by the Reverend Peter J. Karalus, Vicar General.

Hunter Bolender, Cameron Corcoran, Colin Corcoran, Payton Cotter, Brendan Cox, Isabella DeMarzio, Max Dobucki, David Duane, Quinn Flaherty, Camryn Flanigan, Cameron Gallagher, Christopher Gill, Dylan Krauze, Isabella Ligammare, Maria Lista, Meghan Maj, Olivia Manganaro, Madeline Marzec, Madison Massaro, Reese McCrea, Tristan Miller, Matthew Molina, Khris-tin Nowaczyk, Natalie Nowak, Blake Papke, Brett Papke, Megan Pawlowski, Aleksander Pedersen, Emelia Pokrywczynski, Owen Power, Olivia Prescott, Griffin Smith, and Joseph Trusiak.



BEFORE CANA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Our Family of Parishes is looking for married couples to join our Family Before Cana (Pre Cana) Team, who are willing to share their experiences with couples who will soon be married in the Catholic Church. Each married couple will describe the good and maybe not so good experiences in a 15-minute talk in front of a group of young men and women. Topics include: Our Marriage is a Sacrament; Communication in Marriage; Sexuality in Marriage; Fidelity in Marriage and during the engagement; and Critical Issues/Dual Careers/Financial etc. Training and assistance preparing your talk will be provided. Before Cana is currently held once a year (mid-winter) with a second session in the planning stages. If you think you are ready to influence Future Catholic Families and can spare a few hours once or twice a year, please contact Deacon John and Barb Owczarczak: (716) 683-3269 or deaconjohnowczarczak@gmail.com.





Some of our second grade students show off their Halloween costumes and Bills gear!



St. Mary's Elementary



The new school year has been off to a great start with many seasonal activities for our students, their families, and our community. Fun activities included dressing up for Halloween, trunk-or-treat, a Fall craft show, cheering on our Buffalo Bills, and Breakfast with Santa! We also continue to recognize Christian Witness Recipients each month who lead by example with their actions.



Our Christian Witness Recipients for the month of September, who embodied the spirit of Welcoming.

Offer a Mass For a Loved One

As a special way to remember a deceased loved one, or for the intention of someone living, please consider offering a Mass for them at St. Mary's.



The usual donation for such intentions is \$15. You may select Mass dates, as they are available.

Please contact the Rectory to schedule a Mass, or send the name of a person for whom a Mass is being offered to: St. Mary of the Assumption, 1 St. Mary's Hill, Lancaster, NY, 14086. Your check should be made payable to St. Mary of the Assumption. Please include your name and phone number.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

RSVP: Pancakes, Sausages & Beverages
\$10 a person

Sat., Dec. 10th, 9-11am
SME Parish Center

Blessed Gabriele Allegra

by Barbara Owczarczak, Pastoral Minister



Giovanni Stefano Allegra was born on December 26, 1907, the eldest of 8 children born to a humble Catholic family. They raised Giovanni and his siblings to be loving followers of God and the Blessed Virgin Mary. He entered the Franciscan minor seminary in 1918, at age 16, and the order's novitiate in Bronte in 1923. In 1926, Giovanni was sent to Rome to study at the Franciscan international College of St. Anthony. His life was changed when he attended a celebration of another Franciscan, Giovanni di Monte Corvino, who had attempted the first translation of the Bible in Beijing in the 14th century. It was on that day that Giovanni determined his life's aspiration, to translate the Bible into Chinese.

Shortly after his ordination in 1930,

where he took the name Gabriele Maria, he sailed to Hunan province, to begin his lessons to learn Chinese. Once he learned the language, he began his translation, which would take the next 40 years of his life. With the help of his teacher, he prepared a first draft around 1937. Due to fatigue, he then returned to Italy for 3 years, to continue his studies in biblical languages and biblical archaeology. He left Italy again in 1940, ending in sailing from San Francisco to Japan, on his way to China. When he arrived in Kobe, he found he could not return to Hunan, due to the Second Sino-Japanese War. He was forced to travel through Japanese occupied territories to Beijing, where he lost half of the translated Bible due to war events. Being an Italian citizen, the Japanese did not keep him from working on his translation, but by 1942, he was actively helping other missionaries being held in Japanese internment camps in China, helping to gain the release of several prisoners.

He next organized a group of Chinese Franciscan Friars to work with him on the translation, inaugurating the Studium Biblicum Franciscus in Beijing in 1945. As the Chinese Civil War ended, the Chinese Communist party took over China, so Allegra and his team had to leave for Kowloon, Hong Kong

in 1948. The first three volumes of the Old Testament were published in 1945. Over the next 12 years, 8 more translations were released, including the New Testament. In 1954, he and 4 Chinese Friars went to Jerusalem to the Studium Biblicum to study original Bible texts for about a year. Gabriele continued to live in Hong Kong after that, where he organized the 1st Ecumenical Bible Exhibition in Hong Kong in 1965.

It was on Christmas Day in 1968 that they released the first publication of a one-volume Chinese Bible. In 1975 the Chinese Bible Dictionary was published. He was well read on other scriptural matter, an expert on the philosophy of Duns Scotus, an important Christian theologian-philosopher of the Middle Ages. He also took time to help the sick and poor, especially his beloved lepers on Macau. He started his memoirs in 1975, but died while working on them on January 26, 1976 in Hong Kong.



A Marian Prayer for the Season ...

*God of heaven and earth, you came to us and took our earthly flesh through the gift of Mary's yes. She is our Mother in faith, as she is your earthly mother. We are thankful beyond our ability to thank you for the gift of her Son as our brother and savior. Through her self-giving, we have been reconciled to you. Bless us as we begin this New Year and endow us with the desire and ability to create a world of peace. We ask all this, through the intercession of Mary to you,
one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

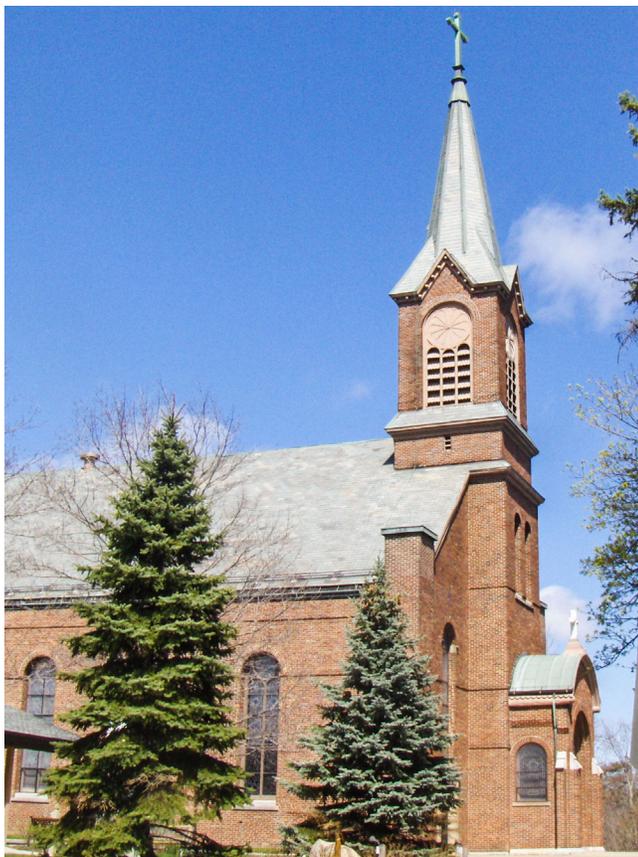
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John Owczarczak, Permanent Deacon
Kaitlin Scirri, Editor
Ray Milkowski, Sr., Photographer



Like us on Facebook and visit us on Instagram and Twitter @SMALancaster.
Visit us on YouTube at St. Mary's on the Hill.



Masses

Monday – Friday: 12 Noon

Saturday: 7:00 PM

Sunday: 8 AM, 10 AM & 12 Noon

Weekday, Saturday 7 PM, and Sunday 10 AM Masses
are livestreamed.

Visit <http://stmarysonthehill.org/live-streams/>.

Livestreamed Masses are also available on Facebook and
You Tube @St Mary's on the Hill.

*Please call the St. Mary's Rectory at (716) 683-6445
for Holy Day Mass schedules.*

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Saturday 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. or by appointment

*Appointments may be made by calling
the St. Mary's Rectory at (716) 683-6445.*