

St Sebastian Catholic Church



A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust
A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg

801 Broad Avenue · Belle Vernon, PA 15012

January 7, 2024

Mass Schedule

Saturday

4:30 PM

Sunday

9:00 AM

11:00 AM

Tuesday, 8:00 AM

Friday, 8:00 AM

Parish Staff

Rev. Michael J. Crookston Pastor

mcrookston@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mr. Daniel F. Lisovich Business Manager

dlisovich@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mr. Scott J. Martin Director of Faith Formation

smartin@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mr. Dean Dellamalva Coordinator of Liturgical Music

ddellamalva@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mrs. Linda Drury Parish Secretary

ldrury@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mrs. Darleen Koury Bulletin/Faith Formation Secretary

dkoury@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Baptism Preparation

Third Wednesday of every month. Please call the Faith Formation Office, 724-929-9300.

Religious Education/Formation

Please call the Faith Formation Office, 724-929-9300.

(RCIA) Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Anyone interested in becoming a Catholic, please call the Faith Formation Office.

Reconciliation

Confessions are on Saturday: Epiphany—11:30 a.m. and St. Sebastian—3:30 p.m. You may also call at anytime for an appointment for confession.



"WE SAW HIS STAR AT ITS RISING AND HAVE COME TO DO HIM HOMAGE." - MT 2:2

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

EXCERPTS FROM THE LECTIONARY FOR MASS (2001, 1996, 1970 CCD, LRP)

Saint Sebastian Regional Catholic School

Mrs. Carole Aiello: Principal

caiello@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Ms. Tiffany Zetty: School Business Manager

TZetty@sssbv.org

School Telephone ~ 724-929-5143

School Website ~ sssbv.org



From the Pastor The Epiphany of the Lord



Today is one of my favorite celebrations in the Church year. For centuries now people have been fascinated with the story of the Magi. Eastern Rite and Orthodox churches celebrate the Epiphany, rather than Christmas as the time of gift-giving in imitation of the Magi bringing gifts to Jesus. The star, along with the manger, has been the most popular image on Christmas cards.

With all of the mania of Christmas behind us, most people have packed up all of their decorations and put them away for another year, so that we can focus on the revelation of the Incarnate Christ without distraction. And yet for many churchgoers the story of the Magi is all they know of it. Ultimately this feast points to the wonder of God's plan for all people. It deals with life and all of the divisions we are faced with in our world as well as in our hearts.

Through the wisdom of Isaiah we can see that here is a man who is well aware of the perils in life and the struggles of people to attain freedom. For Isaiah as well as for all of the Jewish people of his day, Jerusalem is the center of the world and the focal point of all the hopes and dreams of the Jewish people. He speaks very inclusively about all nations walking by the light of Yahweh. He dreams of how the Jewish people will lead all people to God and share in the blessings of salvation. He is more than anxious to rally the spirit of the Israelites so that they can find hope for a better future. We all need a spokesperson like Isaiah to help us realize our hopes in times of trouble. People all over the world, living in darkness with poverty war and oppression, look for a light to lead them. Isaiah's prophecy is an excellent example which speaks to the hopes of all peoples who follow a star that shines on a better future. We all look for "epiphanies" or revelations for a better world and a deeper faith in God.

Matthew in our Gospel for today reflects on Isaiah's dream to include all people in God's plan of salvation. Like Isaiah, it is the light that guides the Magi to the Christ child. These Magi are not ordinary men. The Greek word "magi" refers to a priestly cast known for their wisdom and ability to interpret dreams and decipher astrological phenomena. The gifts that they brought; gold for a king, frankincense which is a symbol of prayer rising to God and myrrh, a symbol of one who will die, suggests that these men have received a special revelation or epiphany from God as to who the child Jesus was. The Magi's journey symbolizes for us our own human experience, our journeys both physical and spiritual. In celebrating this feast today we all give witness to a universal truth based on the experience of all people and their quest to find God. Their journey reflects our own lives, our own stories, our own gifts which we bring to God.

Salvation is meant for all, if we are willing to follow God's signs of the gift. Although we may not abandon everything in life just to follow a star, the story helps us to recognize that in our daily living God does lead us. We just have to have the faith and insight to recognize that guiding light. If we walk by faith following our own stars in life who knows what might be at the end of our journey.

Due to the early transmission of bulletins, the financial report for December 31, 2023, will be in next Sunday's bulletin.

MONTHLY OVERVIEW—Listed below is a breakdown of what our monthly expenses were as opposed to the amount of money taken in. We will be providing this to you on a monthly basis.

Dec. Expenses	Amount	Week	Collection
Maintenance	\$ 287.00	Dec. 3	\$ 13,931.00
Electric	\$ 723.41	Dec. 10	\$ 14,612.37
Gas	\$ 537.19	Dec. 17	\$ 11,168.01
Other Utilities	\$ 102.62	Dec. 24	\$ 9,602.50
Misc. Office	\$ 2,226.88	Dec. 25....	\$ 13,934.00
Church/Liturgy	\$ 5,541.12	Nov. Elec. Offerings	\$ 4,609.42
Payroll	\$ 24,399.11	Total	\$ 67,857.30
Diocesan Expenses	\$ 14,396.87		
(Breakdown)			
Accent	\$ 659.60		
Ed. Assessment	\$ 6,495.76		
Dio. Assessment	\$ 3,729.27		
Insurance	\$ 3,477.24		
Data Processing	\$ 35.00		
Total	\$ 48,214.20		



Consider online giving, click the "my Offering" button on our parish website.

Stewardship of Treasure—December 24, 2023

Regular Offertory:	\$ 8,624.50
Catholic Accent:	\$ 353.00
End of the Year Donation:	\$ 625.00
Total Dec. 23/24	\$ 9,602.50

Tax Statements—It is that time of year when we need to start gathering our information to file taxes! If you would like a statement from the Church, please let us know and we will get one sent to you.

Ladies of Faith will meet today, **Sunday, January 7** at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. All women of the Parish are encouraged and invited to attend.

Prayer Shawl Ministry—The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Ministry will be on Wednesday, **January 10** at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Center. For more information email—liberati17@yahoo.com or call 412-657-7880.

Matters of Sexual Misconduct Information

If you have any suspicion about the sexual abuse (or any other type of abuse) of a minor child by anyone — please contact PA ChildLine immediately at 1-800-932-0313. If the alleged abuser is functioning in a parish, school or diocesan position as clergy, religious, paid staff or volunteer you are also requested to contact the Bishop's Delegate for Matters of Sexual Misconduct after you have called the ChildLine number and made the report. The Bishop's Delegate may be reached at 724-837-0901, ext. 1221.

NEW YEAR NEW *Hope*

A New Year of Hope—Life is full of new beginnings, we move from one situation to another. We carry with us the successes and disappointments of our past and make them a part of who we are in the present. We learn from our mistakes (sometimes) and do our best to avoid them in the future. In a perfect world this would be the golden rule. However we do not live in a perfect world and it is sad to say that we repeat a lot of our mistakes over and over and never learn our lesson. We have another new beginning with the start of a new year, and there are many opportunities that lie ahead with many challenges to be met. There will be much success and probably some failures, but we need to start this year with a spirit of hope in our minds as well as in our hearts.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

As I mentioned last week in the bulletin, beginning the first Sunday of Lent we will be permitted to receive the Precious Blood with Holy Communion. It has been quite a while since we have been able to share in this gift because of COVID. It is important for you to remember, that even though we are permitted to share in the cup, you certainly do not have to, the choice is yours as it was before.



In order for this to be even possible at our Church, we will need more people to step up and serve as a Special Minister of Holy Communion. To be able to share the Body and Blood of Christ with the members of our community is truly an honor and a privilege.

As with all of the ministries in the Church, everybody needs to have their clearances. If you were a minister before and wish to continue, please call the office and see if you are up to date with your clearances. If you will be new to the ministry, we will help you to get your clearances done.

We are all called to share who and what we are with the community making up the Body of Christ. I am asking that you consider being a part of this ministry.

Part Time Positions at SSRCS

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School in Belle Vernon is looking to fill an immediate position for part-time Maintenance/Janitorial Personnel. The qualified applicant should have general knowledge/skills in the following areas: electrical, plumbing, painting, lifting, carpentry, cleaning, etc. Competitive pay and flexible hours (5 hours/day) with the potential for full-time employment if desired. Clearances necessary. If interested, please email caielo@sssbv.org.



St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School is also in need of substitute teachers at this time. Please contact the school principal at caielo@sssbv.org.

Liturgies of the Week

January 6—Vigil

4:30 pm George Stewart—Petricin Family

January 7—Epiphany of the Lord

9:00 am (Death Anniv) Josephine Bacha—Family

11:00 am John Dunlop—Sue Ann Edwards

Monday, January 8

8:00 am Mass at Epiphany of Our Lord

Tuesday, January 9

8:00 am Marie Tonarelli—Bellmar Class of "59"

Wednesday, January 10

No Mass Today

Thursday, January 11

8:00 am Mass at Epiphany of Our Lord

Friday, January 12

8:00 am (Date of Birth) Joan Picchiarini—Campus Family

Saturday, January 13—Vigil

3:30 pm *Sacrament of Reconciliation*

4:30 pm (Date of Birth) Richard Wawro—Wife, Sandy

January 14—Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish

11:00 am David Conn—Mary Lynn

THE ROSARY IS PRAYED SUNDAYS AT 8:30 AM, PRIOR TO THE 9:00 AM MASS. PLEASE JOIN US!

Altar Candle Flowers

The flowers this weekend are in Honor of the 100th Birthday of Lidia Salvino from her Children and Grandchildren.

Sympathy and Prayers—Please remember in your prayers those who have died: ANDREW A. KROLIK. We extend our sympathy to his family. May he rest in peace.

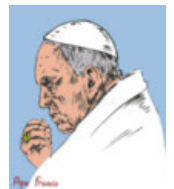
A Prayer For Our Earth

By Pope Francis

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe, and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen.





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