



OUR PARISH

Family Newsletter

Winter 2017

Saint Joseph
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Serving God and Neighbor Since 1946



DON'T FORGET ADVENT

We live in a world that tells us we can do whatever we want in an instant, that preparation isn't necessary and everything only matters for and in the moment. With this mentality, we end up jumping right from Halloween to Christmas, forgetting about the season of Advent. Catholicism is different. We know that holiness takes time, becoming like Christ is a lifelong endeavor. Far from skipping over liturgical seasons we are asked to bask in the present encounter with Christ. These liturgical seasons prepare us for what is to come much like seasons of our lives prepare us for the future. What does Advent prepare us for?

Advent is the preparation time for two things. First, it is the celebration of the time of preparation that led to the coming of our Messiah at Christmas and second, it is the celebration of the preparation of the impending second coming of our God at the end of time. While Christ's wrapping himself in flesh happened in an instant and his second coming—like a thief in the night—will most probably happen the same way. Advent reminds us that there were many years between creation and the time of the Jesus-event and that there are many more years leading up to the second coming. This is the preparation time, designated by God, for you and me to get to

know the one we want to spend eternity with.

With the world constantly throwing Christmas in our face, the whole entering into Advent thing is easier said than done. But is it? Here are a few practical tips for celebrating Advent more fully; use your Advent wreaths, join the parish Jesse Tree Ornament Exchange (info in the bulletin). Listen to Advent music, wish people a "blessed Advent and Merry Christmas." By celebrating the season of Advent more fully, may a deeper hope for the eternal joy that waits in the presence of God, well up in your heart!

Have a blessed Advent and Merry Christmas everyone!
Fr. Bob

Table of Contents

Don't Forget Advent	pg. 1
Sharing Trees	pg. 2
2017 Annual Report	pg. 3
Marriage & Family Ministry	pg. 6
Feeding Our Family	pg. 7
The Feast of Seven Fishes	pg. 8
Winter Thaw Winner Recipes	pg. 8



Sharing Trees



Holidays mean so many different things to each and every person. Everyone has their favorite holiday and reason for liking it. Christmas is one that is a top pick for kids and adults alike. The stores seem to prepare earlier and earlier for this holiday. There are cards to write, cookies to bake, parties to attend, gifts to wrap and decorations to be hung. With all the hustle and bustle of these preparations, it is easy to forget why we truly celebrate Christmas. After all, you cannot write Christmas without Christ!

Do you want a way to keep Christ in Christmas during this special season? The annual Sharing Tree at our parish is just one small way that you can do just that. This small act of helping will have not only a big impact on a stranger at Christmas but also have a powerful impact on you as well. Who knew that taking one tag and fulfilling a wish could bring back the magic of Christmas that is easily forgotten!

The Sharing Trees have been up and decorated in the Gathering Area. While it seems early, the process of getting the gifts to the recipient takes some time. In fact, this process starts in September with phone calls to organizations and families in need. The wish lists are typed up and made into tags for the trees. Altogether about 1,500 tags go onto the tree. Each year the parish comes through and we are able to fulfill the wishes of those in need at Christmas.

There are a variety of families, individuals and organizations that are put onto the tree. The main focus of the trees is to take care of

our Strongsville family first. The trees have 90 tags on them for gifts for families in Strongsville, these families are found through the Strongsville Food Bank and without our support, these children would not have gifts at Christmas. We also place tags on the tree for individual families to make sure people in our community have a beautiful holiday. Another big group we help through the trees comes from Medina at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish. There are many toy tags on the tree for this parish that are pegged for certain children in need. Taking one tag can make Christmas magical for a child.

There are groups that are placed on the trees. There are many sweatshirt, hat and glove tags for St. Herman's in Cleveland. This is a men's shelter and these tags make sure the men stay warm throughout the winter. Another group helped out on the trees is Albion Home in Strongsville. This is a home for young men and their simple wish is for McDonald's gift cards to go out to eat on their own throughout the year. These two groups are just the tip of the iceberg for those helped on the trees. The West Side Catholic Center asks for GFS gift cards to serve breakfast throughout the year. There is also the Holy Family Cancer Home who asks for donations to support their amazing facility. Another group we support is all the way in El Salvador. They ask for monetary donations for water filters and cooking stoves. Lastly, our own Minister of Assistance needs gift cards to provide to clients in need in Strongsville throughout the year. It is truly amazing to see how many people are touched by the trees.

One of the positive things about having so many groups on the trees is that each parishioner can find a tag that speaks to them. Families with young children often prefer to take toy tags. This helps to teach children about helping others, especially at Christmas. Other people have been touched by the Holy Family Cancer Home and see the trees as a way to give back. No matter where your heart is, you can find a tag that speaks to you.

The giving process is simple and you can help so many. Come back and find a tag that you like...**please then buy a gift or gift card, wrap it, attach the tag and return it to the trees no later than December 9th and 10th. This step is imperative to the process. If the gifts are not returned by this date, the person on the tag will not get their present. The gifts are then sorted and delivered on December 10th.** There are hundreds of people helped because of your generosity.

This parish has always been so supportive of the Sharing Trees. Each year so many people receive gifts and with that, joy and hope during the magical season of Christmas. This a great project for anyone who would like to get involved (including families with young children). The sorting day pulls so many parishioners together for a common cause. If you would like to help or have any questions please feel free to email Debbie Festa at sjsharingtree@yahoo.com or call the Parish Office. We thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity and wish you all a blessed and magical Christmas season. Debbie Festa

2017 Annual Report

St. Joseph Parish

Dear Parish Family:

Each year our Winter Newsletter affords me a chance to write and share with you an Annual Report about the activities, life, and finances of our parish community. Since beginning my ministry as Pastor of St. Joseph six years ago, we have experienced much together as a family of believers. I have taken great pride in the ministries and work that we have cultivated and undertaken, while also being able to grow in our awareness of Christ's presence found in ourselves and in our neighbors. I hope that in some way these years have been a blessing for you and our parish community as they have been for me. With a very grateful heart, I present to you our Annual Report covering the period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

As I wrote last year, we do not anticipate any further major capital improvements in the near future, and since last year, because of your generosity, we have secured the funding necessary for our Pipe Organ. Thank you again for what has already been contributed to this project. It's wonderful to see our capital plans fulfilled!

Beyond our completed capital plans, I believe that many parishioners are aware that in December 2010 our parish refinanced the remaining \$598,200 from our 2006 \$1.5 million mortgage loan for renovation, remodeling, and updating of our church. The ten-year loan was originally due in December 2020. Through establishing debt repayment as a priority for our Finance Council and your continued generous support of the parish through Sunday Offertory collections, I am pleased to share that we will repay that loan in April 2018 and save nearly \$30,000 in interest payments! Thank you for all the financial gifts offered to our parish, as I believe being debt free, maintaining the ministries and outreach we do, and being able to do these things without coming to our parishioners to request additional Sunday Offertory donations as many other parishes have done, helps give witness to our parish's commitment to "serving God and Neighbor."

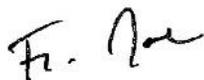
Parish Life Statistics	2017	2016
Adults welcomed into the Church	5	9
Infant Baptisms	78	57
Marriages	14	22
Funerals	68	70
8th Grade Confirmations	80	75
2nd Grade First Communions	61	74
Registered Households	2,672	2,593
Registered Parishioners	7,027	6,731
Average Weekend Mass Attendance	1,492	1,474

While we are happy to be eliminating our debt, it's worth noting, as I am sure you may have also experienced first-hand, the cost of our employee health care continues to grow and reflects the largest increase in our 2017-2018 budget. Our Diocese manages plans for all the parishes, entities, and many Catholic organizations so that we do not have to do such managing ourselves, yet the cost of health care has risen 15.5% since last year.

As you view our report, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact James Reagan, Finance Council Chairperson at 440.821.0560, Joe Shuman, our Business Manager at 440.238.5555, or me. You may also wish to visit www.sjohio.org/finance for details on our Finance Council or for past Annual Reports.

I am hopeful of your continued prayerful, active, and financial support of our parish. I continue my pledge to always strive to be the best steward of our shared resources. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide our work, that way, together, with St. Joseph as our guide, we might continue to accomplish great things!

May God bless and keep us,



St. Joseph Parish Statement of Church Revenue and Expenses

	Actual Year Ended June 30,		Budget
	2017	2016	2018
Parish Receipts:			
Offertory Collections	\$ 1,196,719	\$ 1,208,868	\$ 1,176,185
Donations & Bequests	-	86,814	-
Maintenance & Repair Fund ¹	140,045	143,183	131,300
Income From Parish Programs	219,082	121,050	106,380
Investment & Endowment Income	62,163	5,354	10,601
Miscellaneous Receipts ²	83,183	95,530	51,830
Designated Collections	29,993	24,243	24,330
Total Parish Receipts	<u>1,731,185</u>	<u>1,685,042</u>	<u>1,500,626</u>
Parish Disbursements:			
Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	620,210	599,051	633,058
Rectory & Household	16,949	16,993	12,300
Parish Office & Administration	75,967	80,128	72,617
Altar, Sanctuary & Liturgical	63,263	59,485	60,597
Community Outreach ³	36,192	32,996	38,126
Religious Education	24,954	31,731	35,100
Stewardship & Evangelization	37,663	35,353	39,560
Utilities	54,495	48,902	56,717
Insurance & Property Taxes	18,882	18,511	20,160
Maintenance, Repairs & Plant Operating	50,748	62,159	44,244
Diocesan Assessment	137,604	136,266	138,324
School Support ⁴	249,844	276,759	255,776
Designated Collections	29,993	24,243	24,330
Capital Expenditures ⁵	210,159	367,863	22,020
Total Parish Disbursements	<u>1,626,923</u>	<u>1,790,440</u>	<u>1,452,929</u>
TOTAL PARISH SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	104,262	(105,398)	47,697
Less - Mortgage Principal Payments ⁶	109,596	85,667	75,128
TOTAL PARISH CASH FLOW (USAGE)⁵	<u>\$ (5,334)</u>	<u>\$ (191,065)</u>	<u>\$ (27,431)</u>

¹ These funds help to offset plant operating and capital expenditures.

² Includes \$40,522 in 2017, \$52,411 in 2016 and \$10,000 in the 2018 budget from *Rooted In Faith* donations.

³ Includes Social Concerns Ministries, such as Feeding Our Families, West Side Catholic Center Meals, Mission of Hope and Bereavement.

⁴ Includes our parish subsidy to our interparochial school and any parish-awarded tuition assistance.

⁵ Our negative cash flow includes: in 2017, \$67,136 for Phase II for the parking lot replacement project, \$35,194 for the memorial brick project, \$32,819 for rectory remodeling, \$20,759 for the new organ project and in 2016, \$201,792 for the parking lot replacement project and \$98,944 for the garage addition. Funds for the parking lot and garage addition projects were raised in previous years.

⁶ Our mortgage will be paid off during the year ending June 30, 2018.

St. Joseph Parish Statement of Church Assets and Liabilities

	Balance As Of June 30,	
	2017	2016
ASSETS		
Checking, Savings And Investments		
Checking Account Balances	\$ 9,591	\$ 9,519
Savings and Investment Account Balances	341,550	367,104
Parish Improvement Account	217,309	133,515
Total Checking, Savings and Investments	568,450	510,138
Accounts Receivable	346	69,843
Prepaid Expenses	1,000	-
Total Assets	\$ 569,796	\$ 579,981
 LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 26,685	\$ 31,536
Loans, Notes and Mortgages Payable	75,128	184,724
Total Liabilities	101,813	216,260
 FUND BALANCE		
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	363,721	469,119
Net Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	104,262	(105,398)
Fund Balance, End of Year	467,983	363,721
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	 \$ 569,796	 \$ 579,981

Parish Information

Baptism: Parents are to attend a Formation Session in preparation for their child's Baptism. Sessions are held here in February, April, June, August, October, and December and at St. John Neumann during the other months. Baptisms are usually celebrated every Sunday at 1:00 p.m. or during a Weekend Liturgy. To register, please call the Parish Office.

Reconciliation: Every Saturday from 3-4pm, on First Sundays at 9:15am, and at any time by an appointment with one of the priests.

Marriage: Contact one of the priests or deacons at least six months before the desired wedding date.

Anointing of the Sick: This is celebrated during the month of October and around the Fourth Sunday of Lent after Weekend Liturgies. In case of surgery or serious illness, please call the Parish Office.

Care of the Sick: If you will be hospitalized, please notify the Parish Office so that you may be visited. In addition, if someone is confined to the home and wishes to receive the sacraments, please call the Parish Office.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: If you are interested in becoming Catholic, please call the Parish Office.

Parish School of Religion (PSR): Children in Public School are expected to attend the Parish School of Religion classes. Please call the Parish Office for more information.

New Parishioners: We welcome you! Please call the Parish Office and we will be happy to welcome you.

If you are moving: Please notify the Parish Office of your new address.



**Carol Petro,
MSW, LSW**

Dear Friends and Members of St. Joseph Parish,

It is with great joy that I take this opportunity to introduce myself and my husband, Paul Petro, as new members of this vibrant parish community. We originally came from the parish community of St. Mary's in Avon. We are a remarried couple that formed a blended family of 11 children where faith, music, competitive cooking, sports and travel serve as our favorite past times. Paul is semi-retired and works in the construction industry and I am a licensed social worker who works for Catholic Charities in the Department for Marriage and Family Ministry. I have worked for Catholic Charities for 18 years, and I am currently responsible for the ministries to couples in crisis, divorce, remarriages and stepfamilies throughout parishes in eight counties of our diocese. The position requires the skills of

developing programs and pastoral counseling. Actually, the story is that Deacon Bob Lester applied for this position and they chose me. But, God had a plan for the two of us. Twelve years ago, the Director of Marriage and Family Office, Bill Boomer and Father Bob Sanson wanted to create a pastoral outreach program that would help to save marriages and address the needs of the divorced. They felt that Deacon Bob and I would make a good team where people would receive the benefits of a social worker and a clergy member who had been divorced and remarried. Since that time, we have serviced over 220 couples with 80% of them saving their marriages through a couple directed program called Finding Peace. This also included the formation of a program for divorced that incorporated a retreat-style format of healing called Sacred Steps to Peace. My husband, Paul, has helped run the group for divorced men. Recently added is the Sacred Steps for Teens. Over the years, the pastoral outreach has grown to include bereavement, older adults, parenting and marriage enrichment. We continue to be on call for the needs of this parish and for the priests. So, after 12 years of driving back and forth, Paul and I

sold our house to become part of this welcoming community of caring people. This past year, I have also joined the wonderful choir conducted by Luke. I also sing in the Diocesan Parish Choir 3-4 times a year. There is nothing like music to restore our souls and experience joy. Paul has joined the Mission of Hope Ministries putting his skills to work.

I want to take this time to thank the priests...Fr. Joe, Fr. Anthony Suso, Fr. Bill Jerse, Fr. Bob McWilliams, Deacon Bob Sabol and Deacon Pete, who have been there to support this ministry. They truly believe in being the face of Jesus to those who come to them. I also want to thank Deacon Bob Lester who has been part of this journey and his many late nights of being with his people. He truly has the heart of Jesus. Furthermore, we could not do this ministry without the support of the parish office staff, especially Debbie and Moira. It is with great humility that I thank those who have allowed us to accompany them through the crisis in their life journey. Finally, as new parishioners, my husband Paul, and I are looking forward to Many years of serving this parish and meeting all of you. Blessings!

**WE WELCOME THESE FAMILIES TO
OUR ST. JOSEPH
PARISH FAMILY**

Allen
Bartunek
Bergin
Cliché
Diens
Halverson

Hein
Jackson
Kelley
Kraemer
Manning
Marks

Miko
Parobek
Piorkowski
Price
Rhodes
Rodriguez-Moore

Rossoll
Sargent
Schaefer
Seitz
Spar
Vlcek
Volosyn

FEEDING OUR FAMILY

This December marks the third year anniversary of the Feeding our Family Ministry at St. Joseph Parish . This ministry was “born” out of the knowledge that we had parishioners eager to be involved in a ministry where they could reach out to those less fortunate and make a difference in their lives. Ministry participants have the opportunity to be involved as much or as little as they’d like. All ages are welcome. There are people involved from ages four to 90 years of age! Dinners are provided at Our Family Center, a storefront on Euclid Avenue in East Cleveland on the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month. The work is divided according to your talents and abilities. We have cooking teams who meet at noon in the Parish kitchen to prepare a nutritious, well-balanced meal for our clients. By 2:30 pm a team of servers arrive to begin loading up the cars for transportation to the site. Four to six parishioners

carpool to East Cleveland to serve the meal from 4-5 pm.

To try to give you a “feel” for this ministry, let’s take a look into an average day there. We arrive by 3:30 pm giving us time to set up the tables with the food. Already, people are lined up on the sidewalk waiting for the Center to open for dinner. We have quite a car load of food and beverages but many hands make light work. Our clients are always so appreciative of our being there, they readily come over and help us unload our cars. Patrice, a center worker, mans the water and punch station for us. We do prep work necessary before the doors open such as wrapping utensils, cutting the desserts and plating them, arranging fresh fruit for them to take. What’s been so awesome is the involvement of the clients in the process. They are right there helping us out and we have gotten to know them and vice versa. By the time 4 pm rolls around there’s quite a line outside and we’re ready for the rush. We have our ‘regulars’

and another story of need.

Clients have spread the news of a “good meal” to their friends and our numbers have grown. Besides the obvious desire to feed those in need another goal of this ministry was to interact with our clients and know them as people. There’s Ted, a disabled Vietnam vet who lives down the street in a motel where he cares for his wheelchair bound friend; Mary, suffers with chronic seizure and mental health problems and is on her own now as her significant other has been jailed; John is disabled but always comes in with the biggest smile on his face; Pete, our working mechanic, always comes in with his tools hanging from his belt. He picks up a dinner for himself and his elderly mother. Receiving our meal helps their limited funds to be spread a little more. It’s meaningful to be able to call these people by name and catch up on their lives each time we go.

If you are interested in learning more or becoming involved in this ministry you can reach Allen Weaver at 440-667-5094 or email at allenweaver@aol.com.



THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES

The Feast of the Seven Fishes is part of the Italian-American Christmas Eve celebration, although it is not called by this name in Italy and is not a “feast” in the stricter sense of “holiday” but rather a grand meal. Christmas Eve is a vigil or fasting day, and the abundance of seafood reflects the tradition of abstinence from red meat until the actual feast of Christmas Day itself.

Today, it is a meal that typically consists of seven different seafood dishes. It originates, however, from Southern Italy, where it is known simply as The Vigil (La Vigilia). This celebration commemorates the wait, the Vigilia de Natale, for the midnight birth of the baby Jesus.

The long tradition of eating seafood on Christmas Eve dates from the Roman Catholic tradition of abstaining from eating meat during certain times of the year.

As no meat or animal fat (there is not prohibition on milk or dairy products) could be used on such days, observant Catholics would instead eat fish (typically fried in oil).

It is unclear when the term “Feast of the Seven Fishes” was popularized. The meal may include seven, eight, or even nine specific fishes that are considered traditional. However, some Italian-American families have been known to celebrate with nine, eleven or thirteen different seafood dishes. “Seven” fishes as a fixed concept or name is unknown in Italy itself. In some of the oldest Italian-American families there was no count of the number of fish dishes. Dinner began with whiting in lemon, followed by some version of clams or mussels in spaghetti, baccalá and onward to any number of other fish dishes without number. Some have

suggested that the idea of “seven” fishes originated in restaurants.

The most famous dish for Southern Italians is baccalá (salted cod fish). The custom of celebrating with a simple fish such as baccalá reflects customs in what were historically greatly impoverished regions of Southern Italy, as well as seasonal factors. Fried smelts, calamari and other types of seafood have been incorporated into the Christmas Eve dinner over the years. The meal’s components may include some combination of anchovies, whiting, lobster, sardines, dried salt cod, smelts, eels, squid, octopus, shrimp, mussels and clams.

The menu may also include pastas, vegetable, baked or fried kale patties, baked goods and homemade wine. This tradition remains very popular to this day.

Submitted by Pete Cardello

2017 Winter Thaw Winners’ Recipes

Baked Potato Soup By Alex Falconi

- 9 baking potatoes
- 2/3 cup butter
- 2/3 cup all purpose flour
- 6 cups whole milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 chopped green onion
- 10 ounces shredded Cheddar
- 8 ounces sour cream

Prick potatoes with a fork and cook in microwave 3 or 4 at time and scoop out the flesh (while the others are cooking). In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in flour and cook about a minute. Whisk in milk, a little at a time, stirring constantly until

thickened. Stir in potatoes, salt, pepper, 1/3 cup bacon bits, 2 tablespoons green onion and most of the cheese.

Cook until thoroughly heated. Stir in sour cream and heat through. Serve topped with remaining bacon, onions and cheese.

Vegan Chili By Rick Royal

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 1/2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell peppers
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 serrano peppers, stemmed peeled and minced

- 1 1/2 pounds Portobello mushrooms cubed
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 4 large tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 3 cups black beans
- 1-15 ounce can of tomato paste
- 1 cup vegetable stock
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro leaves
- Cooked brown rice for side
- Sour cream to garnish
- Diced avocado to garnish

Mix all ingredients in stock pot except the garnishes. Cook to a boil then simmer until done.