



# Saint Sebastian Catholic Church

801 Broad Avenue · Belle Vernon, PA 15012

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A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg



December 7, 2025

## 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. - Mt 3:4

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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### Mass Schedule

**Weekend: St. Sebastian: Sat. 4:30 PM Sunday 9 & 11 AM**

**Epiphany: Sat. 4:00 PM Sun. 8:30 & 10:30 AM**

*Epiphany of Our Lord, 44 Pennsylvania Blvd. Monessen, PA.*

**Daily Mass: Mon. & Thur. 8:00 AM at Epiphany**

**Tuesday: 8:00 AM at St. Sebastian**

**Wednesday: 9:00 AM at St. John the Baptist**

*St. John the Baptist, 3332 Pittsburgh Rd, Perryopolis, PA*

**Friday: 8:00 AM at St. Sebastian**

**10:15 AM—St. Sebastian**

### Reconciliation—Saturday

**Epiphany—3:00—3:45 PM**

**St. Sebastian—3:15—4:15 PM—By appointment anytime.**

### **Mission Statement**

We the Parish Family of Saint Sebastian, Belle Vernon, serve people in Westmoreland and Fayette Counties. We are Roman Catholics of various ethnic backgrounds with strong family values demonstrating a variety of skills, trades and professions. The purpose of the parish is to glorify God by assisting the community on the "Journey of a Lifetime" through the Liturgy and Sacraments, teaching and preaching the Word of God, and witnessing to our faith. As a community of faith, we are committed to love of God and neighbor through worshiping together and serving others in caring for their spiritual, emotional and physical needs. Each of us is called to strengthen and reach beyond our parish through being responsible stewards of our time, talent and treasure in the spirit of our patron, St. Sebastian.

## Scripture Reflection for Sunday

Reflecting on the prayers we use at Mass for the second week of Advent, both this Sunday and throughout the week, I am struck by the consistent call to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.



The antiphons and collect emphasize that the Lord will come to save and enlighten, urging us to await His arrival with vigilance and hope. The themes of spiritual nourishment and divine mercy remind us that our efforts alone are insufficient; it is God's grace that prepares us for salvation.

The prayers over the offerings and communion highlight our humility—recognizing we have no merits to plead, only seeking God's mercy and protection. They also teach us that participation in the Eucharist is a means of spiritual renewal, guiding us to judge rightly the things of earth and to cling to the enduring truths of heaven.

Furthermore, the emphasis on light—"a great light," "scattered shadows," "children of light"—symbolizes Christ's presence illuminating our darkness. The prayer that we may love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures encourages us to focus on eternal life, not passing worldly pursuits.

In sum, these prayers call us to active preparation, repentance, and hope, trusting in God's mercy and the promise that Christ's coming will bring salvation and light to all who await Him with sincere hearts.

### Sympathy and Prayers

Please remember in your prayers those who have died: FRED J. FUNDY. We extend our sympathy to his family. May he rest in peace.

*When we pray,  
God hears more than we say,  
answers more than we ask,  
gives more than we can imagine,  
in His own time and in His own way.*



Advent is the time to prepare for the greatest gift God has given us, the forgiving love we find through His Son. In celebrating this forgiveness we will offer the sacrament of Reconciliation throughout our region. All Penance services begin at 6:00 PM.

December 9	St. Sebastian, Belle Vernon
December 10	Epiphany of Our Lord, Monessen
December 11	St. John the Baptist, Perryopolis
December 16	St. Edward, Herminie
December 17	Seven Dolors, Yukon
December 18	Hoy Family, West Newton
December 19	Church of St. Anne, Rostraver

Mark these dates down and make an effort to come and bring your family to this life-giving sacrament.



**Baptism Congratulations**—To Isla Jane Hilker, daughter of Christian and Atacie (Eversburg) Hilker, who was baptized in Christ on Sunday, November 23. We welcome Isla into the Church and into our parish family. God bless her and her family.

## Remembrance Tree

Parishioners and visitors are invited to add the names of those living or deceased they wish to be remembered in prayer to the Tree of Remembrance. Their special intentions will be prayed for throughout the month of December by the daily rosary group.



# WEEK 2 Advent

## Oplatki or Oplatek, Christmas Wafers

Oplatki wafers are available in the church vestibule for \$3.00. Each package contains four separate wafers. Please place your donation in the basket provided, in the collection basket or in the drop-box located in the Parish Center breezeway.

## Gift Certificates

Star Nail & Spa are offering \$50 gift certificates for their services: nails, pedicure, and waxing. The owners, parishioners of St. Sebastian, are donating 100% of all proceeds to the Church. Star Nail is located at 825 Broad Ave and can be reached at 724-810-3333. We thank them for their kind generosity. The certificates are available at the Parish Office.

## Christmas Craft & Bake Sale

St. John the Baptist Byzantine Church, Uniontown, 201 E. Main Street., will hold their annual sale Sunday, December 7, from 10:00 AM—1:00 PM in their upstairs Social Room. For more information call 724-483-1382.

## Christmas Fruit Box

The cost is \$25 per box. The **deadline** to order is **December 15. Pick up date is Tuesday, December 23 in the Church Hall between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM.** Please complete the order form and drop in the collection or return to the Parish Office with your payment.

### *Lord, please remember the sick of our parish and community:*

Rita Mandarino, Bernadette Dayner

Lord, give them strength in body, courage in spirit, and patience in pain. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



**Baptism Congratulations—**To Cecilia Lynn Suppa, daughter of Jesse and Jamie (Fordanich) Suppa, who was baptized in Christ on Sunday, November 30. We welcome Cecilia into the Church and into our parish family. God bless her and her family.

### CHRISTMAS FRUIT BOX ORDER

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

# FRUIT BOXES \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT IS ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

PICK-UP: **DECEMBER 23 BETWEEN 11:00 AM—1:00 PM.**

## THE CENTURION WHO BELIEVED

MONDAY, 1ST DECEMBER 2025; WEEK I, ADVENT, YEAR II ISAIAH 4:2-6; PSALM 122; MATTHEW 8:5-11

My dear friends, as we enter this first and second week of Advent, the Church calls us to reflect on the story of the Centurion who came to Jesus in his need. The Centurion is often remembered for his humility and deep faith, but today I would like us to pause and reflect on two other lessons that speak directly to our Advent journey and are beautifully echoed in the First Reading.

### 1. Man's helplessness without God

The Centurion was rich, influential and powerful. He could afford the best medical care. He could command servants. His words carried authority. But in the face of a dying servant, he was utterly helpless. He reached the limit of human ability and had to run to someone greater than himself.

This is the truth of life. No matter how great the human person is or becomes, life will always be greater. Some situations will always be more than us. There will always be questions we cannot answer and problems we cannot solve on our own. The human person can never be the measure of everything. Without God, we are lost. When we reach our limit and have nowhere else to look, emptiness and meaninglessness become inevitable.

Isaiah tells us today that God Himself will be a refuge, a shelter, a canopy of protection for His people. This is exactly what the Centurion discovered: human strength collapses, but God becomes our shelter. In a world where atheism is becoming attractive and many people live with deep emptiness, this truth is more important than ever. Advent calls us to return to God as our true security and meaning.

### 2. Let us learn from the kindness of Jesus and His willingness to help

When the Centurion approached Jesus, notice what Jesus did. He did not refuse him. He did not question him. He did not say He was too busy or that it was not in His plans for the day. He simply responded with kindness and was ready to stop everything to follow him. The Centurion was not part of His schedule, but love and kindness freely overflowed in His ministry.

This speaks directly to us. Our gifts, resources, talents and skills mean little if we are not willing and available to help others in their need. The First Reading shows God as a shelter for His people. In the Gospel, Jesus becomes that shelter through His kindness and in our lives, we are called to allow His kindness to become visible in us.

### Conclusion

As we begin Advent, let us learn from the Centurion our need for God, and from Jesus the power of simple kindness. May God be our shelter, our meaning and our strength and may our lives overflow with the same kindness that flowed so freely from the heart of Christ.

## Immaculate Conception

### Question:

I've heard people call Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit being "immaculately conceived." Is that what the Immaculate Conception is?

### Answer:

While these two events are often confused, they are not the same thing. We celebrated the conception of Jesus on March 25<sup>th</sup>, the feast of the Annunciation. While that was surely miraculous, it isn't what we refer to as the "immaculate conception." The Immaculate Conception is *Mary's* conception, and we typically celebrate it on December 8<sup>th</sup>. If the 8<sup>th</sup> happens to be a Sunday, the Church moves the feast to December 9<sup>th</sup>. It is a holy day of obligation. Why does the Church consider it so important to celebrate?

Mary's conception is immaculate because she was conceived without original sin. The angel Gabriel acknowledges this when he hails Mary as "full of grace" (Luke 1:28). Scripture scholars identify several theological ideas that confirm this.

In the Old Testament, the sacred, pristine Ark of the Covenant held the presence of God. The presence of God is now held within a new "arc" — the womb of Mary. Genesis 3 also prophesies of a woman who would oppose the devil and whose child would crush the devil's head. Christ is the "New Adam." This passage sets up Mary, then, as the "New Eve." Jesus and Mary are the beginnings of a new creation, one we all can participate in through the grace of our baptism. After all, God's love is more "original" than our sin!





All children are invited to have Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, **December 14** in the Epiphany Church Hall. The event is sponsored by the Holy Name Society and the Epiphany Ladies. Breakfast begins at 9:30 a.m., and will be served until 11:30 a.m. Breakfast cost is \$5.00 for adults while all children eat for free. Santa will be available to hear Christmas wishes from the children. FCSLA will provide treat bags for all kids.

**Save the date** for the "Holiday Cookie Walk" on Saturday, **December 13** from 12 Noon-3 PM in the Epiphany Church Hall. Sponsored by the Epiphany Ladies, the Walk will feature a wide variety of 'cookie jar cookies' home-baked by our



Epiphany bakers and friends. Participants will choose either a \$5 bag (approx. 1/2 pound) or a \$10 bag (approx. 1 pound) and walk the display selecting the cookies of their choice. The Walk is open to the public so share the news with family, neighbors and friends!

### Youth Ministry Fundraiser

Our youth ministry team is currently selling tickets to help raise money to offset costs for amazing experiences in the coming year for our Young Church in Grades 6-12. Opportunities like conference retreats, fun trips to Kennywood and Cedar Point and catechetical field trips to St. Anthony's in Pittsburgh and other shrines/locations. Tickets are \$10 with 3 numbers with a prize of two complete packs of PA scratch off tickets, \$500 cash and \$500 in assorted gift cards. Tickets play on PA Lottery on December 21. Contact Adelle (724-244-9434) to get yours.

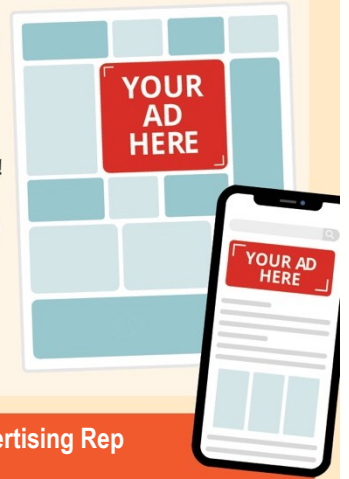
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## The Parish Staff

**Pastor**—Rev. Anthony Onoko

aonoko@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Parochial Vicar**—Rev. Michael Thomas

mthomas@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Office Manager/Clearances**—Mrs. Amy Legeza

alegeza@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Regional Business manager** (off site)—Ms. Christine Coletti

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**Regional Director of Faith Formation and Discipleship**

Mrs. Adelle Slebodnik

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**Regional Director of Children's Formation & Discipleship**

Mrs. Julianna Baluch

jbaluch@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Coordinator of Liturgical Music**—Mr. Dean Dellamalva

ddellamalva@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Parish Secretary**—Mrs. Linda Drury

ldrury@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Bulletin/Faith Formation Secretary**—Mrs. Darleen Koury

dkoury@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Maintenance/Housekeeping**—Ms. Lynn Rusnak

lrusnak@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**Maintenance**—Mr. Patrick Frederick

pfrederick@dioceseofgreensburg.org

## St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School

**Principal**—Mrs. Carole Aiello

caielo@dioceseofgreensburg.org

**School Business Manager**—Ms. Tiffany Zetty

TZetty@sssbv.org

School Telephone | 724-929-5143



## Liturgies this Week

### December 6—Vigil

4:30 PM † Raymond Moluski—John & Lucretia McCrory

### December 7—Second Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM † (Date of Birth) Andrew Yencsik—Family

11:00 AM For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish

### Monday, December 8—Immaculate Conception

9:00 AM Mass at Epiphany of Our Lord

6:30 PM † (Date of Birth) Rick Rodriguez—Cousins, Denise, Keith & Zach Byers

### Tuesday, December 9—St. Juan Diego Cuahtlatotzin

8:00 AM † Celia Matesich—Joanne Wiggins

6:00 PM *Advent Penance Service*

### Wednesday, December 10—Our Lady of Loreto

9:00 AM Mass at St. John the Baptist

*Eucharistic Adoration*

6:00 PM *Epiphany of Our Lord Advent Penance Service*

### Thursday, December 11—Pope St. Damasus I

8:00 AM Mass at Epiphany of Our Lord

6:00 PM *St. John the Baptist Advent Penance Service*

### Friday, December 12—Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:00 AM † Arthur & Nancy Trilli—Trilli Family

*Eucharistic Adoration*

10:15 AM For All the People of Saint Sebastian Parish

### December 13—Vigil

4:30 PM † (Death Anniv) Michael Hepple—Mom & Dad

### December 14—3rd Sunday of Advent

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

11:00 AM † Gene Lancas—Wife, Paula

**The Rosary is Prayed Sundays at 830 AM. Please join us!**

*Due to the early transmission of this bulletin, the financial report for November 30 will be in the next bulletin.*

### Offertory for November 23, 2025

Regular Offertory	\$7,110.00
Utilities/Maintenance:	\$128.00
Votives:	\$231.00
Diocesan Poverty:	\$610.00
Star Nails Fundraiser	\$150.00
Capital Projects:	\$20.00
Thanksgiving:	\$278.00
Sanctuary Flowers	\$5.00
Family Services:	\$25.00
Christmas:	\$45.00
Immaculate Conception	\$5.00
Increased Offering:	\$515.00

**Total Nov. 22/23 \$9,122.00**

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**PLEASE NOTE:** If you plan to invite any guest speaker to a church event, please first contact Adelle Slebodnik at 724-244-9434 or aslebodnik@dioceseofgreensburg.org. The Diocese requires all guest speakers to be vetted and have the required clearances. Thank you for your cooperation.

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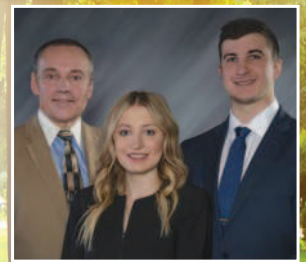
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