

**ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH BULLETIN**

**FOR**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2008**

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 7, 2008

# Saint Alphonsus

## Roman Catholic Church

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust

750 Pittsburgh Street • Springdale, PA • 15144

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Web Page Address: [www.stalphonsuschurch.com](http://www.stalphonsuschurch.com)

Administrator: Rev. George E. Saladna, S.T.L., S.S.L.

Weekend Assistant: Rev. James P. McDonough, S.T.L., J.C.L.



*Parish Established September 9, 1901      Church Dedicated September 5, 1926*

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**SUNDAY MASS:** Sat. 5:00 P.M. and Sun. Morn. at 8:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.

**WEEKDAY:** Mass held in Chapel next to Church. See bulletin each week or call Rectory for schedule of the 8:00 A.M. Mass which is not held every day (never on Sat morn).

**HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION:** these days vary in time and obligation from year to year. See bulletin or call Rectory each time for details.

**CONFESSIONS:** Sat. from 3:30 to 4:30, and anytime by appointment.

**MARRIAGE, BAPTISM:** call parish office (six months before marriage).

**COMMUNION CALLS AND OTHER SERVICES:** call office for information.

### PARISH OFFICES & STAFF

**ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER (RECTORY:** former Convent building)

(724) 274-5084

Marsha Etzrodt, Secretary

**Office Hours:** Mon. - Thur.: 8 to 4, Fri.: 8 to Noon

**LIGUORI CENTER OFFICES** (school building side entrance)

(724) 274-2547

**CCD & Youth Min.** - Karen Mueller

**Social Services** - Cathy Moxie

**Music Director/Organist** – Vickie Roof

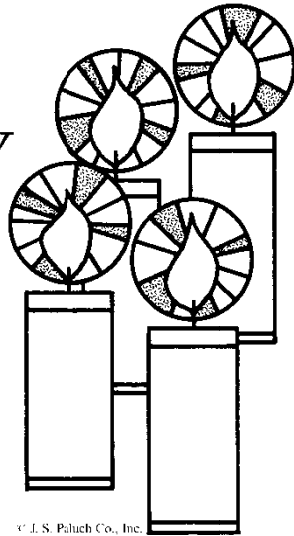


**New Parishioners:** We welcome new parishioners whether newly moved into the area or those who have fallen off through inactivity. Welcome! Register by calling or coming to the parish office. Become an active, attending and supporting member of the parish. And please let us know if you move away or have your telephone or address changed. Thank you.

**Church Hall Telephone:** ..... (724) 274-2547

CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
PITTSBURGH  
ALLEGHENY  
VALLEY DEANERY

# Make Ready the Way of the Lord



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## ADVENT

Advent is a Latin word which means “coming,” “coming toward.” The season in which we now find ourselves celebrates the “Advent” or “Coming” of Almighty God, His coming toward us.

Imagine that! God coming to **US!** To paraphrase Elizabeth when she was visited by Mary, “Who are **WE** that the Lord and Creator of the Universe would come to us?”

God comes to us in many ways. The first way he came to us was when he created us. He continues to come to us and be with us constantly, in his sustaining of the universe and his continual calling us to be with him.

The greatest Advent of all was when Jesus, 2000 years ago, came here in human form to be with us. As a result of that great Advent whose anniversary we celebrate and commemorate every Christmas, Jesus Christ, Son of the Eternal Father, will always remain with us, interceding for us.

The big question of Advent is **NOT** whether God comes to us and wants to be with us. We can be sure of that. We can take that for granted. God loves us and wants to be with us. No, the big question of Advent is whether **WE** want to be with God.

God calls. God knocks. God inspires. God desires to save us. Whether anything good comes from this call depends on our response. **DO WE WANT GOD? DO WE WANT HIM TO BE A REAL AND PERSONAL PART OF OUR LIVES? DO WE WANT TO BE WITH HIM, TO THINK AND ACT AS HE DOES? ARE WE WILLING TO FOLLOW JESUS IN THE PATH HE TOOK TO RESURRECTION AND LIFE?**

This is why we celebrate Advent. We use it to examine the priorities in our life and see if we are really letting God come to us. Is our door open? Do we want to be better? Do we want to give up sin? Do we really want heaven, knowing that it means we will have to carry a cross as Jesus did to get there?

Jesus came here the first time 2000 years ago. He will come again at the end of time and at the end of our lives, at a time we least expect. Let us use this Advent season well so we can be ready, looking forward with joyful hope to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have a good Advent. Have a good life. Have a good death. Have a good eternity!

-- Fr. Saladna

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## SCHEDULE OF MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

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**MONDAY, DECEMBER 8** – Immaculate Conception of Mary (Holy Day of Obligation – Three Masses)

6:30 AM	For all Parishioners, Liv. & Dec.
12:00 Noon	Rita Mickelic
7:00 PM	Paul Blume

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9** – Advent Weekday

8:00 AM	Pamela Hartzell
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**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10** – Advent Weekday

8:00 AM	Margaret Blume
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**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11** – No Mass scheduled for today

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12** – Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:00 AM	Helen Santay
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**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13** – No Mass on Saturday morning

5:00 PM	[For Sunday] Agnes Urik
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**NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14** – Third Sunday in Advent

8:00 AM	For all Parishioners, Liv. & Dec.
11:00 AM	Catherine and Nancy Pillitteri

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** for all those who are required to attend an "In-Service" presentation of "AWARENESS TRAINING FOR PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN."

This 3 hour presentation will be held in our **CHURCH HALL** on Sunday, January 18, 2009, from 12 Noon to 3 PM.

Note that this is a new date (replacing the originally scheduled date of December 14). Mrs. Karen Mueller, our CCD Director, will do the presentation. **PLEASE MARK THE DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR if this applies to you (all those on the Database, unless you have already attended the presentation elsewhere on an earlier date).**

If you have questions, call Karen at 724-274-2547 or Marsha at 724-274-5084.

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### LOOKING AHEAD

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 8** – Immaculate Conception of Mary. Holy Day of Obligation for all. Three Masses: all on the same day, Monday

6:30 AM	For all Parishioners
12:00 Noon	Rita Mickelic
7:00 PM	Paul Blume

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9** – Ladies of Charity Meeting in the Liguori Center at 7:00 PM.

#### SPECIAL CONFESSION TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS:

1. Regular: every Saturday afternoon from 3:30 to 4:30 PM.
2. **SPECIAL: Monday, December 22** – Three priests hearing from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.
3. **Tuesday, December 23** – 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM.

**CLEANING AND DECORATING THE CHURCH** – Monday and Tuesday, December 22 and 23

#### MASS SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS:

December 24, Wednesday	-	5:00 PM
December 24, Wednesday	-	10:00 PM
December 25, Thursday	-	8:00 AM
December 25, Thursday	-	11:00 AM

#### MASS SCHEDULE FOR MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (NEW YEAR'S DAY)

December 31, Wednesday	-	5:00 PM
January 1, Thursday	-	8:00 AM
January 1, Thursday	-	11:00 AM

**TURKEY VOUCHER ENVELOPES** – A wonderful Thanksgiving/Christmas tradition in the parish is the so-called **TURKEY VOUCHER**. Your donation in the "Turkey Voucher" envelope (found near the Church doors) will assist the hungry and the poor, especially during the holidays, either through our Parish Social Services Program and the Ladies of Charity, or through the Lower Valley Food Bank. Your name on the envelope is optional in case you wish to remain anonymous. Follow instructions on the envelopes. Thank you very much.

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**GIFT TAGS** – If you took a gift tag from the Christmas tree, the gift should be returned to the Church lobby by this Sunday afternoon, December 7, so that the gift can be given on the Food Bank's distribution day.

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#### HOLIDAY DECORATION OFFERING ENVELOPES –

In your envelope packets you will find the traditional envelope for Holiday Decorations, with a place to mark the name of someone you would like to remember by your offering. Our special Christmas Day bulletin insert for December 25 will contain the names of these "memorials." In order to be published, they must be received here no later than Friday, December 19. Please mark the names clearly (print rather than script). The money received will be used toward our Parish Share assessment.

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**YOUTH GROUP MEETING** -- today, December 7, at 9 AM in the Liguori Center. Our topics will include our attendance at the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual March for Life in Washington, DC, Youth Ministry t-shirt sizing and ordering, our winter snow tubing trip, and a special presentation by Mr. and Mrs. McCutcheon. Don't miss it!

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**ADVENT RETREAT FOR WOMEN** – Friday, December 19 at LaVerna House (Shaler). Theme: Franciscans and the Meaning of Christmas. Time: 6-9 PM, includes simple meal. Cost: \$10. To register call 412-515-7708 by December 16.

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**OPLATKY (CHRISTMAS WAFERS)** – Oplatky will again be available this year through our Parish Social Services. A colorful packet of 10 wafers (8 white, 2 pink) is sold for \$5.00, with proceeds going to Social Services in their outreach to the elderly and sick. They will be sold in the Activity Room after all Masses each Sunday before Christmas.

### BILLY GRAHAM'S PRAYER FOR OUR NATION

Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, 'Woe to those who call evil good,' but that is exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. We have killed our unborn and called it choice. We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self esteem. We have abused power and called it politics. We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. Search us, Oh God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Amen!

**LOWER VALLEY MEALS ON WHEELS** program is in great need of volunteers to cook meals. It only requires 3 hours a month and they work out of the St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Springdale, Please call Paulette at 724-224-6685 to volunteer or for more information.

**CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL** – The placement test for eighth grade boys who wish to attend Central Catholic starting in the Fall of 2009, will be administered on Saturday, December 13. There is a \$10 fee for this test. To register, visit [www.pittcentralcatholic.org](http://www.pittcentralcatholic.org) or contact the Admissions Office at 412-621-7505. All potential applicants must take this test.



### ADVENT: A CRY OF HOPE OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE JUST

Vatican City, Nov. 29, 2008 (VIS) – In the Vatican Basilica at 5 PM today, Benedict XVI presided at first Vespers for the First Sunday of Advent.

“Advent is par excellence, the spiritual season of hope”, said the Pope in his homily. “During that time the entire Church is called to become hope, for herself and for the world. All the people of God resume their journey, attracted by this mystery: that our God is the ‘God Who comes’ and calls us to come out and meet Him, first and foremost in that universal form of hope and expectation which is prayer”.

The Pope indicated the Psalms as the most exalted form of prayer, and quoted Psalm 141: “I call upon You, O Lord; come quickly to me”. This, he said, “is the cry of a person who senses great danger. But it is also the cry of the Church among the many perils that surround her and threaten her sanctity, that irreprehensible integrity of which the Apostle Paul speaks and which must be conserved for the coming of the Lord.

“In this invocation resounds the cry of all the just, of all those who wish to resist evil and the enticements of iniquitous wellbeing, of pleasures offensive to human dignity and to the condition of the poor”, the Holy Father added. “At the beginning of Advent, the liturgy of the Church once again makes this cry her own and raises it to God ‘as incense’ which is a symbol of prayer, of the effusions of people’s hearts towards God”.

“In the cry of the mystical Body we recognize the voice of the Head, the Son of God Who has taken our trials and temptations upon Himself to give us the grace of His victory”. In praying the Psalms, “the Church relives the grace of this compassion, of this ‘coming of the Son of God into human anguish until touching its very depths. The cry of hope of Advent expresses, then, all the gravity of our condition, our extreme need for salvation. Which is to say that we await the Lord not as some beautiful decoration to a world already saved, but as the only way of liberation from mortal danger”.

Referring again to Psalms 141 and 142, which form part of today’s liturgy, Benedict XVI pointed out that “they guard us from any temptation to evade and flee reality, they protect us from a false hope which could perhaps seek to enter Advent and so make us proceed towards Christmas forgetting the drama of our individual and community existence”.

The Holy Father concluded by saying that “a reliable hope, one that does not deceive, cannot but be a ‘Paschal’ hope, as we are reminded by the canticle of the Letter to the Philippians with which we praise the Christ incarnate, crucified and risen, universal Lord”.

- VIS (Vatican Information Service)

**PASTORAL STATEMENT OF U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

- The Bishops’ Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities is a call to people of good will to examine their attitudes toward their brothers and sisters with disabilities and promote their well-being, acting with the sense of justice and compassion that the Lord so clearly desires.
- What individuals with disabilities need, first of all, is acceptance. We must love others from the inside out, accepting their differences from us in the same way we accept our differences from them.
- Concern for people with disabilities was one of the prominent notes of Jesus’ earthly ministry (Matt 11:3-5)
- We see the defense of the right to life of persons with disabilities as a matter of particular urgency because the presence of handicapping conditions is frequently used as a rationale for abortion.
- People with disabilities bring with them a special insight into the meaning of life; for they live, more than the rest of us in the shadow of the cross. And, out of that experience, they forge virtues like courage, patience, perseverance, compassion and sensitivity that should serve as an inspiration to all Christians.
- We must undertake forms of evangelization that speak to the particular needs of individuals with disabilities, make those liturgical adaptations which promote their active participation and provide helps and services that reflect our loving concern.
- Our concern should be extended to the families and especially to parents. No family is ever really prepared for the birth of a child with a disability. When such a child does come into the world, families need strong support from their faith community.
- People with disabilities have the same duty as all other members of the community to do the Lord’s work in the world, according to their God-given talents and capacity.
- It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to people with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together.
- People with disabilities are not looking for pity. They seek to serve the community and enjoy their full baptismal rights as members of the Church.
- There can be no separate Church for people with disabilities. We are one flock that serves a single shepherd.

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES** is experiencing a 40 percent increase in the number of calls from people seeking help. The problem is heightened by the fact that the economy is also affecting the level of support being received at Catholic Charities.

With the approach of cold weather, there is a keen sense of urgency and a very real concern that current efforts will not be sufficient to meet the demand. For that reason, **I am asking you to sponsor a second collection in your parish this weekend, December 6 and 7 to benefit Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.** Thank you for your cooperation in alleviating this important need.

Most Reverend David A. Zubik  
Bishop of Pittsburgh

**MEMORIAL GIFTS**

Thank you for the following donations to the St. Alphonsus Memorial Fund:

**IN MEMORY OF CARMEN CIAMACCO** by Bernadette Rebold; Mary Pulliam; Earl and Connie Powers.

**IN MEMORY OF THE DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE FENN AND KUCHTA FAMILIES** by Jim and Audrey Fenn.

**IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH KOBOLKA** by Margaret Lukac.

**IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL LANDIS** by Bernadette Rebold; Tony Jursa; Earl and Connie Powers; Maggie and Don Cushman; Pulliam Family.

**IN MEMORY OF SCOTT LANDIS** by Family.

**IN MEMORY OF JENNIE CIAMACCO PAGEN** by Earl and Connie Powers; Ed and Lee Misour; Eleanor Ciamacco.

**IN MEMORY OF HERBERT PASTUCHA** by Chuck and Millie Evans; Tina and Kristine Kopay.

**IN MEMORY OF JOANNE SYDLIK** by Fran and Cathy Moxie.

**Your Ministry of Support**

Thank you for your offerings to Saint Alphonsus Parish  
For Thanksgiving Day and  
Sunday, November 30, 2008

Offertory . . . . . \$5,132.60  
Parish Share . . . . . \$340.00

**PLEASE REMEMBER SAINT ALPHONSUS CHURCH IN YOUR WILL**

**The second collection next weekend, will be the monthly collection for Improvements (moved from the first Sunday of December because of today’s special Catholic Charities collection).**