

The Rumble Strips of Advent

Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy! The sleepy apostles couldn't keep awake with Jesus and drifted off when he most needed them.

I have only fallen asleep at the wheel once. During college, I worked the morning shift starting at 6 AM. After a late night with little sleep, I sluggishly got into my car. Comfortably driving down the highway at about 5:15 AM, I dozed for a few seconds before awakening to the noise of my tires vibrating on the warning tracks—just in time to straighten the wheel and avoid the cement divider.

Advent is like those rumble strips. You don't always need them, they are annoying when you accidentally run over them, but they are very important!

We can get tired, trying to keep our hearts awake and attuned to Jesus. The rhythm of life, the background music of the world, the distractions that fly by us—they all contribute to the danger of a passive heart. Running across Advent is like a wake-up call: "Stay awake! He is almost here."

As in driving, there are many distractions vying for your attention, but you learn to focus on what's important. You survey your surroundings, looking for hazards while keeping your eyes on the road. There are many signs to read, but only certain ones point you where you want to go.

Piece: *Christ Awakening the Apostles on the Mount of Olives*, 1641-42

Artist: Rembrandt van Rijn

Location: Collection of E.W.K., Bern, Switzerland



Jesus says to be attentive to the signs; learn to interpret their meaning. Understand them, without being distracted by them. Be vigilant, pray for strength, and stay awake and alert. Thanks be to God for those rumble strips!

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

For Reflection

Do I believe there is a limited time to my life on earth? Since I do not know when Jesus will arrive, isn't peaceful awareness of his eventual return the smartest attitude?

[Jesus said,] "May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping."

(Mark 13:36)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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FIRST DAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 3, 2017

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Josie & Gus Fredriksen

★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM	Rita Klang	FRI	7:30 AM	Eleanor Painter
SUN	7:30 AM	Living & Deceased Parishioners		9:00 AM	ICA Mass – Victoria Barletta
	9:00 AM	Elvira Messner & Fred Del Grosso		7:00 PM	Living & Deceased Parishioners
	11:00 AM	Dec'd Members of ICC Women's Society	SAT	5:15 PM	Living & Deceased Parishioners
MON	No Mass		SUN	7:30 AM	David Palko
TUES	7:00 PM	Sr. Janine Torzecka		9:00 AM	Joseph Gulla
WED	7:30 AM	Louise Sica		11:00 AM	Charles Wagner
THURS	7:00 PM	Audry McWilliams			

NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

SCRIP: Sponsor: Porambo 5:15 Pisarek 7:30 Kasperowicz 9:00 McCauley 11:00 DeFalco

DAY	MASS	Lector	COMMENTATOR	ALTAR SERVERS
SAT	5:15PM	Jennifer Stuart	Mary Schwendt	Delaney Hyer, Avery Lang, Angela Serpico
SUN	7:30AM	Tom Callahan	Pam Amos	Kathryn Krueger, Amanda Marley, Sidney Wolf
	9:00AM	Brian Hannon	Pat Fessler	Stephen Hannon, Anna and Daniel Schlegel
	11:00AM	Leonard Cline	Jim Keaveney	Ethan Cline, Carson Endy, Josh Piccarreta

Second Collection Next Week is Religious Retirement Fund

Dear Parishioners,

As we begin 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 4:00 to 5:00pm.

Our Advent Parish Penance Service will be held on Monday, December 18th at 7:00pm. On that occasion, visiting 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

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Marco Fiato, Margaret Kakas, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Yolanda Marino, Ann Schlott, Joseph & Susan McCorristin, Mary & Phil Morici, Dan Casciano, Jake Maccarone, Madge Butto, Joan Cronin, Rose Osorio, Steve Mammarella, Dominic Strock, Bob Hocker, Mike DiScala, Anthony Mattassa Sr, Deb Petras, Ronald Kryman, Anna Swiezak, Margarie & Walter Hansen, Rita Dougherty, Lou Franco, Lucy Doney, Virginia Marks, Ken Rumler, Mark Vignone, Justine Mattassa, Harry Wood, Tony Guilliams, Fannie Hunter, John LeFosse, Robert Thomas, Theresa Lynch, Mark McDonald, Dante Stetina, Roseann Malcolm, Nancy Iezzi, Charles Reppert, Sharon Egolf, Bartholomew Magliocchetti, Helen McDonald

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS: Monsignor McCann, Deacon Hiryak, Deacon Bardi and Deacon Giordano visit our parishioners who are hospitalized, in nursing homes or homebound regularly. If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, please call the parish office at 610-582-2411.

THIS WEEK AT ICC:

Sun	12/3	Social Sunday
Mon	12/4	7:30pm RCIA
Tues	12/5	7:30pm Baptism Class
		7:30pm Bell Choir
Thurs	12/7	7:30pm Adult Choir
Fri	12/8	6pm SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP
		8pm Adoration
Sat	12/9	4-5pm Confessions
		Women's Society Cookie Sale



WHAT'S HAPPENING



Please note there will be NO MASS on Monday, December 4th.

Discover/Rediscover Catholicism - Join us on Monday evenings for a better understanding of our Catholic Faith. This week's topic will be "Sacred Scripture, Part II: New Testament." Deacon Chuck Giordano is the presenter. Class begins at 7:30pm in the office building lower level meeting room. All are welcome. Contact the office with questions at 610-582-2411.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation and the Patronal Feast of our parish church is Friday, December 8th. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered at 7:30am, at 9am with the children of Immaculate Conception Academy, and at 7pm. The Vigil Mass will be on Thursday, December 7th at 7pm.

Women's Society Annual Christmas Cookie Sale will be held before and after all Masses December 9th/10th. If you love baking cookies, please consider baking an extra batch or two to share with us. We would love to include your favorites in our beautiful arrangements! We also accept cookies marked, packed, and sold by the dozen. Cookies for assortments can be delivered to the social hall on December 8th, 7-9pm and by 9am December 9th. We also accept donations before and after all Masses.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP will meet Friday, December 8th, 6-9pm. All of the high school students of our parish are welcome to attend for an evening of service, prayer, food and fun. Please note the earlier start time of 6pm due to a service project we will be completing. The Youth Group will meet in the social hall. Bring a friend!

Because of the efforts of Immaculate Conception Academy's students and Mission Representatives, we were able to provide Thanksgiving baskets to needy families. Extra food will be donated to the Exeter Food Pantry. Thanks to all who donated!! Did you know that you can re-direct your state taxes to fund a need-based scholarship for a student in any of our Diocesan Schools instead of sending your money to Harrisburg? Anyone who pays PA state income tax and qualifies as an Accredited Investor is eligible. This is defined as having individual income of \$200,000 or \$300,000 of joint income in each of the two most recent years, or a net worth of \$1,000,000 excluding your primary residence. For more information call the Office of Education at 610-866-0581, ext. 2328.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2017

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

PENANCE SERVICE

Monday, December 18 - 7:00pm

CHRISTMAS MASSES

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday, December 24 - 4:00pm, 7:00pm, Midnight

CHRISTMAS DAY

Monday, December 25 - 9:00am, 11:00am

NEW YEAR'S MASSES

NEW YEAR'S DAY - SOLEMNITY OF MARY

Monday, January 1 - 9:00am

TOYS FOR TOTS - The mission of the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to less fortunate children in our community.

Immaculate Conception Academy is a drop off location and will be collecting toys through December 20th. Items can be dropped off at ICA, Monday through Friday, 8am-3:30pm. There is also a box in the narthex for Sunday donations. Organized by ICA Mission Representatives. Call 610-404-8645 with questions.

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.

SIMBANG GABI (9 Day Novena Masses) - Dec. 8th-16th, 7pm - Holy Rosary Church, 3rd & Franklin Sts, Reading, 19602, Potluck nights: Dec. 8, 15 and 16

Christmas Season Mass, Party and Potluck: Dec. 30th, 7pm
Mass intentions are accepted at Holy Rosary Religious Residence at 237 Franklin St, Reading, 19602

March for Life: On January 19th our parish family of the Immaculate Conception will sponsor a bus to the March for Life being held in Washington DC. Watch the bulletin for more information as the date nears or contact Angela Peterson at 610-582-6993 or apeterson@windstream.net.

Daniel Boone High School Interact Club Annual Christmas Luncheon for Seniors - 12/7, 12pm. Christmas Carols presented by DBHS. Luncheon immediately to follow in cafeteria. **RSVP by December 5th** to 610-582-6100, x2213.

Daniel Boone Optimist 36th Annual Craft Show - 3rd, 9am-3pm at the Daniel Boone Middle School - Over 120 crafters - see www.danielbooneoptimist.com for more information

Calendar

Monday

December 4
Advent Weekday
Is 2:1-5
Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday

December 5
Advent Weekday
Is 11:1-10
Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday

December 6
Advent Weekday
Is 25:6-10a
Mt 15:29-37

Thursday

December 7
St. Ambrose, Bishop and
Doctor of the Church
Is 26:1-6
Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday

December 8
Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed
Virgin Mary
Gn 3:9-15, 20
Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Lk 1:26-38

Saturday

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

Sunday

December 10
Second Sunday
of Advent
Is 40:1-5, 9-11
2 Pt 3:8-14
Mk 1:1-8

Dear Padre,

Why do we have Advent?

Advent as we know it today developed many centuries after Jesus' life on earth. Because of the number of persons being baptized in the early Church, a practice developed of having another time for baptism in addition to the Easter Vigil. Christmas was chosen as another baptismal season. Since Lent served as a time of preparation for the baptisms at the Easter Vigil, the weeks leading up to Christmas became a time of penance and preparation.

Combined with this penitential practice, of course, was the preparation for Christmas. The Sunday and weekday Scriptures during Advent recall the centuries of longing for the coming of the Messiah, the conception of John the Baptist, and the family history of Mary and Joseph. Today



the writings of the prophet Isaiah are featured during Advent because they so eloquently speak of Israel's longing for salvation.

Among the special signs and symbols that the Church uses to recall and enter into these central parts of our Christian heritage are the Advent wreath, vespers, reconciliation services, the O Antiphons, Scripture readings, the Jesse tree, the giving tree, the Christmas tree, the crèche, gift-giving, and of course, Midnight Mass. Hopefully, these symbols of the season will remind you of your own birth in baptism and your own commitment to living a life filled with peace and love.

Fr. Thomas Santa, CSsR,
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A Word From Pope Francis

The Lord comes...into our life as a liberator; he comes to free us from all forms of interior and exterior slavery. It is he who shows us the path of faithfulness, of patience and of perseverance because, upon his return, our joy will be overflowing. Christmas is near,...[and] outward signs invite us to welcome the Lord who always comes and knocks at our door, knocks at our heart, in order to draw near to us.

—Angelus, December 11, 2016