

WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS



- Saturday, December 3rd, @ 5:00PM, Birthday Remembrance for **George Duane Martensen**, requested by the Martensen Family.
- Sunday, December 4th, @ 8:00AM, Mass for **Thomas West, Sr.**, requested by Irene and Bob Samuelrich.
- Sunday, December 4th, @ 11:00AM, 7th Anniversary Mass for **Astra Cerchia**, requested by the Cerchia Family.
- Sunday, December 4th, @ 5:00PM, Mass for **Patricia King**, requested by the Newman Family.
- Monday, December 5th, @ 8:30AM, Birthday Remembrance for **William J. Carew**, requested by Bill & Karen Carew.
- Tuesday, December 6th, @ 8:30AM, Mass for **Thomas West, Sr.**, requested by Barbara & Dick Hopkins.
- Wednesday, December 7th, @ 8:30AM, Mass for **Thomas Zile, Lorraine Zile and Norman Zile**, requested by Bob Zile.
- Friday, December 9th, @ 8:30AM, Mass for **George Gorman**, requested by the Mathewson Family.
- Saturday, December 10th, @ 5:00PM, Mass for **Jacqueline "Jacky" Ward Welsh**, requested by the Domashinski Family.
- Sunday, December 11th, @ 8:00AM, Mass for **Ed & Ella Wulf**, requested by the McHale Family.
- Sunday, December 11th, @ 11:00AM, Mass for **Martin Hollis**, requested by Terri Hollis.
- Sunday, December 11th, @ 5:00PM, Mass for **Jim Frulla**, requested by the Frulla Family.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Monday, Dec. 5th, 7PM - **Communications Comm.** - Library
- Tuesday, Dec. 6th, 7PM - **RCIA** - Rectory
- Tuesday, Dec. 6th, 7:30PM - **Men's Club SCC** - Library
- Monday, Dec. 12th, 7PM - **Prayer Shawl Mtg.** - Library
- Tuesday, Dec. 13, 7PM - **Finance Council Meeting** - Rectory

FEED THE HUNGRY YOUTH GROUP

Our next visit to the shelter will be on December 17th. Contact Mrs. Sheary at lisasheary@remax.net if you can help.

Offertory Collection for 11/27/11

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|---|--------------------|
| Weekly Collection: | \$11,204.21 |
| Loose Cash/Checks | \$ 1,682.21 |
| Envelopes | \$ 9,522.00 |
| Budgeted for Week: | \$ 9,000.00 |
| Overage: | \$ 2,204.21 |
| Cathedralicum* | -\$ 616.23 |
| School Tax* | -\$ 616.23 |
| Additional Campaign for Human Development: | \$ 365.00 |



*Parish Taxes (5.5%) Paid to the Archdiocese for services to the Parish

UPCOMING COLLECTIONS

- Immaculate Conception - 12/8**
- Religious Retirement Fund - 12/11**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

CONFIRMATION I & II will meet today, Sunday, Dec. 4th.

GRADE 3 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - The

Christmas Pageant rehearsals are underway, but already we are behind because of the storm cancellations. Please make sure your child does not miss class for the next few Sundays unless ill, so that they are able to rehearse for our lovely



Christmas Pageant on Saturday, December 17th, at 11AM. Dress rehearsal will be at 9AM sharp on December 17th, so please be a few minutes early. A reception will follow in Russell Hall. Please be sure to return the goodies/beverages sign-up sheet to your child's teacher or Kathi Bonner.

Breakfast with Santa



LAST WEEKEND TO BUY TICKETS!

Breakfast with Santa will be held on Saturday, December 10th, from 8-10:30AM in Russell Hall. No tickets will be

sold at the door. Please bring an unwrapped toy or gift card for Simsbury Social Services (preferably for a child older than 5). Contact Susan for more info @ smnapolitano@hotmail.com or call 860/651-9749.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE! This is a great way to earn Confirmation hours! Sign-up sheets are in the atrium and vestibule. Contact **Susan** @ 860/651-9749 or email smnapolitano57@hotmail.com for more information.

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA WEBSITE



Attention All Parishioners: Our new Parish Website is up and operating. Check it out at www.stcatherine.info and review all of the useful information including: Mass

Schedules, Sacraments and Worship, Parish Ministries, Resources and our Parish Religious Education programs. Add it to your list of favorites for convenient future reference! It is a work-in-progress, so check it out frequently to see how it grows!

Attention Parish Ministry Leaders: In order to make our Website informative and timely, we need contributions from each Parish Ministry. We need you to provide the website with content to inform the parish about your group: who you are, what you do and when your activities take place. Your Parish Ministry Section can include text, images, pictures of activities, etc. Be creative!

Please send your Parish ministry content contributions to StCatherineWebMaster@comcast.net. The sooner you build out your Ministry section, the sooner you will reap the benefits from increased visibility. If you have any questions or need assistance with formatting, etc., call **Tom Tanski** at 860/559-2024.

FROM FATHER MICHAEL...



Kudos and Thanks! On Saturday, November 19th a great number of Saint Catherine of Siena parishioners went out into our neighborhoods in this year's Annual Leaf Rake, and worked very hard to clean-up yards of those in our community who are unable to take care of their own property. Leaves were raked as well as collected and then they also stacked up tree branches and debris left over from October's devastating Nor'easter. This was a wonderful act of charity! It is also a sign of the goodness of God as lived out by His disciples in very practical ways. Parishioners' young and old—and those in between—worked in more than 30 yards to help neighbors in need. As you know, this is an annual event—which seems not only to grow in quantity each year but manifests the magnificence of so many wonderful people. While there are too many to mention by name, I do wish to mention Mike Reilley who takes the lead in organizing this event and thank him for his kindnesses and expertise in putting this annual act of charity together. I have received numerous cards and phone calls from those individuals you all helped out—they are thankful beyond words. And a *Big Thanks and applause* to all who participated in this year's event! Thank you all!

Week Two of Advent. As we come to the close of the year in the secular world, the media will produce a "retrospective" of 2011—we will hear of those famous personalities who died this year, the best and worst of movies, dress, and the all-important bloopers. We will be forced to remember just what comprised the year 2011—like it or not—as the year fades into a collage of the past 12 months.

But as the Church ends its liturgical year, we do not re-gurgitate the past but rather look to the future. In fact, the readings of the Advent season points us to what lies ahead—the birth of God made man, the Resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting—in a nutshell. And as we contemplate what lies ahead for each of us, we do so in the midst of the Word of God. Let us look this second Sunday in Advent to our second reading (2 Peter) and listen to what the Apostle tells us:

The Lord's time is not our time. His plan for us and for the whole of Creation is not limited to human understanding or time frame—God is bigger than that. And in His plan, God wishes not to lose any of those He created (you and me). His hope and desire is that none should perish, but that all should come to know His love and mercy through our repentance. In this we become holy and righteous. In our admitting our guilt and faults, in recognizing our need for Him, in seeing that He calls us to Him and His love, *we are forgiven*. Coming to Him in the sacrament of Reconciliation—which Jesus Himself created and gave to His Church—and thus seeking His Mercy—this is *the* hope of God.

In today's world culpability for wrong doing or sin is not something we like to think about. Considering what "I do" as wrong or sinful is not "normal" in today's modern and enlightened mind. Rather, what "I do" is "ok" because I am a "good person." In this mindset we then hold God at a distance—far from our hearts. But God tells us, and Peter reiterates, that He is patient and for Him a day is like a thousand years...though we do not know when the Lord is coming...*"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire and the earth and everything done on it will be found out."* Nothing will be hidden. All will be known. God has told us this. He has warned

us. He has also showed us how to act, how to be, what to do.

In order to begin the path to repentance though, we need hope. And that's what today's scriptures offer us. In today's first reading a people who are beginning to doubt God's promises are given hope. The prophet Isaiah offers the exiled Jewish people in Babylon the promise of consolation. This exile of the Jewish people means they will become slaves again. But the prophet tells them to continue to trust in the Lord—even in their despair—and He will lead them out of slavery into the Promised Land.

In the second letter of Peter, hope and encouragement are given to those who despair about the timing of the Lord's second coming. People think that God is working too slowly. They hoped for—expected, even demanded—the second coming to happen right away. They were disappointed. But Peter tells them to live lives that are faithful and holy while they wait for God. God works slowly because He respects human freedom and allows growth to happen in small and often imperceptible ways.

The Gospel offers the hope of a new beginning: the birth of Jesus Christ, a little child in a backwater town, poor and a refugee. But His birth will change the entire meaning of life, which is now meant to end in friendship with God.

New beginnings are often difficult, even when the new beginning or change is chosen, but it is especially difficult when change and new beginnings are thrust upon us. Forced change can lead to questions such as "Why did God let this happen to me?" or "Where is God now?" God is always near! He is never silent. He is gentle and caring, like a shepherd who knows and loves His flock. To trust in God and His providence requires great faith. Even the disciples who walked with Jesus and saw Him at work struggled with faith. We are no different. And questioning faith is not evil or wrong—as long as we do not question it with the attitude of just giving up. But if we question like Thomas, with a desire to know the Truth, then our questioning will only lead to God who is Truth. Our path to friendship with God takes time. We all travel at different speeds and on different roads. What we cannot become is closed to or cut off from God's forgiveness and mercy, for if we are, then we cannot become His friends.

As we travel through Advent this year, let us be with the Church and look to what lies ahead: the birth of God made man in Jesus Christ, the Resurrection, and life everlasting. All things that give us hope.

Advent Giving Tree Project

This weekend we begin our Advent Giving Tree Project in our parish. As Catholic Christians we are called to be our "brothers and sisters keepers" which means we are called to think beyond ourselves and to do what we can for the needs of others.

We have two ways for all of us to take part in this wonderful project. **One option** is to support **Pantry Partners of Saint Catherine** and assist our parish in helping our local neighbors right here in Simsbury to help to buy food each month. Too many of our friends and neighbors are struggling with their food bills. Supporting this program will ensure they have enough food to make it through the month. **The second option** is to make a donation to the **Malta Mobile House of Care**. This medical van, staffed by volunteer medical professionals, travels the archdiocese and provides medical care, medicines and treatments for those who have no medical insurance. Mothers, babies, senior citizens, and families. Please look at the displays for each ministry in our atrium and stop by the Malta Medical Van which will visit our parish this weekend. Feel free to walk through the Malta Mobile House of Care and see how your donation works. For more information on the Giving Tree Project contact Karen Carew at 651-8960 or w.carew@comcast.net

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