

Dear Friends,

The prophet Isaiah speaks of comfort for the people. Even though the people have been suffering greatly, God has not abandoned them. He calls on them to put their faith in God, to trust in the Lord, and to prepare the way of the Lord. We are to heed to the voice that cries out for us to make straight what is crooked, to fill in what is missing, and to lay low that which is an obstacle. That voice is John the Baptist who appears preaching a baptism of repentance.

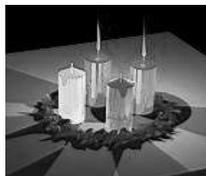
That same message is still in effect for us today. As Peter speaks to the early Church, he reminds them to live in holiness and devotion, so that they may be ready for the day of the Lord. We are to reject what is evil in the world and in our own lives. The life of holiness begins with repentance.

We need to make straight what is crooked. What are we aiming for in life? What goals and desires do we actively pursue? Are they leading us towards or away from God? Scripture again and again uses the image of the straight path. To have as the ultimate aim in all we do life with God forever. We are not to turn to the left or the right. We are not to find our end in some good that is not God.

We need to fill in what is lacking. Do we spend any quality time with God? Do we attend Mass only when I am not busy with something else? Do we pray only when I need something I cannot get some other way? What do I do to work on my relationship with God? How many of the corporal or spiritual works of mercy do I perform? Do I know what they are? God is knocking at the door, and is waiting for us to invite Him in.

What obstacles need to be removed from our lives? What are our repetitive sins? What are our personal idols? What good that people are allowed is too distracting for me, so that I may need to give it up? Both sins and the goods of the world are things that can get between us and God. God gives us the sacrament of Confession to rid us of our sins. We also have to decide in our lives what goods of the world are true needs and which are desires. Nearly everything advertised in the media is really a desire not a need. To make way for God which desires should I do without?

Fr. Peter



Weekend Ministries
December 16th & 17th

Saturday--5:00pm

Lector: L. Lancaster

EMs: L. Muir

Altar Servers: C. Lancaster, M. Lancaster, J. Pharis

Sunday--8:15am

Lector: C. Tennyson

EMs: J. Dominic, J. Kayser, D. Kayser

Altar Servers: K. Kovich, N. Kovich, J. Fitzgerald

Sunday--10:30am

Lector: G. Dameron

Reader: M. Padukiewicz

EMs: J. Graham, S. Hall, C. Miller

Altar Servers: M. Brelage, R. Brelage, J. Siebert

Sunday--6:00pm

Lector: A. Bishop

EMs: A. Bishop

Pray for the Sick

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|--------------------|-------------------|
| Joyce Ack | Grace Angela |
| Emma Aparicio | Vivian Barnes |
| Timothy Binder | Pam Bohmann |
| Robert Bradburn | Karen Byrne |
| Lisa Carpenter | Jack Cullison |
| Catherine Dean | Erica Dingle |
| Jane Dougherty | Fritz Feltman |
| Jack Greenwell | Pam Hayden |
| Mary Agnes Hill | Jason Hoyer |
| Cameron Kalen | Jane Kenyon |
| Paul Mackie | Addie McBride |
| Ann McDonough | Diane Miller |
| William Morris | Gerry Mueller |
| Fr. O'Connell | Kay Owens |
| Lin Perry | Lawrence Potter |
| Peggy Raley | Patty Raley |
| Janet Sanders | Gabriel Santos |
| Nicole Shreve | Gertrude Sullivan |
| Wise Tennyson | Hilda Trossbach |
| Susanna Wolf | Janice Wood |
| Elizabeth Woodburn | |

Mass Intentions

December 11th-17th

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| Monday | 9:00am | For the Intentions of the Forrest Family |
| Tuesday | 9:00am | Ben Forrest |
| Wednesday | 9:00am | Donnie Carroll |
| Thursday | 9:00am | Ted Abell |
| Friday | 9:00am | St. Michael's School |
| Saturday | 5:00pm | Joe & Alice Taylor |
| Sunday | 8:15am | St. Michael's Parishioners |
| Sunday | 10:30am | Frances Trossbach |
| Sunday | 6:00pm | Special Intentions |

Stewardship Report

December 3 rd Collection	\$3,569.00
1st Dist. Catholic Aid Society	\$817.00

Catechetical Corner

Advent is a season of preparation for the Lord. The sacrament of Confession is an important part of welcoming God into our lives. The sacrament of Baptism gave us new life, but we are still subject to suffering, illness, and death both in body and soul, so that this new life can be weakened and even lost by sin. (CCC 1420)

God provides a remedy for this through His grace, and especially a remedy for sin through the sacrament of Confession. (CCC 1420-1498) sin is an offense against God and also breaks our communion with the Church. (CCC 1440) Only God forgives sin. By his divine authority God gives this power to men to exercise in God's name. (CCC 1441) The concrete form of the sacrament has undergone many changes in the history of the Church but the fundamental structure is the same; contrition, confession, and satisfaction. (CCC 1448)

During the season of Advent it is good to avail ourselves of this healing sacrament. In addition to our usual confession schedule there will be school of religion confessions during class time on Dec. 10th and 17th, the day school penance service will be Dec. 14th at 10am, and there will be a penance service for the southern St. Mary's county parishes at IHM on Dec. 18th starting at 6pm with multiple priests available.

WOMEN'S EVENING OF REFLECTION--

Daughters of St. Regis, a women's ministry group of St. John's Parish, will be hosting an Advent Evening of Reflection for Women on Thursday, Dec. 21st from 6:30pm-8:30pm at St. John's in Hollywood. Participants can choose to follow a video-guided mini-retreat or simply enjoy some precious time of quiet prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Priests will also be available to hear confessions. All women and teen daughters are welcome to participate, and moms are welcome to bring nursing infants. For more information, please call the parish office at (301) 373-2281 or email Lacy at scheiberl@sjchollywood.org.



Christmas Mass Schedule
December 24th--6:00pm
and 10:00pm
December 25th--10:30am

New Year's Day Mass
January 1st--9:00am

Youth Christmas Caroling—Join the Via Christi Youth Group in spreading some Christmas cheer to the residents of the Victory Woods Retirement Community. We will be meeting at Victory Woods on December 17th at 5:00pm, which will be followed by more caroling and a Christmas Party in Leonardtown. All those grades 5-12 are encouraged to come! Please bring cookies or another Christmas treat to share! For more information contact Peter Farrell at 240-317-7065 or peter@ihmrcc.org.



St. Michael's School News



December 500 Club Winners

Pam Nunn--\$50.00
Minnie Russell--\$50.00
Kay Owens--\$100.00
David Abell--\$100.00
Donna Knott--\$200.00

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS!

St. Michael's School Annual Auction is planned for June 9, 2018. We are able to accept gently used Cars, Boats, Motorcycles or RV's in running condition. We can store and provide minor repair of donated items. Please contact Rich Muir at 240-538-1888 cell, leave message if no answer.

Cash Calendars are available in the back of the Church. Each \$10 entry into the raffle gets 31 chances to win. Please fill out the top of the calendar and return it to the school or drop in collection basket with payment. The bottom portion may be sent as a Christmas gift/greeting or kept as you wish.

Angel Wings and Things Thrift Store--



The store is open from 9:00am-4:00pm on Saturdays and from 10:00am to 1:00pm on Sundays. Items can be dropped off on Saturdays between 10:00am-2:00pm.

The store will be closed from December 23rd-January 31st. Thank you for your generous support!

Queen of Hearts--Every Friday night at the American Legion in Ridge. Tickets will be on sale from 4:00pm-7:00pm and food will be available starting at 5:00pm. Drawing at 7:00pm. Come out and support St. Michael's School for a fun night of chance! **December 15th there will not be Queen of Hearts.**

Mark Your Calendars:

December 12--Special Mass to celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe, 9am
December 14--Penance Service SMS, 10am
December 17--Breakfast with Santa, 8:30-11am