

**ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH BULLETIN**

**FOR**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2008**

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – NOVEMBER 30, 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.

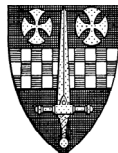
**WEEKDAY:** Mass held in Chapel next to Church. See bulletin each week or call Rectory for schedule of the 8:00 A.M. Mass which is not held every day (never on Sat morn).

**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.



**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

### 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)

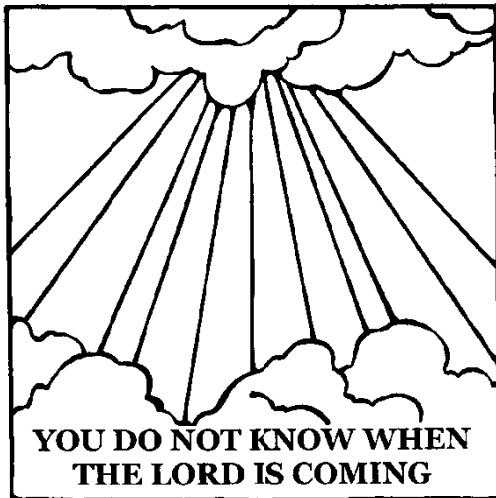
(724) 274-2547

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

**Social Services** - Cathy Moxie

**Music Director/Organist** – Vickie Roof

CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
PITTSBURGH  
ALLEGHENY  
VALLEY DEANERY



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### ADVENT PAST, ADVENT PRESENT, ADVENT FUTURE

In Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," we hear of Christmas, past, present and future. As we begin a new church year today, the First Sunday of Advent, we could consider this time of "waiting for the coming" under the same three aspects: Advent Past, Advent Present, and Advent Future.

In "Advent Past," we try to imagine the longing that the chosen people had for their Messiah, promised by God through the prophets of old. We try to imagine, even though it is impossible, what it must have been like to be without the hope we now have in Christ the Savior. In that historical advent, the people lived by faith, trusting that the promise of a new David would be kept. And their faith was not in vain, for not only did a Messiah come to them, but it was God himself in his Incarnate Word, Jesus, true God and true Man.

In "Advent Present" we "wait" for the coming of Christ at Christmas. His liturgical coming is celebrated sacramentally, as the readings in the season of Advent speak of our love for and longing for Christ, who will fill our hearts when he comes among us as our brother in the flesh. Even though we know who is coming and what he can and will do for those who accept him, we realize that Jesus' coming is deeply personal for each of us, and we prepare a place for him in our lives. John the Baptist tells us that we should prepare a straight path for Jesus, leveling the bumps and filling in the holes in that path by which we can receive our Lord eagerly and completely.

Finally, in "Advent Future," we look forward to the second and final coming of Christ, this time as King and Judge, when the dead will rise and the great, final judgment will take place. The world as we know it will end and the kingdom of God will be ushered in. The church urges us to look forward to these events with joy, for when he comes again, it will be to reward all

those who have thrown their lot in with Christ. They will reign with the Lord and Savior of the world and will hear him say to them, "Come ye Blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning." After that, there will be no more "advent." Everyone will have "arrived."

-- Fr. Saladna

### Mass Intentions



### SCHEDULE OF MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 1** – Advent Weekday

8:00 AM August Jursa

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2** – Advent Weekday

8:00 AM Jennie Patula

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3** – St. Francis Xavier

8:00 AM Carol Tabacheck

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4** – No Mass scheduled for today

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5** – Advent Weekday

8:00 AM Helen Bosman

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6** – No Mass on Saturday morning

5:00 PM [For Sunday] Anna Rovnanik

**NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7** – Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM Stella Mazak

11:00 AM For all Parishioners, Liv. & Dec.

**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.



**LOOKING AHEAD**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7** – 9:00 AM – Youth Group Meeting in the Liguori Center.

**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.

**A CHRISTMAS TREE ALREADY?** In the Church lobby, you will see a Christmas tree with tags all over it. This is our way of announcing the annual **GIFTS FOR THE POOR** campaign.

Through our own Social Services or the Food Bank we are invited to get a gift for someone this Christmas season. If you do, the recipient will not know who you are, nor will you know who gets your gift. Only the Lord knows of your generosity and thoughtfulness. The tags on the tree indicate, in a general way, the person who would get your gift: adult male, teenage girl, etc., etc.



If you would like to help in this worthy holiday endeavor, please take a tag or tags from the tree, whichever one you wish. The gift you get should be returned to the Church lobby on or before Sunday, December 7, so that the gift can be given on the Food Bank’s distribution day. If you can help, someone will be blessing their “secret benefactor.”

**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.

**NO CCD TODAY, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30.** This is our Thanksgiving Day holiday break. Classes will resume on Sunday, December 7.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** Our next Youth Ministry meeting will be held in the Liguori Center next Sunday, December 7, at 9 AM. 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!

**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 Decmeber 16.

**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, beginning this weekend.

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**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
CHRISTMAS SEALS**



This year marks the 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary of the Knights of Columbus' Christmas Seal Drive, which benefits Saint Anthony School Programs and McGuire Home. While you are undoubtedly familiar with the drive, what you may not know is that this year's effort will push the total revenue of the campaign over the \$5 million mark – an astounding level of support over the past half century for these two wonderful programs in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

The Knights will distribute Christmas Seals today, Sunday, November 30. Not only does the drive benefit Saint Anthony School Programs and McGuire Home, it also helps to place images of the Incarnation of our God before thousands of people – on Christmas card envelopes, personal correspondence and other items. Any amount you may wish to donate will be appreciated. Follow directions on the envelope. Even if you cannot donate, please keep the seals. Thank you.

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**CHRISTMAS NUT ROLL SALE** – SS Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, 339 E. 10<sup>TH</sup> Avenue, Tarentum, will be holding its annual Christmas Nut Roll Sale on December 3, 4 and Dec. 10 and 11. Nut, Apricot, and Poppy Seed Rolls will be available. Cost is \$10 per roll. Please place your order by calling Lynn, between the hours of 10 AM and 8 PM at 724-352-0031.

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**MAKE A CHARITABLE GIFT THROUGH AN IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER** – If you are over the age of 70 1/2, you must take a required minimum distribution from your IRA. Normally, this money is taxed as ordinary income. However, federal tax legislation enacted on October 3, 2008 permits you, for the remainder of 2008 and throughout 2009, to make a direct gift from your IRA to your parish, or other qualified charity. This gift counts toward fulfilling your required minimum distribution.

For each of the years 2008 and 2009 you can exclude up to \$100,000 from your gross income for distributions made directly from your traditional IRA to a qualified charity. For married couples, each spouse can make a distribution from his or her IRA under the same provisions.

**Diocese of Pittsburgh  
111 Boulevard of the Allies  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

My dear brother priests:

As the Chair of the Members of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, I am pleased to report that the agency has embarked on its new strategic plan, "Mission to Greatness." This exciting new phase for Catholic Charities is ambitious but will undoubtedly take its work to new heights.

In addition to the critical objectives contained in the strategic plan, Catholic Charities is challenged by the current economic conditions. As I'm sure you are aware, more and more individuals are having trouble making ends meet.

Catholic Charities is experiencing a 40 percent increase in the number of calls from people seeking help. I have been informed by the executive director, Susan Rauscher, that not only is the increase a significant change from this time last year, but in the complexity of the situations has increased as well.

The problem is heightened by the fact that the economy is also affecting the level of support being received at Catholic Charities. Ms. Rauscher informs me that the agency's fall appeal has seen similar numbers of donations being returned, but the level of donations has dropped.

Catholic Charities is being proactive in responding to the current situation. They are varying programming to meet increasing demand. In addition, teams of volunteer advisers are being asked to lead regional workshops to educate people on ways to avert problems before they become a crisis. The agency has also adapted to a new, more aggressive marketing plan that seeks out new and atypical funding sources.

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 the weekend of December 6 and 7 to benefit Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.** Thank you for your cooperation in alleviating this important need.

Grateful for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

Most Reverend David A. Zubik  
Bishop of Pittsburgh

**ABOUT THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** – The Knights of Columbus, a fraternal benefit society founded in 1882 in New Haven, Connecticut, by the Venerable Servant of God Father Michael J. McGivney, is the world’s largest lay Catholic organization, with more than 1.7 million members in the Americas, Europe and Asia. The Knights support each other and their community, contributing millions of volunteer hours to charitable causes each year. The Knights were the first to financially support the families of law enforcement and fire department personnel killed in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and to work closely with Catholic Bishops to protect innocent human life and traditional marriage. To find out more about the Knights of Columbus, visit: [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org).

**ABOUT CATHOLIC INFORMATION SERVICE** – Ever since its founding, the Knights of Columbus has been involved in evangelization. In 1948, the Knights started the Catholic Information Service (CIS) to provide low-cost Catholic publications for the general public as well as for parishes, schools, retreat houses, military installations, correctional facilities, legislatures, the medical community, and for individuals who request them. Since then, CIS has printed and distributed millions of booklets, and thousands of people have enrolled in its catechetical courses. If you desire a broader, deeper knowledge of God, Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, CIS can help. Find us at: [www.kofc.org/cis](http://www.kofc.org/cis).

**TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION**

Advent calendars appear now in many homes, and new-fangled formats are even available on line. Children have fun opening the doors and windows keyed to the days counting down to Christmas. Behind each door is a picture related to the Christmas mystery, perhaps a scripture verse or saying, but more and more these days something totally unconnected to religious life, like a small toy or a chocolate treat, appears instead. The Advent calendar is not very old as traditions go. We can trace it back to German-speaking Christians, both Protestant and Catholic. Lutherans might have originated the custom by placing chalk marks on doors starting December 1, lighting candles every day, or placing a new religious picture on the wall each day during Advent. The oldest known hand-made calendar goes back to 1851, and the first printed ones appeared in 1908 in Germany with Bible verses behind the doors. By far the most interesting calendar is a building, the town hall (*Rathaus*) of Gengenbach in Germany’s Black Forest. Every year the townspeople invite an illustrator of children’s books to create twenty-four paintings or motifs for each of the twenty-four main windows of the building. Every night the people gather to see a new window opened and illuminated.

Very few commercial Advent calendars pay much attention to the core values of our liturgical calendar: the pivotal place of Sunday, the importance of Advent feasts like Saint Lucy and Saint Nicholas, and the clear shift in tone on December 17 from Advent longing and preparation toward imminent hope in Christ’s coming. That kind of creativity is left up to you!

—Rev. James Field, © Copyright, J. S. Paluch

**GOD HAS A DIFFERENT PLAN**

We begin the season of Advent with a heartfelt call for our own repentance. We remember God’s faithful love for us, and call upon God to help us to turn back. For “behold, you are angry, and we are sinful” (Isaiah 64:4). In the first reading and in the psalm, we recall God’s promises and lament our unfaithfulness and our guilt. We call upon God’s might and power in order to save us. With Isaiah, we ask God to “rend the heavens and come down, / with the mountains quaking before you” (Isaiah 63:19).

Yes, God is faithful to us, because we are the work of God’s hands. God is the potter, we are the clay. And yet, our concept of how God will come to save us is rooted in our own expectations of a warrior God who crushes mountains and thunders into our lives with great noise and glory. But God has a different plan: the Incarnation.

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**Your Ministry of Support**

Thank you for your offerings to Saint Alphonsus Parish  
For Sunday, November 23, 2008

Offertory . . . . .	\$4,731.00
Parish Share . . . . .	\$1,035.00
Retirement Fund for Religious . . . . .	\$2,823.00

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

The special **second collection next weekend, will be the special Diocesan collection for Catholic Charities**. Our Improvement Fund collection, usually the first Sunday of the month, will be moved to Sunday, December 14.