



2017 DIOCESAN PARISH SHARE

CAMPAIGN Thanks to ALL who helped our parishes meet our 2017 Target Goal. If you'd like to make a special Christmas, or Year End Gift to your parish, offering it through the D/PSC is the best way, since all gifts are returned to the parish tax free. *All gifts are tax deductible. God Bless!*



K of C Council #11380 is pleased to announce the winners of the 2017 "Have Yourself a SCRIP Christmas". Winners receive SCRIP cards of their choice. Congratulations to : Martha Zwick \$300; Rose Thrower \$100; Jim Hoehn \$100; Dave Wolfe \$75; Norma Marko \$50. A big thank you to all who purchased tickets to help with this project.

BELL RINGERS A sign-up sheet is located in the narthex of each church asking for individuals (high school -adult) to volunteer at least *one hour* to ring the bells at the kettles at Kishman's and Shopco. This activity supplies the operating budget to assist the needy in our area throughout the year. Our area covers Malvern/Brown Twp. and Minerva. Volunteers are needed. *Please help!*

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS/DECORATIONS:

Your Church Envelope packet has a special one for "Christmas Flower Donations". Please fill out the front of the envelope with the names of the people you would like to have memorialized and printed in the *Flower Insert* of the Christmas Bulletin. Return it to the office, in the collection basket, or by mail. Deadline for the intention to be printed in the Christmas bulletin is December 17. Any intentions received after that date will be printed in the following bulletin. For questions, please call the office.

2018 CHURCH CALENDARS: Home calendars are available in the narthex of each church. Thanks to Bartley Funeral Home for generously sponsoring our 2018 calendars. Take one home as a reminder of the feasts for the New Year.



March for Life

MARCH FOR LIFE: The Alliance First Friends Church will be sponsoring a chartered bus to Washington DC on Friday, Jan. 19, 2018 for the annual March for Life. For more information, contact Miss Connie Bancroft, Bus Coordinator & Hostess at 330-823-4210.

VOCATION VIEWS: God calls us to proclaim the Good News. How do you share that Good News? Pray for the grace to be a faith-filled witness of God's love. (Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11)

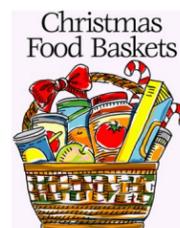
THE GIVING TREE

ST. FRANCIS: All gifts have to be *returned To St. Francis* by Sunday, December 17. Please make sure you *sign the list next to the name you take*. Attached to the paper ornament are two labels; one label has the information about the child you need to know, the other label has their name. Please put the label with just the name on it on the gift so it can be put with the right family. Thank you for your cooperation and helping make a child's Christmas better. If you have any questions, contact Jackie Contini - 330-863-0740.



ST. GABRIEL: The Angel Tags give suggestions and sizes for a particular child. The gifts can be wrapped (if you wish). Please attach the angel Tag to the gifts and return to St. Gabriel by December 12 after the 10:30am Mass. Any questions, please call Julie Lane at 330-205-4135. Thanks to all who have continually given and those who will help this year. The happiness you will give to some child cannot be measured!

JUSTICE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE - Christmas Food Boxes



The Justice and Social Concerns Committee is still collecting non-perishable foods for the Christmas Baskets. We are taking a *Special Collection* after all Masses this weekend to help with the purchase of perishables (bread/milk etc.) and extra canned goods. We *need help* packing and distributing the boxes on **December 19 at 2:30pm**. If you are able to help please call Ryan Irwin at 330-205-5475.

NEWS OF COMFORT

In a time of preparation, much of it having to do with material things, it is good to hear the words of Isaiah, "Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God" (Isaiah 40:1). In a time of such stress and rush, when our usual burdens are augmented by piles of Christmas preparations, we can choose to slow down, take some time to heal, and appreciate the enormous gift we are about to receive. Christ, the Son of God, has become one of us, and knows our human limitations. Yet God, even now, is freeing us from the burdens that our inattentiveness to our God and to our deepest inner longings have heaped upon us. The Lord comes, not as a king with mighty armies, but as a shepherd leading the flocks with care and tenderness. Isaiah prophesies good news: our oppression is over, our sins forgiven. The savior we have awaited is coming, not the first time, but in the end times, as our salvation.

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ST. GABRIEL

400 West High Street ▪ Minerva, OH 44657

OFFICE ADDRESS: P.O. Box 275 ▪ Minerva, OH 44657

PHONE: 330-868-4498

EMAIL: smstgabriel@frontier.com ▪ WEBSITE: stgabriel-stfrancis.org

PASTOR: Fr. Victor Cinson 330-868-4498
SECRETARY: Mrs. Peggy Romine
FAITH FORMATION/RCIA DIRECTOR: Ms. Linda Shaw
PSR COORDINATOR: Mrs. Denise Laubacher
SOCIAL HALL PHONE: St. Gabriel 330-868-4610
St. Francis 330- 863-0760

OFFICE HOURS:
9am - 5pm Monday - Thursday; 9am-2pm Friday

REGULAR MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4:00pm at St. Francis
6:00pm at St. Gabriel
Sunday: 8:30am at St. Francis
10:30am at St. Gabriel
Weekdays 8:00am Mon. and Wed. at St. Francis
9:00am Tues. and Thurs. at St. Gabriel
9:00am Fri. St. Gabriel Communion Service

[See Weekday Schedule inside for changes & special days.]

Holy Days of Obligation

Vigil (evening before) 7:00pm at St. Francis
Holy Day 9:00am and 7:00 pm at St. Gabriel
CONFESSIONS [Check bulletin for Holiday Schedule]
Saturday: 2:00 - 2:45pm St. Gabriel
3:15 - 3:45pm St. Francis

Other times by request. [Note: Confessions will be cancelled when there is a wedding at either church. Check weekly bulletin.]

BAPTISMS

Parents are to call the Parish Office to arrange for a preparation meeting. The child need not yet be born to make these arrangements.

MARRIAGES

Couples intending to marry must consult the pastor personally at least 6 months prior to the desired date. No date will be set until this meeting takes place.

BULLETIN DEADLINE:

All items must be submitted to the Parish Office in writing by 12:00 Noon on Tuesday.



ST. FRANCIS

125 Carrollton Street ▪ Malvern, OH 44644

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Many people think that Saint Francis originated the Christmas crèche, but its origins go far back. The Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome has housed what is said to be relics of the cradle of Jesus since the seventh century. In time, every year during the Christmas season the reliquary (container for relics) was surrounded by an increasingly grand three-dimensional scene of the place of Jesus' birth. Rocks and trees, houses, streams, figurines of villagers going about their daily tasks were all included. It was a very dramatic presentation. If you've ever seen an elaborate model train installation, you get the idea. The proper term for this depiction is *presepio*, from the Latin word for "surround" or "hedge."

Over the centuries, the custom spread first to churches, and then to aristocratic homes. In Italy, whole chapels are often set aside for the *presepio*, and it is not unusual to have hundreds of figures. It can sometimes be a challenge to locate the Holy Family amid the crowd, almost like a *Where's Waldo?* children's book. The oldest surviving *presepio* is in St. Mary Major and dates from the thirteenth century, although many pieces have been broken or lost. Saint Francis of Assisi took a decidedly creative step in 1233 in the village of Greccio, when he directed his followers to fill a manger with hay and tether an ox and ass nearby. He then invited the villagers to attend Mass outdoors near the crib, the worshipers themselves becoming a living *presepio*. By the seventeenth century, the tradition was well-established, particularly in Naples, and had a firm hold in Portugal, Spain, and in the Provence region of France. Today, it is not unusual to find *presepios* with five hundred figures, a vivid reminder of Emmanuel, God-with-us!

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



Second Sunday of Advent - December 10, 2017

WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 9
4:00pm SFX Earl & Gretchen Staley by Jane Phillips
6:00PM SG Living and Deceased members of both parishes

Sunday, December 10—2nd Sunday of Advent
8:30am SFX John Cinson by John & Anita Tokos
10:30am SG Michael Canestraro by Ted & Beth Tomak

Monday, December 11—St. Damasus I
8:00am SFX The Health of Shawn Coe

Tuesday, December 12—Our Lady of Guadalupe
9:00am SG Mary Jo Casper by Terry & Lisa Dunlap

Wednesday, December 13—St. Lucy
8:00am SFX Carol Gallina by Joan & Bob Gallina

Thursday, December 14—St. Joh of the Cross
9:00am SG Michael Zwick by Raymond & Martha Zwick

Friday, December 15
9:00am SG Communion Service

Saturday, December 16
4:00pm SFX Living and Deceased members of both parishes
6:00PM SG David Casper by Russ & Judy Wood

Sunday, December 17—3rd Sunday of Advent
8:30am SFX Ruth Witczak by Janet Michel
10:30am SG Ruth Pilati by The Bill Pilati family

CHURCH SUPPORT:

May God bless you for your generosity to our parishes on December 3, 2017

St. Gabriel: Adult \$2,948; Loose \$155; Cap Imp.\$192; New Hall \$240.76; Christmas Decorations \$315; Immaculate Conception \$130; Retired Religious \$630.

St. Francis Xavier: Adult \$2,643; Loose \$92; New Hall \$1,340; Extraordinary Bldg Fund \$379; Retired Religious \$10; Christmas Decorations \$210.

PARISH SUPPORT: *Please make any Checks covering your Regular Church contributions payable to the parish in which you are formally registered.* The exception would be if you are making a donation to the New Hall Fund, which should be made payable to: St. Francis Church. Thanks.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT:

"Prepare the way of the Lord..." - MARK 1:3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, does just that – it puts us on the path to holiness and it invites others to be holy, too.

PARISH SHARE CAMPAIGN:

December 9/10 Paper products (necessities)
December 16/17 Hot Drink Mix, Coffee, Tea, etc.

SICK AND SHUT-INS

Stone Crossing: Vera Kompara (SFX)
St. Joseph Care Ctr.: Fran Montella (SFX), Jerry Nicolet (SG)
Home: Denise Laubacher (SG); Ivette Martinez (SG)
SG at Arbors (Great Trail) Nursing: Richard Lane, Doris Ferguson, Mary Campbell

St. Luke Minerva: James Smith, Josephine Moysenko
Carroll Health Care: Mary Wadsworth (SG)
The Pines: Roman Ritterbeck (SG)

Copeland Oaks: Jane Collins, 800 S 15th St, Room 8103, Sebring, OH 44672
Altercare of Louisville: Rosemarie Scurto (SFX), 7187 Saint Francis Street., Room # 402, Louisville, OH 44641

Prayer Chain for St. Gabriel and St. Francis:

For the prayer list for **St. Francis**, please call Dolores Hudson at 330-863-0273; For **St. Gabriel**, please call Darlene Mackey at 330-868-6639.

FOR ILL & HOSPITALIZED: Please call Parish Office as soon as one is hospitalized, and/or to request home visits and Holy Communion, from either parish. The Eucharistic Ministers *are not* to make these arrangements. Whenever one is admitted to an area hospital, or nursing care facility please **inform the Admissions Office you are Catholic and your Parish**. Due to the *Privacy of Information Act*, hospitals no longer give out personal information.



The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The RCIA process, designed for those adults who are interested in finding out more about the Catholic faith, continues to meet on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9 PM in the annex at St. Gabriel's. During these weeks, which will take us to the first Sunday of Lent, we will reflect specifically on what the church teaches in our Creed and the seven sacraments, focusing especially on the Sacraments of Initiation which we will celebrate at the Easter Vigil: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. For more information about becoming part of this faith journey process, please contact Linda Shaw at the church office at 330-868-4498.



CHRISTMAS DECORATING: We will decorate both churches for Christmas after Mass on Sunday, December 17. Can you lend a hand? Many hands make light work! Help us to get our house ready for Christmas!

PSR News

All children in PSR, K- 8, are invited and encouraged to be part of the nativity and chorus presentation which will be held prior to the Christmas Eve 4 PM Mass. A letter with more information is coming home with the children from class today.



**"Come Together, Build Our Future,
"Leave a Legacy"
Support the NEW "St. Francis & St. Gabriel"
Parish Hall Fund Drive.**

PHASE II: "GROUND BREAKING" DRIVE
**Every Day we aer getting closer. PLEASE
HELP US WITH YOUR GIFT!**



Help us to keep the momentum growing. We are in the "Ground Breaking" phase of our New Hall plans. To date the **Phase II Drive has raised \$330,987 in new, or additional, gifts and pledges. The extra money needed will help towards the furnishings and equipment for the hall.**

We have submitted our loan proposals to three area banks according to Diocesan Guidelines and are anxiously awaiting their response. As soon as we hear from them we have another meeting with the Diocesan Building Commission to finalize that plans and begin the bidding phase. Please pray that all proceeds well for us.

We need the help of All members of Both parishes, visitors, former parishioners, and the wider local community and Business/Corporate gifts. A special brochure with a return envelope is available in the narthex of each church, or by calling the Office. Please make checks payable to: "St. Francis Church". Help us to leave a legacy for the future of our parishes! **Thanks. God Bless!**

Pledge Amounts as of 11/20/2017

\$ 640,595.00 Pledges & Gifts (bricks, blocks, windows)
\$ 142,967.00 Fundraisers/Org. gifts & memorial donations
\$ 783,512.00 Total of Pledges and Gifts*

\$50,000 MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE - UPDATE:

Thorough the generosity of an Anonymous Donor we can **"double our money"** for the New St. Gabriel-St. Francis Parish Hall. To date we have received **\$21,020 in new pledges/gifts** which will be **MATCHED** Dollar-for Dollar for all **New Pledges/Gifts**, or **additional amounts added to an existing gift**, up to **\$50,000**. **WOW!!!** No matter how large or small your gift, it will be **worth twice as much**. What a wonderful way to make the dream of a new Hall for both parishes a reality. All gifts are appreciated.

NEW

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:

stgabriel-stfrancis.org

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2017:



Christmas Eve Sunday, Dec. 24
4:00pm St. Gabriel, Minerva
7:00pm St. Francis, Malvern
10:00PM St. Gabriel, Minerva



Christmas Day Monday, Dec. 25
9:30am St. Gabriel, Minerva

Parent Sacramental Meeting

The required *Meeting With Parents* of children planning to celebrate the Sacrament of *First Reconciliation* that was originally scheduled for Sunday, December 17 has been rescheduled for **Sunday, January 7 at 9 AM** in the *annex meeting room*. This meeting is required by both Parish and Diocesan policies and is designed to not only inform you as to the ongoing preparation of your children for the reception of the sacrament and your role as your child's primary educators, but also to allow you as parents and adults to reflect on your own understanding and appreciation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please mark your calendar's now and make every effort to join us for this important session



ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE:

As we get ready for the feast of Christmas we prepare our hearts to welcome Jesus. An important way we can do this is by joining in the communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Penance **Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 7pm at St. Francis Xavier for all area parishes.** Many area priests are scheduled to assist with individual confessions. Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year it will be one of the last scheduled times to celebrate the sacrament. We invite parents to assist their children in preparing to celebrate this opportunity to grow in their faith too! **Make this Advent at time to experience God's love and mercy as you get ready to celebrate Jesus' coming into our lives and into our world.**

Best Advent Ever (Dynamic Catholic) – is designed by Matthew Kelly and is a free email program that will help you slow down and focus on what matters most during this busy season. To sign up all you do is go to dynamiccatholic.com and complete the form. You will receive daily emails with short inspirational videos and practical tips for your every day life.

CHRISTMAS CHOIR PRACTICE for both St. Gabriel and St. Francis Xavier will meet this coming Wednesday at St. Francis, Malvern at 5:30pm. This includes any children that will be singing with the choir at the 4pm Christmas Eve Mass at St. Gabriel. The children that are singing before Mass will practice on Sunday's during PSR. Anyone wishing to sing for Christmas please attend this practice.