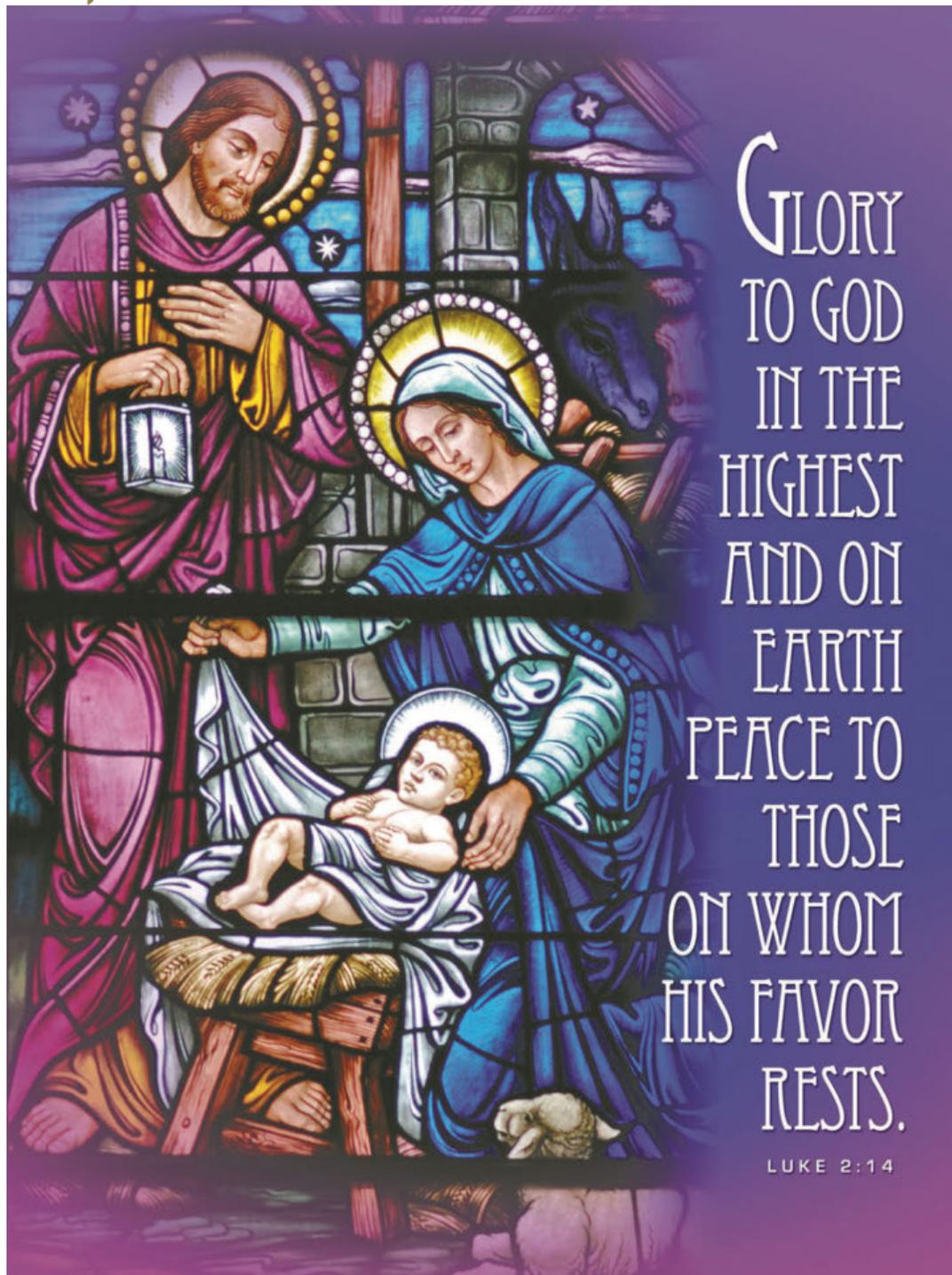


ST. MICHAEL'S



GLORY
TO GOD
IN THE
HIGHEST
AND ON
EARTH
PEACE TO
THOSE
ON WHOM
HIS FAVOR
RESTS.

LUKE 2:14

Mission Statement

Compelled by the love of Christ,
we love others,
deepen our faith,
and transform our world.

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FR. MARK'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Dear Guests and Sisters and Brothers of Our Mother of Sorrows!!

Merry Christmas! We are honored that you chose to celebrate the great Feast of Christmas with us.

I am so happy that you came to share Christmas with us. To all of you who are parishioners of Our Mother of Sorrows & St. Michael's, as always, it's wonderful to see you. To those of you who are visiting family here in Johnstown and have come with them to celebrate Christmas here at OMOS or St. Michael's, welcome. To those of you who haven't been to Mass for a long time but felt the tug of Jesus – or someone in your family -- welcome. To those of you who are struggling these days because of hurt, loss, loneliness, or grief and are wondering about the meaning of life, you are most welcome.

Here is the message of Christmas for you. There is a God who is so madly in love with you that this God simply cannot tolerate any distance from you but came to dwell with you and to heal your hearts. The God we celebrate here this Christmas isn't the 'man upstairs' keeping score but the 'man below' who took on our human condition and taught us the meaning of life by being compassionate, forgiving, and self-sacrificing.

And, He hasn't left!! He is still here, very much here. Through the Church, Jesus is actually more present to us now than He was on that first Christmas long ago. In the midst of our world that looks all too broken and wounded by humanity, God's divine (and human) light shines through.

As many of you know, I have been reading Greg Boyle's books. I think his best book is Barking to the Choir, the Choir being the Church. In that book, there is a chapter titled "And Awe Came upon Everyone." In it, he tells the stories of men and women, former gang members, who are seeking to begin a new life because they have experienced the love of God through Fr. Boyle and the many members of his staff. They start to see these glimpses of light, where in their lives before, there was only darkness. In that chapter, he tells the story of Sergio. A story much more in detail than I can share here but let me offer one small part of his story that fills me with awe.

While sharing his story, Sergio says that when he was nine years old, his mother beat him pretty much every day of his elementary school years. Each day his back was bloodied and scarred. He said, "I would wear three t-shirts to school each day. The first cuz the blood would seep through. The second cuz you could still see it. And, finally, the third, cuz you couldn't see no blood. Kids at school would make fun of me, 'Hey, fool, it's 100 degrees, why are you wearin' three shirts?'" Boyle writes, "Sergio paused again so his emotions could catch up to him. For a time, he seemed to be staring at a piece of his story that only he could see. "I wore three t-shirts," he finally said, swallowing back his tears, "well into my adult years cuz I was ashamed of my wounds. I didn't

want no one to see them.” Then he suddenly found a higher ground upon which to rest. “But now I welcome my wounds. I ran my fingers over my scars. My wounds are my friends. After all,” he continued, barely getting out the words, “how can I help others heal if I don’t welcome my wounds?” AND AWE CAME UPON EVERYONE.

I pray that you and I, all of us, are in awe of the fact that God chose to become one of us so that we can become like Him. Similarly, can we be in awe tonight because, not only by His birth but because of His death, we can now be healed of our wounds? “By his wounds, we are healed.” (Is 53: 5-6). The love of Fr. Greg, a disciple of Jesus, touched Sergio’s heart and led him to embrace and begin the long process of healing that continues to this day.

Pope Francis states that this Christmas is a wonderful time to heal wounds, extend kindness, and a time for forgiveness and reconciliation. And may I say to everyone reading this letter: I am sincerely sorry if the Church has ever hurt or offended you. I am truly sorry if the Church has ever made you feel unwelcome.

I am in awe that you are here. So may all of us here tonight and today be in awe of what we celebrate this Christmas 2022. And let’s be in awe that miracles of healing and forgiveness continue to this day because Jesus lives among us still. Jesus is healing us still, forgiving us still, loving us recklessly, unconditionally, completely, and outrageously STILL!

This year’s Christmas gift is Matthew Kelly’s book, “Holy Moments.” The prologue tells a beautiful story; you will understand what the book is about once you read it. However, I want to share something from the end of the prologue that surprisingly will not give the story he tells away. Right toward the end of his story, it reads, “*As time passed, the Abbot noticed little things (holy moments). There was a new spirit of cooperation. The brothers praised and encouraged each other, compassion and forgiveness returned to their hearts, and they were kind to each other.*” I wonder what happened. Read the story, find out, and realize it can happen to us too. What happened to those monks can happen to us. What happened to Sergio, that awesome healing process, can happen to us. Jesus has come, but more importantly, He is here!! Merry Christmas!



ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Stay tuned for the “2023 Winter/Spring Adult Faith Formation” offerings. We will offer some of the same classes and add a few more. **The new sessions will begin on Sunday, January 8 at 9:45 a.m.** More details coming in the next few weeks.

The Chosen: Season 1—(with Sue Lovette & Jerry Clark) Season 1 tells the story of Christ’s early ministry while he is still an anonymous Jewish wanderer. The show’s story is incomplete, but the first eight episodes cover Christ’s meeting with the six first disciples and Mary Magdalene.

Unlocking the Mysteries of the Bible: (with Marty Radovanic & Ken St. Clair) - This video series helps to simplify the complex. It allows you to uncover the story woven throughout Scripture to get the “big picture” of the Bible and understand what it is all about. Best-selling author Edward Sri leads you through this video series.

Mom’s Group: This group of moms and grandmoms, often including their children, uses a recent publication on motherhood, and discusses the many dimensions of being a mom!

Dad’s Group: (with Brian Koch & Matt DiFrancesco) This group offers Dads and all men a place to come together and explore the Sunday Gospel readings by employing Lectio Divina. Lectio Divina is a way of becoming immersed in the Scriptures very personally.

Catholic Social Teaching: (with Karen & Mike Blaisdell) The Church’s social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about a just society and living lives of holiness amid the challenges of modern society. Various papal documents and Church teachings have shared modern Catholic social teaching. Karen & Mike will discuss the seven principles and how we can live our faith as 24/7 Catholic Christians.

Women in the Bible: (with Shelley Lowes & Chris Cosgrove) This semester, this class will feature “Revealing the Gift: Living the Feminine Genius” by Lisa Cotter. In this book, Lisa uncovers a transformational vision of a woman’s purpose, meaning, and gifts, which might not be exactly what you expect.

Answer the Faith: (with Norman Ed & Sean O’Dowd) This is a question-based class! Please bring your questions. Sean and Norman will do some research and do their best to bring answers. The following week. Some questions this past year have dealt with church traditions, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, to name a few. This class is open to high school and older. Your questions and your thoughts are welcome.

NIGHT OF WORSHIP AND PRAISE—JANUARY 6



There will be a Night of Worship and Prayer on *Friday, January 6*. Everyone is welcome! Join us for an evening of praising and worshipping our amazing God. If you wish, you will have an opportunity to receive personal prayer from our Prayer Ministry Team for the healing of spiritual, physical, emotional, or relational issues. Please bring a friend and prepare to be blessed with an evening of praise, prayer, community, and contemplation of the presence of God.



Merry Christmas to everyone from the small group ministry!

We are blessed to have many amazing folks participating in our small groups. These folks are actively engaged in our parish life and work to make our parish a “beacon of light in Johnstown.” We invite and welcome everyone to join this ministry and help our light shine bright.

Thank you to all of our cookie bakers! We had a variety of very tasty cookies for our Open House, Sparks Finding Christmas Concert and to send to St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Dinner. You rock!!!!!!

WEEKLY & MINISTRY SCHEDULES

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, December 26

6 a.m. —Eucharistic Adoration
8 a.m.—Mass at OMOS

Tuesday, December 27

6 a.m.—Eucharistic Adoration
7:30 am—Confession
8 a.m.—Mass at OMOS

Wednesday, December 28

7 a.m.—Praise & Worship
4:30 p.m.—Eucharistic Adoration
5:15 p.m.—Confession
6 p.m.—Mass at OMOS
Server: Tim Burgess

Thursday, December 29

6 a.m.—Eucharistic Adoration
8 a.m.—Mass at OMOS
Server: Isabella Segear

Friday, December 30

6 a.m.—Eucharistic Adoration
8 a.m.—Mass at OMOS

Saturday, December 31

4 p.m.—Mass at OMOS
Servers: Arianna & Adriel Manalang
Lector: Christa Curtis
Euch. Min. Michelle Petrell (2), Denise Esch, Marty Radovanic
Hosp: Elsie Kukura, David & Jane Solomon, Pattie Porter, Cathy Vigna, Gerri Isban, Joyce Radovanic, Alexis Angelo

Sunday, January 1

8:30 a.m.—Mass at OMOS
Servers: Sophie Messina & Joe Nibert
Lector: Andrea Criswell
Euch. Min. John Fontana, Linda Geiser, Carol Battaglia
Hosp: Ralph & Maria DeMarco, Jim & Joan Frischauf, Kathy Lepsch, Karen Findish

Sunday, January 1

9 a.m.- Mass at St. Michael's
Servers: Tim Burgess & Lucy Smith
Lector: TBA

Sunday, January 1

11 a.m.—Mass at OMOS
Servers: Charlie Neumann & Joe Gritzer
Lector: Don Falcone
Euch. Min. Tim DiGuseppe, Nelson Lowes, Patty Falcone
Hosp: Patty Falcone, Diane & Denny Thomas, Joyce Nesmith, Bill Ingram, Julie Fontana, Rick Phillips

Saturday, December 24— Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. OMOS Parishioners
4:00 p.m. St. Michael's Parishioners
7:00 p.m. OMOS Parishioners
10:00 p.m. OMOS Parishioners

Sunday, December 25— Christmas Day

9:00 a.m. St. Michael's Parishioners
10:00 a.m. OMOS Parishioners

Monday, December 26

8:00 a.m. Josephine Demo (M/M Richard Benyacko)

Tuesday, December 27

8:00 a.m. Richard Hanechak (Carol Visnovsky)

Wednesday, December 28

6:00 p.m. Marilyn Shorto (George & Carol Pisula)

Thursday, December 29

8:00 a.m. Rose Mirabile (M/M Gary Ripple)

Friday, December 30

8 am Marilyn Shorto (Roger Rosenberger)

Saturday, December 31—Vigil

4:00 p.m. OMOS Parishioners

Sunday, January 1— Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God

8:30 a.m. OMOS Parishioners

9:00 a.m. St. Michael's Parishioners

11:00 a.m. OMOS Parishioners

ST. MICHAEL'S NEWS

Thank you to everyone who helped decorate our beautiful church, Donated poinsettias, sang in the choir, or helped in many ways in our lovely community. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Please put the amount of your donation on your collection envelope. This will assist the counters and help with accuracy. Thanks!

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 & 8ab, 16bc & 17/Mt 10:17-22
Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8/Mt 2:13-18
Thursday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35
Friday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
Saturday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18
Next Sunday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

SUNDAY COLLECTION

December 11, 2022,
Envelopes\$ 8,229
Loose2,725
Online 7,453
Total\$ 18,407
Budget to Sustain Mission \$17,000/wk
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