

Advent

November 30, 2014 ♦ First Sunday of Advent (B)

When my mother became pregnant with my youngest sister, I was old enough to be involved with the preparations for her birth. We added a crib to the room she would share, and we gathered clothes and toys suitable for an infant. I wasn't sure we'd get everything ready in time, and it seemed like forever before she arrived. We didn't know exactly when she'd go into labor, but when she did, we each had a job to do at home while my father took her to the hospital. I was overjoyed when my mother brought her home just before Christmas.

Advent is the Church's time to prepare for new birth. My family had nine months to get ready for my sister. The Church calendar gives us only four short weeks to make our hearts ready to receive Christ.

How do we do that? The Scriptures help us by recalling both the promise of his coming and the exhortation to stay awake because we don't know when it will happen.

How odd, we might think. Christmas is always December 25—of course we know when Jesus is born. What we have to remember is that while Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth at a particular time and place over 2,000 years ago, it also reminds us that Christ is alive today, waiting for us to open our hearts to him. It reminds us that Christ is coming again and that we don't want to be caught napping when he does.

We also prepare by taking extra time to pray, to practice kindness and service, and to remember those in need.

Where will Christ be born in you this Christmas? Will you be ready?

MARY KATHARINE DEELEY
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*Christ is alive today,
waiting for us to open
our hearts to him.*

Today's Readings

Is 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7

1 Cor 1:3–9

Mk 13:33–37

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 secretary@icbvm.org; ccd@icbvm.org; bulletin@icbvm.org; newsletter@icbvm.org

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann Pastor
 Rev. Joseph J. Campion..... In Residence
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak
 Victim Assistance: Wendy S. Krisak, 1-800-791-9209
 Safe Environment: Sister Meg Cole, 610-866-0581, ext 19
 Diocese of Allentown.....www.allentowndiocese.org

Parish Office610 582-2411
 Parish Religious Education/CCD610 582-3880
 Parish Preschool610 404-8645
 Parish Fax.....610 404-2609
 Parish Website..... www.icbvm.org
 Immaculate Conception Academy..... 610 404-8645

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - NOVEMBER 30, 2014

★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM	HELEN JANISZEWSKI	THU	7:00 PM	GERALDINE & GERALD R. IEZZI
SUN	7:30 AM	PARISH MEMORIAL SOCIETY	FRI	7:30 AM	MARY KRETZMAN
	9:00 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS	SAT	5:15 PM	SR. JANINE TORZECKA
	11:00 AM	PARISH MEMORIAL SOCIETY	SUN	7:30 AM	DAVID PALKO
MON	7:30 AM	ANTONIO BARLETTA		9:00 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS
TUE	7:00 PM	EDWARD MACCARONE		11:00 AM	RITA KLANG
WED	7:30 AM	LEON DONEY			

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Helen Janiszewski

NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

SCRIP: Lukes 5:15pm Collura 7:30am Kasperowicz 9:00am Grieco 11:00am DeFalco

DAY	MASS	LECTOR	COMMENTATOR	ALTAR SERVERS
SAT	5:15pm	Jennifer Stuart	Mary Schwendt	John and Matthew Dugan, Colby Mullins
SUN	7:30am	Dennis Piontek	Dan Sweeney	Nicholas Donnelly, Chris and Lindsay Surkosky
	9:00am	Val Romasanta	Isabelita Santos	Kathryn Krueger, Sadie Mangan, Sidney Wolf
	11:00am	Jim Keaveney	Bob Newman	Tucker DiPiazza, Carson Endy, Aaron Gulla

The second collection next week is for Church Building and Parish Maintenance

ICA HSO 12 Days of Christmas Raffle

December 2 - \$50 Wawa Gift Card
December 3 - \$75 Visa Gift Card
December 4 - \$100 Red Lobster Gift Card
December 5 - \$125 Visa Gift Card
December 8 - \$150 Giant Gift Card
December 9 - \$175 Visa Gift Card
December 10 - \$200 Toys-R-Us Gift Card
December 11 - \$225 Visa Gift Card
December 12 - \$250 Target Gift Card
December 15 - \$275 Visa Gift Card
December 16 - \$300 Amazon Gift Card
December 17 - Grand Prize - \$500 Visa Gift card
Tickets \$5 each or \$20 for five. Tickets will be on sale after all Masses on November 29/30 and December 6/7. Tickets will be available in the church office or by emailing ica.hso@gmail.com.

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Joe & Betty Cuccaro, Cecelia Potts, Arthur & Betty Erjavec, Marco Fiato, Bryan Fiato, John Kakas, William Kuehler, Maryanne Prentice, John LeFosse, Tracy Seasholtz, Aaron Gulla, John Iezzi, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Andrew Martin, Alice Smyk, Barbara Pease, Yolanda Marino, Robert Mariani, Marie Snyder, Irene Wade, Loretta Kozlowski, Patricia Reigel, Patricia Winkel, Ann Kretzman, Ann Schlott, Patricia McDermott, Maryanna Niemczyk, Linda D'Alessandro, Michael Kovach, Bernie Rissmiller, Sister Daniel Marie Liddy, Lannie Knapp, Mary Pender, Geri Barth, Jo Ann Hofer, Ron D'Augustine, Paul Milshaw and Tom Hafer

Please welcome our new parishioners: Mr. Brian T. Nicolo

Please pray for the recently departed: Jane M. Harakal and Paddy Ryan

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS: Monsignor McCann and Deacon Paul Hiryak visit our hospitalized parishioners regularly. If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, call the parish office at 610-582-2411.

THIS WEEK AT ICC:

Sun	11/30	Santa Breakfast Ticket Sales
Mon	12/01	7:30pm RCIA
Tues	12/02	7:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
Thurs	12/04	4pm Youth Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal
Fri	12/05	7pm Junior High Youth Group
Sat	12/06	8am & 10am Santa Breakfast 4-5pm Confessions

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Dear Friends,

I trust you had a very Happy Thanksgiving and I pray that God will continue to bless you and your family as we begin to prepare now for the celebration of Christmas Day. I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to our parishioners who donated Thanksgiving Baskets full of food for families in need whose children are enrolled at Daniel Boone High School. We had a tremendous response to our request for help. Because of your goodness, many families in our community had a happier Thanksgiving Day. As we begin now the holy season of Advent in preparation for Christmas, I invite you to set time aside to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Confessions are heard every Saturday from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. Our Advent Parish Penance Service will be held on December 22nd at 7pm. On that occasion eight priests will be available to hear confessions and impart God's pardon and peace. As always, be assured of my continued prayers for you and your family.

Monsignor John McCann

2014 Walk-A-Thon for Catholic Education – Donations are being gratefully accepted. Please place it in an envelope marked **"ICA Walk-a-thon"** and drop it in any Sunday collection basket or mail it to Immaculate Conception Academy, 903 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518.
All donations are greatly appreciated.

TRANSFER GRANTS: Any public, private, or charter school student who transfers into Immaculate Conception Academy, grades 1 through 7, will receive a Bishop's Tuition Transfer Grant of \$1,500 over two school years (\$1,000 for the first year; \$500 for the second).

Junior High School Youth Group will meet on December 5th, 7pm-9pm for an evening of fun, food, prayer and praise including. All 7th & 8th graders of our parish are welcome to attend and bring a friend.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA - ICA 8th grade is sponsoring our annual **Breakfast with Santa** on December 6th! **Tickets available for 8am only.** Pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit, juice, coffee/milk will be served. We will have face painting, cookie and ornament decorating, pictures with Santa and a Christmas Petting Zoo! Tickets are \$8, age 2 and under free. Call 610-404-8645 for more information!!!

Mark your calendar and plan to attend! The Annual March for Life will be held January 22, 2015 in Washington, DC. Our parish will be sponsoring a bus to the March for Life. Watch the bulletin for additional details.

Annual Christmas Cookie Sale December 13th/14th sponsored by the Women's Society. We are asking for donations of holiday plates and containers to use for our assortments. You may give them to Carol J. or Sharon, or bring them along with your cookies December 13th in the social hall. If you would like to have your cookie creations in the assortments, please plan on having them to us December 13th by 10am in the social hall. You do not need to bag them by the dozen. Cookie donations made before all Masses should be labeled and bagged by the dozen for sale. Thanks in advance for all of your donations and support. Happy Baking!!

The Women's Society Bake Sale was a wonderful success. We can never express enough gratitude to the talented bakers who always donate such an array of delicious goodies. We hope you enjoyed your purchases and thank you for your past, present, and future support of our fundraising efforts.

All women of the parish are invited to join the members of the Women's Society for our Annual Christmas Luncheon, December 14th, 1pm at Stoppers. The meal includes salad, bread, beverage, entrée with vegetable and dessert. This year's menu choices are: Crab Cake \$22.50, Chicken Parmesan \$18.50 or Pork Chop \$18.50. Please contact Edie at 610-582-2849 or Betty at 610-326-7017 by December 5th with your entrée choice and payment.

We have been advised by the Berks County Office of Catholic Charities that the **Christmas Wish Program** which our parish of the Immaculate Conception has traditionally participated in has been discontinued. We wish to acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation all of our parishioners who participated in this program in years past. A special note of thanks is extended to our parishioners who organized the program, tracked the many gifts as they came in and transported them to the drop-off site. We are deeply appreciative of your generosity and for the time and effort you invested in this endeavor.

OPLAKTY, Blessed Christmas Wafers, are now available in the church narthex. This custom is many centuries old and finds its origins in the countries of Eastern Europe, particularly Slovakia, Poland and Lithuania. The breaking and sharing of the Christmas wafer at the holy supper on Christmas Eve was a sign of friendship, love and forgiveness among family members and friends. At the holy supper an extra place setting was placed on the table symbolizing that Jesus Christ was the unseen Guest in the home. As you prepare to celebrate Christmas this year, be mindful of the many customs and traditions which remind us of the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior.

BIG Breakfast December 7th, 8-11:30 - Knights of Columbus, Constitution Ave., Stowe - Eggs (to order), Pancakes, Bacon, Sausage Potatoes, Coffee, Fruit cup, juice - Ramped access, public invited www.kofc1192.org

The Filipino Catholic Community of Berks County will celebrate **Simbang Gabi** (Christmas Novena Masses) at: **Holy Rosary Church, Reading** - November 30, noon with potluck - December 5, 7pm - December 6, 11am - December 7, 1pm with potluck - December 12, 7pm - December 13, 11am - December 14, 1pm with potluck - **ALL ARE WELCOME!**



November 30, 2014

dear Padre

Monday
DECEMBER 1

Advent
Weekday
Is 2:1-5
Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday
DECEMBER 2
Advent Weekday

Is 11:1-10
Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday
DECEMBER 3
Saint Francis Xavier,

Priest
Is 25:6-10a
Mt 15:29-37

Thursday
DECEMBER 4
Advent Weekday

Is 26:1-6
Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday
DECEMBER 5
Advent Weekday

Is 29:17-24
Mt 9:27-31

Saturday
DECEMBER 6
Advent Weekday

Is 30:19-21,
23-26
Mt 9:35-10:1,
5a, 6-8

Sunday
DECEMBER 7
Second
Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11
2 Pt 3:8-14
Mk 1:1-8

When did Advent start?



When did the Church start celebrating Advent?

It's a little complicated, because our Western Church's celebration of Advent grew up over time in different areas of Europe rather than beginning all at once in one particular spot.

Some of the earliest references to special pre-Christmas practices for Christians come from Spain and Gaul (modern France) in the fourth and fifth centuries, but we also have evidence of a pre-Christmas fast in Rome at the end of the fourth century.

The shape and flavor of these local Advent celebrations were different, with some running as long as six weeks and some being much shorter. In Gaul they emphasized penance and the final coming of Christ in judgment at the end of time, while in Rome there was more emphasis on the coming celebration of Jesus' birth.

The Roman four-week Advent eventually carried the day and shaped the rhythm of our Church's calendar. But if you pay attention to the readings and prayers offered in our Advent Masses, you'll see elements of both the Roman and Gallican Advents in our modern-day celebrations.

In general, during the earlier days of Advent we emphasize the final coming of Christ in judgment. Then we focus more closely on the commemoration of his birth at Bethlehem.



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Liguori.org   



Liguori wants to give you a free eBook!

Advent Meditations With Fulton J. Sheen (863899)

Let Blessed Fulton J. Sheen, the unforgettable preacher who used television to touch millions of lives, lead you through Advent with eloquent reflections and beautiful Scriptures. Simply visit Liguori.org/Sheen and use **special discount-code 15555** when you check out. Offer expires Dec. 5, 2014. Thank you for letting us walk with you on your spiritual journey.