

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

"Invenies Me in corde Gertrudis"

"You will find Me in the heart of Gertrude"

4900 Rialto Road, West Chester, Ohio 45069

TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS: Sundays 7:30 AM,
9:00 AM High, 11:30 AM, 5:45 PM

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Most Rev. Charles J. McGuire, Pastor
Rev. Stephen McKenna
Rev. Vili Lehtoranta
Rev. Thomas Simpson
Rev. Anthony Brueggemann



December 14, 2025

ADVENT III • GAUDETE SUNDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE

¶ GAUDETE

Rejoice a little today on Gaudete Sunday with the **Christmas Bake Sale** in Helfta Hall! Sunday Classes are at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction are at 4:45 PM.

¶ EMBER DAYS

Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of this week are the Church's winter **Ember Days**. All Catholics between the ages of 21 and 59, inclusive, are bound by the Church's laws of fast, and all who have attained their 7th year must keep the abstinence (meat once at the principal meal on Wednesday and Saturday.)

¶ ST. MONICA CLUB

The St. Monica Club meets Wednesday after the 11:25 AM Mass.

¶ RORATE MASSES

Only a few opportunities left to attend a Rorate Mass this Advent! These quiet, early morning High Masses by candlelight are a beautiful tradition. Come **Tuesday** or **Thursday** at 7 AM, or **Saturday** at 7:30 AM, and keep an Advent vigil with Our Lady.

¶ 2026 CALENDARS ARE IN!

Calendars for 2026 may be found in the bookstore. There are many other excellent Christmas gift ideas in the bookstore as well.

¶ CHRISTMAS ENVELOPES

This is the **last week** to turn in your Christmas Poinsettia Memorial and Christmas Novena Envelopes. Find these in the vestibule.



¶ NEXT SUNDAY: ADVENT IV

Blessing of Expectant Mothers after all Masses. Catechism Classes will be at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction will be at 4:45 PM.

📖 **Set Your Missal:** Fourth Sunday of Advent. Second collect of Our Lady in Advent, third Against the Persecutors of the Church, fourth Against Persecutors & Evil-doers. Trinity Preface.

¶ MIDNIGHT MASS POTLUCK

Just a reminder that the reception after Midnight Mass is a potluck. **Please bring a dish to share** if you plan to attend.

Congratulations to Patrick and Cristin Lotarski on the baptism of their son, Mark Samuel, on Sunday, December 7, 2025.



¶ CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve

7:00 AM Office of Prime
8:00 AM High Mass
1:30 PM Vespers
8:30 PM Matins
10:30 PM Carols
11:00 PM Procession, Blessing of the Crib
11:15 PM Midnight Mass, Potluck Supper

Christmas Day

9:00 AM Low Mass with string quartet, Benediction
11:00 AM Low Mass with carols
5:45 PM Vespers

New Years Day

7:30 AM Low Mass
9:00 AM High Mass
11:30 AM Low Mass
No evening Mass



¶ YOUR PRAYERS

Please pray for Fr. Soliman, Roseanne Elflein, Jane Brockman, Victor Ritze, Mark Blanchet, Terri Young, Christopher Richesson, and Dawn Lager.

¶ UPCOMING

- **Christmas Decorating:** Monday, December 22
- **St. John's Feast with Blessing of Beverages:** Saturday, December 27
- **Holy Innocents Children's Party:** Sunday, Dec. 28, after the High Mass
- **January 1st:** Circumcision, holy day. Masses at 7, 9 and 11:30 AM.

☞ **Please collect your dishes and check the Lost & Found in the social hall. Thank you!**

As Christmas Nears

Commercially Christmas has become only a gimmick for making money rather than a feast celebrating the birth of Christ. Medieval winter scenes appear in advertisements before the symbol of the Christmas star, and the so-called Santa Clauses precede the Crib-picture. It is up to Christians today to show the world the real Christ of Christmas, to restore the child-wonder of breathless beauty brought back to life by the liturgical celebration.

The Christmas Wreath

A much-loved custom is the use of the Christmas wreath. It too may be a family project fashioned by loving hands and made of any green available at Christmas time.

The wreath is usually decorated with a large bow or with tiny bells or cones, and hung in the window. Some like to place it outside the front door as a welcome token. By its circular pattern it shows the love of God, which has neither beginning nor end, and indicates our belief that it was this universal love which brought Christ down into the world, a tiny Babe in a cold manger at Bethlehem.

The Christmas Candle

As the great day approaches, holy anticipation sharpens our faith and sanctifies our hope and joy, while we prepare the Christmas candle. Any ordinary candle may be used, even one which has been decorated by the children, though nowadays commercial candles, very beautiful ones, are easily come by. A simple white blessed candle would be appropriate, since it typifies Christ, the Light of the world.

Preferably it is placed in the window on Christmas Eve, and as night falls, it shines forth to tell all the world that Joseph and Mary are welcome in the home. Perhaps it would be lighted by the father of the house, while all kneel and mother or one of the children reads aloud the Christmas story from the second chapter of St. Luke. This is one ceremony the children will always remember.

— Sr. Mary Laetitia, R.S.M.

Immen Christi

The Sanctuary Lamp will burn before the Blessed Sacrament during the next fortnight for the following intention:

**To heal the family tree of Emily
Bridget Gilhooly**
(Patrick Curry)



ONE LITTLE SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE

One secret to a sweet and happy Christian life is learning to live by the day. It is the long stretches that tire us. We think of life as a whole, running on for us. We cannot carry this load until we are threescore and ten. We cannot fight this battle continually for half a century. But really there are no long stretches. Life does not come to us all at one time; it comes only a day at a time. Even tomorrow is never ours until it becomes today, and we have nothing whatever to do with it but to pass down to it a fair and good inheritance in today's work well done, and today's life well lived.

It is a blessed secret this, of living by the day. Any one can carry his burden, however heavy, till nightfall. Any one can do his work, however hard, for one day. Any one can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, until the sun goes down. And this is all life ever means to us—just one little day. "Do today's duty; fight today's temptations, and do not weaken or distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them." God gives us nights to shut down upon our little days. We cannot see beyond. Short horizons make life easier and give us one of the blessed secrets of brave, true, holy living.

HYMN FOR ADVENT

Lord, come away!
Why dost Thou stay?
Thy road is ready; and Thy paths made
straight
With longing expectations wait
The consecration of Thy beauteous
feet.
Ride on triumphantly; behold we lay
Our lusts and proud will in Thy way!

Hosanna! Welcome to our hearts!
Lord, here
Thou hast a temple too; and full as
dear
As that of Sion, and as full of sin:
Nothing but thieves and robbers dwell
therein:
Enter, and chase them forth, and
cleanse the floor:
Crucify them, that they may never
more
Profane that holy place
Where Thou hast chose to set Thy
Face!
And then if our stiff tongues shall be
Mute in the praises of Thy deity,
The stones out of the temple wall
Shall cry aloud and call
Hosanna! And Thy glorious footsteps
greet!

— Jeremy Taylor (1613–67)



Collection Report

Sunday, November 30th.....\$5,923.00
Thank you for your generosity. Remember St.
Gertrude the great in your will.

✠ THE BISHOP'S NOTE ✠

The third Sunday of Advent—a day dedicated to joy, as it were. Holy Mother Church wants us to rejoice because the day of salvation is very near. Who is not filled with hope and joy at the thought of the Infant Savior's birth in Bethlehem!? Keep your thoughts on the humble manger and remain close by Our Lady and St. Joseph making their journey to the town where Mary will give birth to Our Lord and the reality of our Redemption begins.

The snow came on Friday, but not nearly as much as the weather man predicted. This is often the case, isn't it? Still, the snow-covered trees were a beautiful sight to behold. The bright red cardinals add a touch of beauty that only God could make. The cats aren't too fond of the snow, I've noticed, since they hide themselves indoors for the most part. But every season has its beauty—even the days when the skies are covered with gray. On those days we must remember the truth that the sun is still shining brightly above the clouds. We do not see it but it is there. Similarly, we must live by the Faith. Even though we do not see God or His saints or any of the countless hosts of angels, we know that they are up there in heaven rejoicing for eternity. Sooner or later the clouds will lift and the sun will shine, just as sure as we are one day to leave this earth—and at that moment we will see the reality of God and of Heaven and all those things that we believe by faith.

The school bake sale takes place today and I hope you will go back to Helfta Hall to purchase some goodies. The proceeds go to help our school. A Catholic school is a gift from God and must always be viewed in those terms. It is also a means of keeping parents who cannot or will not homeschool away from the temptation of sending their children to public schools where they are almost certainly to lose their morals, if not their faith. Our children receive a classical education here at St. Gertrude's, and are able to receive the sacraments at least six days out of the week. They also get to see and visit with the sisters and priests on a regular basis. We are thankful for the privilege of having a school attached to our parish and hope that you will consider supporting it by your prayers above all, but also by your kind donations.

We love our homeschool families, too. It is not easy to run a household and educate the children, too. Yet they still do so much to help around here at church. Bishop Dolan always said that both the parish school families and the homeschool families did so much at church. This is still the case—and we are thankful for of you and for all that you do. This should be understood by one and all, even when it is not necessarily expressed outwardly. The most important thing is that we are a spiritual family here at St. Gertrude's and that we work together for God's glory and one another's salvation.

Another health miracle! Roseanne Elflein has defied

the odds of survival which were stacked against her. I know that many of you have been praying for her. Now you should know that your prayers have been answered. She is now out of the ICU and is awake. Please continue to pray for her as she continues to recover. Prayer does work. If you have prayer intentions, send them to us and we will join you in praying for your loved ones.



Oh! I was sitting with some of the younger kids at lunch on Thursday, and somehow an edifying conversation about St. Daniel Stylites turned into an educational conversation about possums. One of the children announced that he once saw a possum, dead and covered with bugs, in the woods in Cincinnati. Then, remaining totally serious, the boy stated that you don't want to eat them like that. "What you want to do is shoot 'em, then throw it in the back of your truck, take it home to cook it, and eat it." Then, just to clarify himself, he said, "You want to do all that before the bugs get to 'em." Only in this neck of the woods! Parents of the school children, I will leave it to you to guess whose kid this was. In all honesty, it was such a fun moment.

Theresa has been busy packing and shipping calendars for at least a week now. What a job that is! School ends for Christmas break after the school musical this Thursday afternoon. **Fr. Lehtoranta** is getting ready for his Christmas visit to Milwaukee. **Fr. Brueggemann** just got back from Seattle where one of the seminarians received the cassock on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Sisters are situating nicely in their new home. That is about all the news for now! May joy fill your hearts and your souls this last full week before the Nativity!

— Bishop McGuire

COLLECT FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Stir up Thy power and come, we pray Thee, O Lord, and with great might succor us; that our deliverance, which our sins impede, may be hastened by the help of Thy grace and the forgiveness of Thy mercy. Who livest and reignest forever and ever, Amen. *(Say this prayer Saturday evening, as you light all four candles on your Advent wreath.)*

NOVENA PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment in which the Son of God was born of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. At that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my petitions through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.

(Traditionally said 15 times a day from St. Andrew's Day until Christmas.)

✠ CALENDAR

MON 12/15/25	OCTAVE DAY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
8:00 AM	Low Mass Special Intention, deceased – SB (<i>Jacinta Giese</i>)
11:25 AM	High Mass Special Intention for family (<i>Audrey Dunaway</i>)
TUE 12/16/25	ST. EUSEBIUS, BPM
7:00 AM	Rorate Mass Bishop McGuire's intentions (<i>Smith family</i>)
8:00 AM	Low Mass †Bishop Robert McKenna, O.P. – 10 th anniversary (<i>Karen Simpson</i>)
11:25 AM	Requiem High Mass Purgatorial Society
5:00 PM	Low Mass †Nancy Seyfried (<i>JCS</i>)
WED 12/17/25	EMBER WEDNESDAY
	FAST & PARTIAL ABSTINENCE
	ST. LAZARUS, BPC
7:00 AM	Low Mass In honor of St. Joseph (<i>Jane Childers</i>)
8:00 AM	Low Mass Alfonso T. Capetillo (<i>Nana & Grandpa</i>)
11:25 AM	High Mass Intentions of the St. Monica Club
	St. Monica Club Meeting
5:10 PM	Low Mass Anthony Caggese – Happy 20 th Birthday (<i>Dad & Mom</i>)
THU 12/18/25	FERIAL DAY
	EXPECTATION OF OUR LADY
7:00 AM	Rorate Mass †John Metz, 35 th anniversary & †Kyle McGuire, 4 th anniversary (<i>Judy</i>)
8:00 AM	Low Mass †Kyle McGuire (<i>Bishop McGuire</i>)
11:25 AM	High Mass †Loren McGuire (<i>Erika McKnight</i>)
1:00 PM	(approx.) Christmas Musical
5:00 PM	Low Mass †Nancy Seyfried (<i>JCS</i>)
FRI 12/19/25	EMBER FRIDAY
8:00 AM	Low Mass Special intention (<i>Cleo Speckert</i>)
11:00 AM	Confessions
11:25 AM	Low Mass Joseph D. Boyd/Murray (<i>John Boyd</i>)
5:15 PM	Confessions & Rosary
5:45 PM	Low Mass Holy Souls (<i>Jane Childers</i>)
6:30 PM	Sacred Heart Novena, Benediction
SAT 12/20/25	EMBER SATURDAY
	VIGIL OF ST. THOMAS
7:05 AM	Confessions
7:30 AM	Rorate Mass †Tacey Hoban (<i>Andrea England</i>)
8:10 AM	Alma, Sermon
8:20 AM	Low Mass Renee Fernandez & Family (<i>Cora Arlinghaus</i>)
SUN 12/21/25	ADVENT IV 🕯️🕯️🕯️🕯️
7:05 AM	Rosary
7:30 AM	Low Mass Agnes Brueggemann (<i>Anna Brueggemann</i>)
9:00 AM	High Mass For the repose of my †grandparents (<i>Renee Fernandez</i>)
10:40 AM	Catechism Classes
11:05 AM	Rosary
11:30 AM	Low Mass Clare Lotarski (<i>Sasha Bavetz</i>)
4:45 PM	Vespers & Benediction
5:45 PM	Low Mass For the people of St. Gertrude the Great

✠ THE GREAT ANTIPHONS

The public prayers of the Church consist not only of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass but also of the Divine Office, the prayers of the priests' Breviary. The Office was at one time chanted by some religious Orders. Certain parishes are reviving the custom of having Solemn Vespers on the eve or afternoon of major feasts. The Magnificat or Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary is chanted near the end of Vespers. Starting on December 17 a series of Antiphons are added to Vespers before and after the Magnificat. Just to read those "O Antiphons" each day would be a wonderful part of any Catholic's preparation for Christmas!

"The following Antiphons are said entire before and after the Magnificat, from the 17th to the 23rd of December, inclusive. If the Vespers are of a first or second class double, the great Antiphon is said after the prayer of the feast, for the commemoration of Advent.

Antiphon for the 17th of December (O Sapientia): O Wisdom that comest out of the mouth of the Most High, that reachest from one end to another, and dost mightily and sweetly order all things: come to teach us the way of prudence!



Antiphon for the 18th of December (O Adonai): O Adonai, and Ruler of the house of Israel, who didst appear unto Moses in the burning bush, and gavest him the law in Sinai: come to redeem us with an outstretched arm!



Antiphon for the 19th of December (O Radix): O root of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom the kings shall shut their mouths, whom the Gentiles shall seek: come to deliver us, make no tarrying.



Antiphon for the 20th of December (O Clavis): O Key of David, and Sceptre of the house of Israel; that openest and no man shutteth; and shuttest and no man openeth: come to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death.



Antiphon for the 21st of December (O Oriens): O Dayspring, Brightness of the everlasting light, Sun of Justice, come to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death!



Antiphon for the 22nd of December (O Rex): O King of the Gentiles, yea, and desire thereof; O Corner-stone, that makest of two one: come to save man, whom Thou hast made of the dust of the earth!



Antiphon for the 23rd of December (O Emmanuel): O Emmanuel, our King and our Lawgiver, Longing of the Gentiles; yea, and salvation thereof: come and save us, O Lord our God!



SERVERS

FRI 12/19	5:45 PM LOW: Capetillos
SAT 12/20	7:30 AM HIGH: M. Simpson
	8:20 AM LOW: Brueggemanns
SUN 12/21	7:30 AM LOW: M. McConnell, Brueggemann
	9:00 AM HIGH: MCs: N. & A. McClorey TH: T. England ACs: F. Caggese, M. Simpson TBs: B. & A. Constantino, T. Stanislawski, Ma. Caggese, J. & I. Smith
	11:30 AM LOW: Kolenichs
	4:45 PM VESPERS & BENEDICTION: TH: D. Simpson ACs: I. Smith, P. Caggese CROSS: F. Caggese
	5:45 PM LOW: P. McClorey

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**Redirect your state dues to support
students at St. Gertrude School!**



If you are an Ohio resident, you can redirect your state tax dues to scholarships at our school through the Ohio Christian Education Network Scholarship Granting Organization. Donate up to \$750 (\$1,500 for married couples) and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. It's never been easier to donate and to help educate our schoolchildren!

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Extra
Cost To
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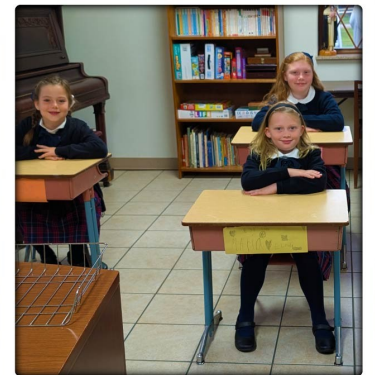
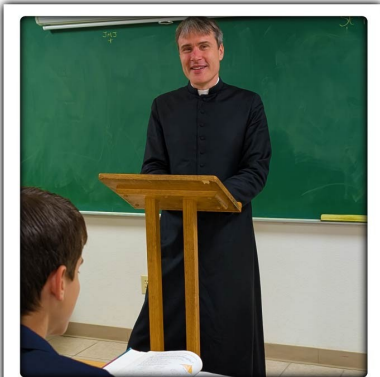
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Questions? : sggschool@sgg.org

