

St. John the Baptist Parish
Polish National Catholic Church
90th Anniversary of Organizing

414 West Oak Street, Frackville, PA 17931

Rectory: 570-874-1960

Pastor - Rev. Robert Plichta, M.Th., M. in Canon Law

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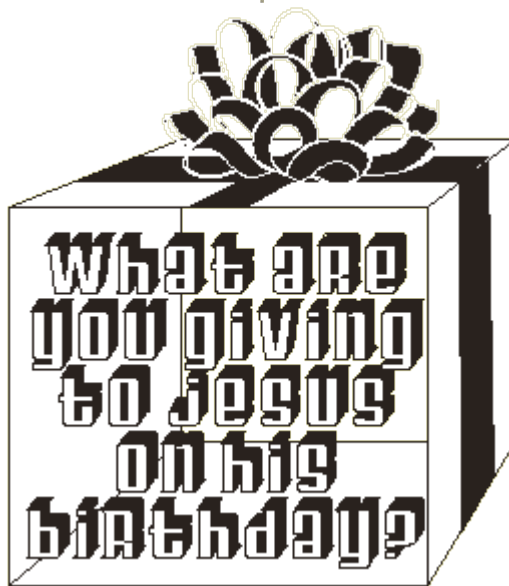
Website: www.stjohnpncc.org

PNCC website: www.pncc.org

Central Diocese website: www.centraldiocesepncc.org

PNU website: www.pnu.org

Prime Bishop of the PNCC – **Most Rev. Dr. Anthony A. Mikovsky**
Bishop Ordinary of the Central Diocese – **Rt. Rev. Bernard J. Nowicki**
Plymouth Seniorate Administrative Senior – **Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski**
Parish Committee Chairman – **Mr. James Chistakoff**



Fourth Sunday of Advent - "A"

Czwarta Niedziela Adwentu

December 22, 2013

EVENTS for the WEEK

Holy Mass – 8:45AM – Traditional liturgy in English.

Today, December 22nd – IV Sunday of Advent

In these days before Christmas we rejoice together in hope as we become especially aware that Christ is present in our lives and in our world.

8:30AM – Advent Penitential Service with the Sacrament of Penance.

8:45AM – Holy Mass intention: for Sp. **Mary Ann Etcho**, of. by Mr. John Etcho.

WEEKDAY READINGS:

December 23: Malachi 3:1-4.23-24; Luke 1:57-66; **December 24:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8b-12.14a.16; Luke 1:67-79 (Mass in the morning); **December 26:** Acts 6:8-10. 7:54-59; Matthew 10:17-22; **December 27:** 1 John 1:1-4; John 20:1a.2-8; **December 28:** 1 John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 2:13-18;

TUESDAY, December 24th - Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord

10:00PM – Holy Mass of Shepherds (Pasterka); intention: for all **Parishioners** and **Friends**.
8:00PM – Holy Mass of Shepherds in Shenandoah.

WEDNESDAY, December 25th - Solemnity – Nativity of our Lord

11:00AM – Holy Mass
9:30AM – Holy Mass in Shenandoah.

THURSDAY, December 26th – Feast – St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr

St. Stephen was a deacon in the early Church and was the first Christian martyred for his faith. He was one of the seven deacons who helped the apostles and was “filled with faith and with the Holy Spirit”, and was “full of fortitude”. Stephen died praying for his executioners. The similarities between Stephen’s martyrdom and the crucifixion of Our Lord emphasize his imitation of Christ even unto the complete gift of self.

10:00AM – Holy Mass, intention: for Sp. **Peter** and **Mary Studlick**, of. by Ms. Carol Blackwell.

FRIDAY, December 27th – Feast – St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

Born in Bethsaida, a fisherman, he was called to follow Jesus while mending his nets. Known as the “beloved disciple”, John wrote the fourth Gospel, three Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. His passages on the preexistence of the Word, who by his Incarnation became the light of the world and the life of our souls, are among the finest of the New Testament. He is the evangelist of Christ’s divinity and fraternal love. With James, his brother, and Simon Peter he was present at the Lord’s Transfiguration. At the Last Supper, he learns on the Master’s breast. At the foot of the cross, Jesus entrusts his mother to his care. John’s pure life kept him very close to Jesus and Mary. John was exiled to the island of Patmos under Emperor Domitian.

5:00PM – Holy Mass, intention: for **Benefactors**.

SATURDAY, December 28th - *Within the Octave of the Nativity* – Holy Innocents, Martyrs

The Church celebrates the memory of the twenty or so babies whom Herod put to death in his attempt to kill Jesus. These innocent victims thus bear witness to Christ to a world unwilling to receive Him.

10:00AM – Holy Mass, intention: for **Children**.

NEXT SUNDAY, December 29th – Solemnity – Humble Shepherds

8:45AM – Holy Mass, intention: for Sp. Leonard Etcho, of. by Mr. John Etcho.

▲ Collection for the Seminary.

Today’s liturgy

ASPERGES – **Pokropisz mnie** Panie hyzopem, a będę oczyszczony, obmyjesz mnie, a nad śnieg będę wybielony. Zmiłuj się nade mną Boże, według wielkiego miłosierdzia Twego. Chwała Ojcu i Synowi i Duchowi Świętemu, jak była na początku, teraz i zawsze i na wieki wieków. Amen.

THE **FOURTH** SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Prayer of Intercession

Prayer:

P. Prince of Peace and Lord, Jesus Christ, Father of the world to come, You will return with power and glory on the clouds of heaven. Now You dwell among us in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, not as our judge, but as our Brother who wishes to share with us the riches of His inheritance. Hear we ask You, the petitions of Your people!

R. Have mercy, o Lord, have mercy.

P. Prepare our hearts for a fervent celebration of Your Nativity.

R. We ask You, hear us.

P. Lead all those who doubt and disbelieve to acknowledge Your Divine Glory.

R. We ask You, hear us.

P. Help the poor, console the afflicted, and deliver the oppressed.

R. We ask You, hear us.

P. Banish from our midst all quarrels and wars, lies, treachery and injustice; and make us all one in You.

R. We ask You, hear us.

P. Grant that, amidst the joys and sorrows of this life, we may always long for Your coming.

R. We ask You, hear us.

P. Have mercy on us in the day of judgement, and lead us all to the glory of eternal life.

R. We ask You, hear us.

Let us pray: For You are He who is to come in the splendor of the heavenly armies. You gather Your people at the Eucharistic Table, as You will one day gather them from all times and all nations to the wedding feast in Your Kingdom, where You live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in all eternity.

R. Amen.

ENTRANCE RITE (John 11:27; Psalm 90:2)

V. Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God, the One Who is coming into the world.

R. Before the mountains were begotten and the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity You are God.

V. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

R. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

I Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

The prophecy in this reading from Isaiah speaks of the intervention of God in human history. A child will be born, called Emmanuel, which means "God is with us".

GRADUAL (Sirach 43:30,28)

V. Awesome indeed is the Lord's majesty, and wonderful is His power.

R. More than this we need not add; let the last word be, He is all in all!

II Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Salvation is offered through Christ Jesus, the Son of God, whose coming into the world is good news.

ALLELUIA (Revelations 22:16)

V. Alleluia, alleluia.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

V. I, Jesus, sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright morning star.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-24

This is the fulfilment of the prophecy given in the first reading, telling the story of Mary conceiving a child through the Holy Spirit and giving birth to a son named Emmanuel.

HYMN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit, come, let this be Your home; come and dwell among all of us who sing this song. Come into this place, shine on ev'ry face, fill us with Your love and grace, Holy Spirit come. Come and dwell among us. Amen.

May you share your happy experience of God's love and generosity with others as you continue to prepare for Christmas.

COMING EVENTS

GENERAL CHURCH

Sep. 29th–Oct. 3rd, 2014 - 24th General Synod of the PNCC (Erie, PA)

FRACKVILLE – Each **First Friday** on the month – Private Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament (5:00PM – 7:00PM)

Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Mass 10:00PM

Dec. 25th Christmas Day Mass 11:00AM

Feb. 2, 2014 Annual Parish Meeting

March 3, 2014 Pastors Seniorate Meeting (1:00PM)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Thanks go out to:

- **Members** of the Parish for preparing the altars, and the church for services;
- to **Mrs. Cindy Eickhoff** for musical preparations, and to the Choir members;
- to **Mr. James Abicunas** for being a lector;
- to the **Sunday greeters**;
- to **Veronica Plichta** for her help at the altar last Sunday.

THANK YOU very much to the following **Parishioners**: Ms. Elizabeth Greenman, Ms. Angela Elsavage, Mr. Charles Chiao Jr., Mr. Frederick Boychak, Mr. Paul Elsavage, Mr. James Abicunas, Miss Veronica Plichta, Mrs. Betty Brazausky, Mrs. Janina Plichta, and Fr. Robert for preparing and decorating the our home church for the Nativity of our Lord's Day! May God Bless Us!

PLEASE CALL THE RECTORY - ..if you or a relative are admitted to a hospital and nursing home;. if your phone number or address change; if you have a prayer concern.

THIS WEEK PRAYER: for **Father Bogdan Jurczynszyn**, his family and parishioners of Our Lord's Ascension Parish in Bethlehem, PA.

CHRISTMAS WAFERS – OPLATKI – are available in the back of the church. Free will offering are for our organist – Mrs. Cindy Eickhoff.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Birthday best wishes are extended to: December 23 – Joseph Makauskas.



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK – especially for – Bishop John Mack – Father Senior Wiesław Pietruszka - James Chistakoff – Sophia Stetts – Sarah Powanda – Joseph Makauskas - Helen Hopko – Paul Elsavage – John Etcho - Flossy Bulcavage – Sharon Chiao – Sue Pascavage – Carolyn Boychak – Anna Folta – John Kruk – Charles Chiao Jr. – Victoria Plichta. At **Nursing Homes**: Helen Chistakoff – Dolores Halaburda - **Frackville Nursing Home**: Louise Gursky (307) - Ann Lech (108); NY – Cecelia Pyzowski.



HOSPITAL VISIT. If you, or a member of your family, are hospitalized or enter a long-term nursing facility, please personally or through a closest family member contact Fr. Robert. I will visit a sick member upon his or his family notification.

UPCOMING SUNDAY MASS INTENTIONS: Dec. 29: Sp. Leonard Etcho; **Jan. 12, 2014:** Sp. Melissa Chiao.

OUR MINISTRY – the Parish Committee is not a Board of Directors. Its work goes beyond the “material” necessities of a parish. It is a unique group of committed Christians with a conviction – to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. Thus, each member of the Committee has a vocation: to be a steward, a good manager of the gifts of God. The Parish Committee member is one who is called to make commitment, with a conviction to function for the sake of the Gospel. To be this person, we must be good stewards or managers of the mysteries of God and faithful witnesses of the same.




CONFESSIONS FOR THE YOUTH – Our younger members as well as their parents are reminded that Confession is an essential part of a child’s religious upbringing. Remember this important part of their religious life. Confession is held on the **first Sunday** of every month at **8:30AM** (before Mass). Children before Confirmation age **must** come to **private** Confession. **If children (until Confirmation) would like to receive the Holy Communion in a worthy manner they must come and be well prepared for private confession at**

least once a month. If other times are necessary please contact Fr. Robert.

ATTENTION PARISHIONERS – in case of your inability to come to church on any particular Sunday, please mail or submit your Sunday offerings and donations to our parish. Your church needs your financial support in order to pay utilities and expenses.

SNOW and ICE ALERT – During winter days, please remember that we do not cancel our Worship Services. In the case of unfavorable travel conditions, please make appropriate decisions about venturing forth.

WARNING – If someone would like to come to the rectory in the winter time, please use **the front porch door**. This is a second year since back porch corner gutter is not fixed, and **stairs are full of ice all the time**.

 **WELCOME OUR VISITORS** – We welcome all our visitors who are present with us for worship this Sunday! Please write your names in the guest book located in the vestibule of the church. You are always welcome to join us in worship.

KINDLY REMINDER – We would like to remind our Parishioners that all financial books for this year would be closed on **December 31, 2013**. Therefore, please, be responsible for your own church and fulfill your obligation to the Parish before that date. **THANK YOU**. A member, who fulfills the financial obligation to the Parish, by paying our yearly dues (\$79.00), is a financial good standing member of the Church. This means that he/she is a voting member of the Parish, can be elected to the Parish Committee, can be elected as a delegate for Synods and Seniorate Council, can be married in the church, and when time comes could be buried at the Parish Cemetery.

JOSEPH'S DIVORCE

There were severe laws against pre-marital sex and adultery in Biblical times. If a man discovered that his fiancée was pregnant by another man, he had right to denounce his wife. She could be sentenced to death by stoning. The husband-to-be would cast first rock. Joseph discovers Mary's pregnancy and is shamed. He is a righteous man--a strict observer of Jewish Law. He is also a compassionate person and decides to arrange a no-fault separation, without admitting or denying paternity of child. This will save Mary's life. God intervenes to state that there is no human father for Jesus. Joseph's faith leads him to accept.

PARISH INFORMATION. **Daily Masses** as announced. Examples of the Mass intention are: for the Sick, in remembrance of the faithful departed (especially parents, grandparents, relatives...), to ask God's Grace, Birthdays and Anniversaries (...) To make arrangements, please contact Father Robert.

Holy Day Masses are held as announced in the bulletin.

Sacrament of Baptism – Arrangements should be made at least two weeks prior the ceremony. **Only practicing Christians** should be chosen as **godparents**.

Sacrament of Matrimony – Arrangements should be made at least six months in advance.

Emergencies, Sickness and deaths – please contact to the rectory immediately.

The parish bulletin - is made on **THURSDAYS** and **FRIDAYS**. All requested announcements should be submitted by **FRIDAY 10:00AM**.

CHRISTMAS EVE SUPPER – WIGILIA – Our traditional Christmas Eve Supper calls for a menu which does not contain meat products. The menu usually includes: opłatek – Christmas wafer, kutia, creamed mushrooms, pickled herring in sour cream, red beet soup, dumplings, baked fish, buckwheat groats, cabbage with peas, fruit compote, homemade bread, nut and poppyseed rolls.

Twelve foods are to be served symbolizing twelve apostles. Various regions of the Slavic countries have different customs. The tradition of our ancestors calls for the blessed opłatek be at the center of the table and each member of the family is to break off a piece before the group prayer and the meal. A white candle is always placed next to opłatek reminding us of “*Christ as the light of the world.*” Hay is spread under the tablecloth symbolizing the stable in which the Christ Child was born.

On Christmas Eve, December 24th as dusk approaches, a candle will be placed in the front window of the house or apartment. This custom is based on the tradition that its light may guide the spirits of family ancestors to find their way ‘home’ for the most holy supper of the year. It is also a sign to a passing stranger who may have no place to go that he or she is welcomed as an honored guest. For Poles who have been known for their hospitality for centuries, no one should be alone on Christmas Eve. As the Christmas tree is lit, the opłatek – Christmas wafer placed atop some straw is at the center of the table. The first star in the heavens on Christmas Eve announces the time for the Christmas Eve Supper.

Let us try to make each season of Our Lord's Nativity truly blessed, meaningful and special by adhering to and even learning more about the precious gift of faith and cultural heritage which **God Himself** bestowed upon us.

RECEIVING THE HOLY EUCHARIST – those who believe in the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist are invited to partake of this Holy Sacrament. It is the practice of the PNCC to distribute the Holy Eucharist through the method of intinction. The Body and Blood of Christ are placed on the tongue, not in the hand.

A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO LIVE ALONE

I live alone, dear Lord, stay by my side. In all my daily needs please be my guide. Grant me good health, for that indeed, I pray, to carry out my work each day. Keep pure my mind, my thoughts and every deed, let me be kind, unselfish in my neighbor's need. Spare me from fire, from flood, and malicious tongues, from thieves, from fear and evil ones. If sickness or an accident befall, then humbly, Lord, I pray hear thou my voice, my call. And when I am feeling low, or in despair, lift up my heart and help me in my prayer. I live alone, dear Lord, yet have no fear, because I feel Your gracious presence ever near. **Amen.**

BULLETIN SPONSOR:
Mrs. Flossy Bulcavage