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SS. Peter & Paul Catholic Church

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 Website: www.saintspeterandpaulionia.org
 Email: parishoffice@ssppcatholic.com

December 8, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent

Pastor: **Fr. Tom Brown**
 616-527-3610, ext. 12
 616-755-1742 (evening)

School Principal: **Mrs. Jenny Leik**
 616-527-3561, ext. 18
 Email: jleik@ssppcatholic.com

Parish Office Hours
 Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Weekend Mass Schedule
 Saturday: 4:00 p.m.
 Sunday: 8 & 11:30 a.m., and 1 p.m. (bilingual)

Weekday Mass Schedule
 English: Mon & Wed, Mass at 12:10 p.m.
 Tues, Communion Service at 7:30 a.m.
 Thurs, Mass at 8:00 a.m. (school year)
 Fri, Mass at 7:30 a.m.

Reconciliation Schedule
 English: Saturday 3:00-3:45 p.m.
 Monday 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

For questions regarding Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, or any other sacrament, please call the parish office: 616-527-3610.

Prayer Chain
 If you have a prayer request for immediate need, please call 616-522-0279, or 616-527-0438.

December 8th is this Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent. Because of this, the Feast Day of our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, is transferred to Monday. The Vatican has stated that it is a holy day of obligation for us. This means, of course, that it is a day on which we will come to church to publicly proclaim our faith in God and thank Him for the gift of his mother. By her immaculate conception, she was prepared to be a worthy vessel for Jesus our Savior.

We have celebrated Mary's Immaculate Conception for many years, yet we still find people who insist that it is not true. They deny the immaculate conception of Mary as, at best, meaning Mary would then have no need of Jesus as her savior or, at worst, as our attempting to raise Mary to the level of a goddess.

First, Mary most emphatically is NOT a goddess. Never was, never will be. She was, is, and always will be a human as you and I are. She needed Jesus as her savior. Indeed He IS her savior. At the same time, it is an absolute truth of our faith that she was immaculately conceived and preserved from all sin.

So, how can this be? There are two ways of saving a person. For example, if I cannot swim and I fall into a deep pool, I desperately need someone to rescue me or I am doomed. Likewise, if I were standing by the edge of the deep pool, lost my balance, and was starting to fall in, I also would need a savior. If someone were to grab me before I fell in, he or she would be my savior even though I never fell in. I never even got wet! Our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the one who pulls us out of the pool of sin and death. Mary, his mother, is the one whom Jesus rescued before she ever fell into the pool of sin.

Some object this is impossible because Mary, the Mother of God, was obviously born before He was. However, Jesus is not just fully a man, but He is also fully God. Time is not an issue for God. The following is from some notes from my seminary days. I do not know the author, but whoever he or she was said, "I am the Mother of God, who is my Son. Therefore, I am his daughter, although his mother. He was born from eternity and is my Son. I was born within time, and yet I am his mother. He is my creator and is my Son. So I am his creation and his mother, for He is God. It was and is a divine marvel that my Son is part of the Trinity, alive always, who has taken me as his mother. What a wonder! I received my existence from Jesus as God and Jesus received his existence as man and savior from his mother. If then, the Son received his human existence from his mother, we must either say that the Son was stained by the Mother or we must say that the Mother was immaculate. This makes sense to me. How about you?"

Mary was proclaimed by an angel as "full of grace." Mary responded with faith, saying, "May it be done unto me according to your word." Mary, in submission to God's plan, is a role model for us. She, who went to Jesus to ask for his help for the bride and groom at the wedding feast of Cana, is our helper as she prays for us. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

May God bless you!
 Fr. Tom

We are one body in Christ!



The Week Ahead...

AH = Apostles Hall **CH** = Church
CR = Cornerstone Room **PO** = Parish Office
SC = School **VR** = Veritas Room
BC = Basement Chapel



Please prayerfully consider adopting a family in need for Christmas. You may sign up by contacting Toni at the parish office (616-527-3610).

We still have **FIVE families** that need adopting! **Thank you to those who have already adopted a family!**

There are **MANY** ways you can help and participate in this vital ministry:

~ **Adopt a family!**

~ **Donate food** for our family food totes through December 15. Non-perishable food items only should be left at Mary's altar in the church. Any perishable food donations should be brought directly to the parish garage on delivery day, Saturday, December 21, at 9 a.m.

~ **Donate new games or toys.** (Ages of our families' children range from 1 to 12). Leave donations at Mary's altar.

~ **Donate monetarily, cash or gift cards** (Please deliver to the parish office, to the attention of Toni McKay.)

~ **Help move packed food totes** from the parish office basement to the garage on Friday, December 20, to prepare for pick-up day.

~ **Help load food totes into adopters' automobiles** on delivery day—food totes are heavy! (Saturday, December 21, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the parish garage)

~ **Deliver food totes and gifts** for adopting families who are unable to do so themselves.

Second Sunday of Advent

Bar 5:1-9/Ps 126:1-6/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6

Saturday, December 7

4:00 p.m. Souls in Purgatory (David Schafer)

Sunday, December 8

8:00 a.m. Deceased members of Larry Listerman family (Madeline Desrochers)

11:30 a.m. Catherine Verdun

1:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass

3:00 p.m. Advent Vespers Service

Monday, December 9—The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary—A Holy Day of Obligation

Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

8:00 a.m. People of SS. Peter & Paul Parish
No 11 a.m. Confessions

12:10 p.m. People of SS. Peter & Paul Parish

7:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass

Tuesday, December 10—Our Lady of Loreto

Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-3, 10-13/Mt 18:12-14

No Mass or Communion Service

Wednesday, December 11—St. Damasus I, Pope

Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10/Mt 11:28-30

12:10 p.m. Intention of Barbara Howe (Christine Bewell)

6:00 p.m. Eucharistic Holy Hour (BC)

Thursday, December 12—Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zec 2:14-17/(Ps) Jdt 13:18-19/Lk 1:26-38

7:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass

Friday, December 13—St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-4, 6/Mt 11:16-19

7:30 a.m. Vernon Brown

Saturday, December 14—St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor

Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9-13

8:30 a.m. Scriptural Rosary

11:00 a.m. Funeral of Bill Bushong

3:00 p.m. Confessions

Third Sunday of Advent

Zep 3:14-18/(Ps) Is 12:2-6/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18

Saturday, December 14

4:00 p.m. Deceased members of Caswell & Stephan families (Elaine Caswell)

Sunday, December 15

8:00 a.m. Aloyse & Theresa Dietrich

11:30 a.m. Melvin Finkler

1:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass

Sunday, December 8—Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. OCIA (PO)

9-11 a.m. Breakfast with Santa (AH)

10:15 a.m. Faith Formation classes K-12

3:00 p.m. Advent Vespers Service (CH)

Monday, December 9—Immaculate Conception Holy Day

6:30 p.m. Monday Night Group (PO)

Tuesday, December 10

6:00 & 6:30 p.m. School Christmas Program (Ionia Theatre)

Wednesday, December 11

6:30-8 p.m. TOPS (VR)

7:00 p.m. Choir Practice (ask Whitney where)

Thursday, December 12

3:45 p.m. Life Fit (VR)

Friday, December 13

8:30 a.m. K of C Spelling Bee for Grades 4-8

Saturday, December 14

10:00 a.m. Health Support Group (Biggby)

Sunday, December 15—Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. OCIA (PO)

10:15-11:15 a.m. Faith Formation K-12: Advent Party

Family School Council (SC)



OUR PARISH OFFERING - Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, 2024

Regular Offertory Collection	\$8,531.60
Electronic Giving	4,065.00
Total	\$12,596.60
-5% Tithe	-629.83
Net Total	\$11,966.77

Budgeted Weekly: \$9,807.69
Surplus for the Week: \$2,788.91

Campaign for Human Development: \$50.00
 Retirement Fund for Religious: \$75.00
 Christmas Baskets: \$45.00
 School Support: \$190.00

Please note that the offertory collection is only part of the income needed to operate the parish. Other funds come from school tuition, fundraising, Mass stipends, educational trust fund interest, sale of votive candles, etc.

December 14 & 15, Third Sunday of Advent

4:00 p.m. Lector: Bill Trueblood
 Altar Servers: Levi & Logan Haskin
 EMs: Mary Perrien, Phill & Sue Wizorek
 Greeters: Mary Lou Mulick

11:30 a.m. Lector: Monica Mabe
 Altar Servers: Evan & Jacquelynn Bailey
 EMs: Shannon Andrews, Barb Mulnix, Theresa Scholtens
 Greeters: Volunteers

8:00 a.m. Lector: Pete Fox
 Altar Servers: Claire/Gabe/Anna Cusack
 EMs: Julie Bennett, Cheryl & John Hildebrandt
 Greeters: Dave O'Mara

Please pray for:

Shirley Weber	Heather Rensi	Michelle Richard-Mix
Gene Suomi	Cherie Flinn	Jennifer Lewis
Brenda Sheaffer	Pamela Pontius	Mary O'Connor
Judy Dick	Anita Hozeski Scott	Kym Coryell
Cindy Hardy	Karen Miller	Terri Nurenberg
Katie Maynard	Pat Brockman	Jessica Fritz
Diana Kujala	Pat McKinstry	Travis Eveleth
Mark Dawson	Russinda Rohde	Charles Timm
Shirley Weber	Landon Battle	Larry Lafler
Tony Burns	Marsha Packer	Arlene Stanton
Lesley Williams	Jack & Sue LaPeer	Pat MacLachlan
Lois Walker	Tamera Pierce	Jim & Barb Mulnix
Gert Bennett	Angie Cedillo	Ken and Sherry North
Steve Barber	Jo Wirtz	Nathan Lower
Ed Blyth	Witney Fockler	Finnly Hunt
Nancy Betz	Becky Wagner	Jerry & Maribeth Fritz
Jim & Sue Huver	Amanda Eveleth	Tom White
Doug Zeeck	Martha Misak	Pamela Coggan
Randy Tripp	Jennifer Durden	Joe Drysdale
Mike Peckins	Beth Buffey	Nichole Munsell
Glen Alvord	Tom McClintock	Jace Peterson
Julie McClintock	Renee Wagner	Georgia Sibert

We continue to pray for all who need healing. If you would like to add or remove a name, please call the parish office. Be sure you have the consent of the person or a family member. Names will remain on the prayer list for three months. Requests may be renewed.

SS. Peter & Paul Parish Staff (616) 527-3610

Permanent Deacon	Zenon Cardenas	616-527-8942
Secretary	Cecilia Luke	ext. 10
Office Manager	Adam Rewa	ext. 11
Pastoral Services	Toni McKay	ext. 13
Music Director	Whitney Crooks	616-527-3610
Faith Formation	Vanessa Booth	ext. 21
Maintenance	Rod Bergeron	616-527-3610
Cemetery Sexton	Aaren Perry	616-527-3610

SS. Peter and Paul School (616) 527-3561

www.ssppcatholic.com

Principal	Jenny Leik	ext. 18
Secretaries	Joann Johnson & Amie Heinlein	ext. 23

SS. Peter & Paul Parish - Pastoral Council

Shannon Andrews Deb Campbell

SS. Peter & Paul Parish - Finance Council

Chris Christensen	Kip Geldhof	Denise Peabody
Tom O'Connor	Dave O'Mara	Vanessa Booth

SS. Peter & Paul School - Board of Education

Cara Brownell	Nik Discher	Rachel Wilson
Andrew Bucholtz	Kevin Heinlein	Allen Wizorek
Lauren Christensen	Anna Johnson	

GOD'S HOUSEKEEPERS—WEEK OF DEC. 8TH

GENERAL CLEANING:

Pat Duffy, Gwen O'Mara, Janis Neustifter

VACUUMING:

John & Kathy Curtin



Knights' Corner

At our meeting this week, we approved a donation to the IM Safe Child Advocacy Center. We also helped serve dinner at Advent by Candlelight on Monday. Next up on our calendar is making pancakes and sausage for the city's Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, and then our Spelling Bee with the school children next Friday, December 13.

Congratulations to the winners of our final raffle drawing of 2024: Carol Fox, Steve Schray, Laurie Tjalsma, and Dann Werner. We still have tickets left for next year, so get them while you can! Only 300 are sold each year and you have 48 chances to win.

Advent Vespers

Sunday December 8, 3:00 p.m. in church
If you're feeling rushed this holiday season, please join us for a peaceful evening of prayer and music. Light refreshments (cookies!) will follow.

Immaculate Conception Holy Day



This year the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is transferred to Monday, December 9, so it will not conflict with the Second Sunday of Advent. The Vatican recently clarified that the obligation to attend Mass remains.

We look forward to seeing you when we celebrate this holy day together on Monday, December 9, this year! Masses at SS. Peter and Paul will be at 8:00 a.m., 12:10 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. (bi-lingual).

Attention, Bakers:

We have two events coming up that would benefit from a variety of baked goods. **December 8 is our Advent Vespers at 3 p.m. January 5 is our annual Epiphany concert, also at 3 p.m.** If you'd like to make something to enhance the fellowship after these events, please bring it to the event. Please mark wheat, egg, and nut ingredients as some people have allergies. Thank you for supporting these events!!
—Whitney

Our annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious is this weekend, December 7 & 8. Extra envelopes for this collection are on the table in the back of church. If you write a check, please make it payable to SSPP Church, and write "Religious Retirement" on the memo line.

Panther Prayer Corner

Please pray for the students who will be performing their annual Christmas program this week. May the spirit of the season shine through them and remind others of the true meaning of the season.

Christmas Flower Memorials

You are invited to honor your loved ones, living or deceased, by offering a Christmas Flower Memorial. Pick up a form from the table in the back of church, write the names of those you wish to be remembered, and make a suggested donation of \$10 per name. Requests and donations should be in the parish office by Sunday, December 15. The names of those honored will be published in our church bulletins during the Christmas season.

Coffee and Rolls?

We would like to begin having Coffee and Rolls after the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Mass on a regular basis again. To do this we need a few more individuals (or small groups) who would be willing to host. If you would be willing to give this a go, please contact the parish office. Our goal is to have enough volunteers so that people would only be scheduled every six weeks or so. Looking forward to hearing from you!



More Volunteers Welcome!!!

We will soon be preparing new schedules for our **church cleaning teams, vacuuming teams, collection counting teams, and bulletin stuffing teams for 2025.** New volunteers are **always** welcome, but this would be the PERFECT time for you to consider joining a team, forming a new one, or letting us know that you need to step down. Please call Cecilia at the parish office (616-527-3610) for more information or to volunteer.

Our Children's choir will be singing at the 4:00 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve. We hope you can join us! - Whitney

Here is the rehearsal schedule:

- Dec 8, 15, 22: 10:45—11:15 a.m. in the choir loft
- December 18 6:00-6:45 p.m. in the choir loft
- December 24 Arrive at 3:15 for the 4 p.m. Mass
- January 5 Sing our special song at the Epiphany Concert at 3 p.m.



Breakfast with Santa

Sunday, December 8, 9-11 a.m. in Apostles Hall
Sponsored by the SSPP Family School Council



Faith Formation

Classes run from 10:15-11:15am on Sunday mornings for Kindergarten—High School. It is never too late to register – join us today!

- Dec 8 Faith Formation Classes K-12
Join us for the High School Class – Beyond Confirmation
- Dec 15 Faith Formation Classes K-12. Advent Party
- Dec 22 & 29 No Classes – Christmas Break
- Jan 5 Faith Formation Classes K-12
- Jan 12 Faith Formation Classes K-8

For more information about Faith Formation, please contact Vanessa Booth at 616-527-3610 or vbooth@ssppcatholic.com.

Sacraments

Is there a Sacrament that you meant to prepare your child to receive but were unable to? We would love to talk to you and work with your family to help with the preparation. Please contact Vanessa at (616) 527-3610 or vbooth@ssppcatholic.com.

Health Support Group

Are you or a family member struggling with a serious health issue? Team members of the Ministry of Consolation invite you to join them for their monthly Health Support gatherings. The next session will be held on Saturday, December 14, at 10 a.m. at Biggy Coffee in Ionia. All are welcome!

For more information about this Ministry of Consolation opportunity, please contact Vanessa Booth at vbooth@ssppcatholic.com

Children's Liturgy of the Word

We are excited to announce that Meghan McGillis will be our new Coordinator of Children's Liturgy of the Word. Please thank her for taking on the added responsibilities of this volunteer role. Meghan has been a faithful leader of CLOW for the past two years and is excited to share her gifts with our parish in this new role. PLEASE join me in thanking Barb Montgomery for her many years of dedication to this ministry! Barb has been instrumental in all areas of its growth and vitality to our parish! Many of the young adults in our parish have grown up attending CLOW and have benefited by this special ministry. Our hearts will be forever grateful to Barb for all her hard work.

We are always looking for more volunteers. If you are interested in learning more about CLOW please contact Meghan at mmmgvsu@yahoo.com or Vanessa at vbooth@ssppcatholic.com.

MONDAY NIGHT SCRIPTURE STUDY

"The Advent of Christ: Scripture Reflections to Prepare for Christmas"

JOIN US in our season of preparation - ADVENT! Contact Toni at the parish office to reserve your study materials. It's not too late!

Christmas Card Exchange

Save a stamp! Parishioners may drop their Christmas greeting cards in the box in the back of church **from now through December.** Use first and last names when addressing the cards. Please do not place anything inside the cards/envelopes except your wishes. Cards in the mailbox will be sorted and placed in alphabetical order on the same table. Be sure to check each week for cards sent to you!

Curious about the Catholic faith?

OCIA, the ministry of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (formerly RCIA) holds its weekly sessions on **Sundays at 8:00 a.m.** We meet in the parish office living room, which can be entered through the stairway entrance off the parish office driveway. We invite you to come and see what Catholic Christians believe, what we do in striving to live our faith, and how we journey into becoming missionary disciples of Christ.

No need to RSVP. Simply come and see what God has in store for all who turn toward him. We look forward to meeting you and sharing our Catholic faith with you!

Midnight Mass and Concert to be broadcast from the Cathedral of St. Andrew on FOX 17 and online

The Prelude of Carols followed by Midnight Mass will be broadcast live from the Cathedral of Saint Andrew on FOX 17 and on the diocesan website, gdiocese.org, on Christmas Eve. The concert begins at 11 p.m. followed by Mass at midnight.

On Christmas morning, there will be a replay of the Mass on FOX 17 at 7 a.m.

A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel shows that John the Baptist and parents have similar vocations. Like the Baptist, parents are asked to make "rough ways smooth" and to "prepare the way of the Lord" for their families. This Advent ask: "Does my life hinder or help my family to know Jesus?"