

## ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

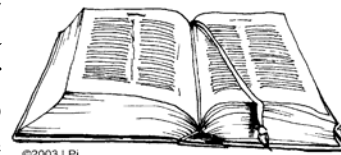
**Today's Readings:** Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10/James 5:7-10/Matthew 11:2-11

**GOSPEL GLIMPSES Tell me it ain't so**

When life deals us unexpected tragedy it batters at our faith first. We fear the worst and desperately wait for someone to tell us "it ain't so." It may be a diagnosis of cancer, loss of a beloved child, financial ruin. The pain is unique for each of us, but the fear, the panic is shared by us all. We doubt our ability to survive the tests we face. We doubt God will see us through. We even doubt He exists. How could He exist we say, when such terrible things are happening?

As John sat in prison, he knew those same fears, shaken to his core with doubt and confusion. What if everything had been a tragic mistake? Had he pointed the way to the wrong Messiah? Yet even in abject despair, John reached out to Jesus. While his words dripped doubt, John's heart knew that only Jesus could give him what he needed. Today's gospel shows us a man trapped in fear and doubt, but more importantly it shows us a man who knew the source of truth. May we learn from John's example to turn to God, even when it is Him we doubt, so that He may send us the reassurance we need.

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Isaiah 7:10-14/Romans 1:1-7/Matthew 1:18-24



### VESPERS

**Tuesday, December 18 at 7:00 pm**

"Your light will come, Jerusalem; the Lord will dawn on you in radiant beauty."

**We are pleased to welcome Mark Kunesh** as a member of our staff. Mark is our new Maintenance/Custodian, working for the parish and the school. He is married with three children and a member of St. Isidore Catholic Church and brings to us much knowledge and experience in maintenance. Once again – welcome and we are glad to have you here.

**Special thanks to Nelson Hahn, Deacon John Weber and Bob Held** for the extra effort in helping us keep up with things until our maintenance/custodian position was filled. It is sincerely appreciated.

### Schedule of Reconciliation for Advent

December 16– 7:00 pm Communal Service  
at St. John

December 18– 12:00 noon & 5:00 pm

December 19– 12:00 noon & 5:00 pm

December 20– 12:00 noon & 5:00 pm

December 21– 12:00 noon & 5:00 pm

December 22– 12:00 noon & 3:30 pm

*Holiday  
Office  
Hours*

The Parish Ministry Center will be closing at noon on Monday, December 24. The office will be closed on Tuesday, December 25 and Wednesday, December 26.

**Bulletin Article Deadline:** Please have articles for the December 23rd bulletin turned in Monday, December 17th, by 10:00 am. Thank you!

**The Giving Tree:** Please note that all "Giving Tree" gifts should be brought back to the church or the Parish Ministry Center by this Sunday, December 16th. Thank you!

**Eucharistic Adoration/Devotion:** During this time of our world, we have to allow special time to not miss the real meaning of Christ's coming. If we continue to hurry and bustle– there will be no room for Him in our noisy inn. He is waiting for us to come adore Him. Your presence will be "special" to God on **Tuesday, December 18 at 4:00 pm** at St. Mary Parish. Adoration deepens our relationship with Jesus, devotion to OLPH and recitation of the rosary, denotes our love to Mary. **COME! A SPECIAL SACRIFICE for ADVENT!**

### **Schedule for the 4th Sunday of Advent**

- Saturday, December 22– 4:30 pm
- Sunday, December 23– 8:00, 9:30 & 11:30 am

### **Schedule for Christmas Masses**

- Monday, December 24– 4:00 pm, 6:30 pm & midnight
- Tuesday, December 25– 9:30 am



**SCHOOL NEWS**

It is hard to believe that we only have four days of school left in the year 2007! This Thursday, December 20 is our last day until January 3, 2008.

**(Please note: We dismiss early on Thursday- 2:30, 2:45. Classes resume Thursday, January 3)**

A great big THANKS for your generosity during our Food Collection. **Our total was 3,278.** This is an all-time high! Here is the breakdown: Pre K- 34, Mrs. Kathy- 275, Mrs. Klein- 256, First- 421, Second- 336, Third- 378, Fourth- 789, Fifth- 195, and Sixth- 594. Isn't that amazing? Thank you again! A special thanks to our sixth graders, Mrs. Mack, and Mrs. Willitzer for coordinating this project!

A BIG WELCOME to Mark Kunesh, our new maintenance person. Mark started on December 3. If you see him around, please introduce yourself.

On Wednesday, our students will gather together with their buddies. Not only are these activities FUN, but they also create a sense of community, caring and respect for one another.

Have a blessed and enjoyable Christmas as you gather with family and friends! Please take some time in the midst of your celebrations to recall the true meaning of the holy day!

Miss Sandy

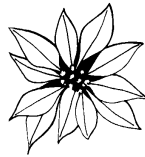
**Defiance Catholic School  
Benefit Calendar Winners**

Mike Shawley \$100, Dan Light, Dawn & Mike Knox, Terry Miller, Dan Light, Jeff Niese, Mr. & Mrs. Tremante, Kimberly Beck, Dick Mekus, Gregg Noffsinger, Doris Dilworth, Nan Mertz, Daniel Michel, David & Chris Batt, Jeff & Patty Ehlinger, Joann Perez, Andy Schweitzer, Mike Kalapos, Brian Martinez, Jack Willitzer, Richard Lockmiller, Ken Klear \$100, Kristy Areghin, Joseph L. Thomas, Shirley Breidenbaugh, Kris, Jason & Tammi Walters, Jordan Trejo, Paula Gentil, Caylon Knox and Beverly Long.

**Scrip News:** The last order of this year will be Monday, December 17th and will arrive Friday, December 21. The next order will be on January 7. After Christmas is over, you can use Scrip for everyday purchases.

Fa-la-la-la-la.....Calling all High School Youth: Join us for an evening of **Caroling, Cookies & Cocoa.** Bring a flashlight, vocal cords and lots of **Christmas** spirit as we will be singing to folks in our Jefferson Neighborhood. See you December 19th, 7:00 pm at the Ministry Center, and we'll end at 650 Jefferson Avenue for Cookies and Cocoa.

**The Furniture Bank needs your help!** The Defiance County Furniture Bank is low on inventory, especially mattresses and boxed springs. Would you like to help the less fortunate of Defiance County? We are looking for donations of good usable basic furniture, beds, bed linens, working electrical appliances (stoves, washers & dryers, refrigerators, microwaves, etc...), baby items, pots, pans and dishes to be distributed to eligible persons in the greater Defiance Co. area. To donate items or cash, call St. Mary Parish at 782-2776. Your support is much appreciated!



**The beautiful poinsettias** that will adorn the sanctuary during the Christmas season (Dec. 25 through Jan. 13) need loving care. Can you help us? The poinsettias will need watering and pruning of dead leaves at least twice a week. Instructions for care are available.

Please call Marge Weber at 419-784-9750 for more information.

**Christmas Poinsettias:** You still have time to purchase a poinsettia in memory and/or in honor of someone special. A suggested donation is \$10-\$20 and can be dropped off at the Ministry Center, mailed or put in the collection basket by Friday, December 21.

The memorial/honorary will be listed in the bulletin, and you may pick up the poinsettia **after** the Christmas season. Please make checks out to St. Mary Parish. Thank you!

Name of person the donation is being given for:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Who the donation is from:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Donated: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Anthony Wayne Property Recommendation:**

“Defiance Catholic School Facilities Committee made their recommendation to School Council at the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. After much discernment and a few minor changes, School Council concurred with the recommendation and unanimously voted to present the recommendation to Administration (both parish priests and the school principal). The recommendation as printed below will now be presented to both the St. Mary and St. John Pastoral and Finance Councils for discernment. We ask that you pray for God’s guidance as we continue discernment on this project.”

### **Recommendation from Defiance Catholic School Council to Defiance Catholic School Administration in regards to the Anthony Wayne Property**

Purchase the Anthony Wayne property consisting of 9.2 acres and the existing school building if a reasonable price is agreed upon. This recommendation is contingent upon the action plan as set below.

#### **Rationale:**

The price of the property would be a good investment for both parishes and create a school savings of approximately \$50,615/year. This type of opportunity will not present itself again.

The up-to-date, handicap accessible building with a gym/stage area, secure playground and more space on a neutral site would allow growth of Defiance Catholic School as well as enhance Catholic education in the Defiance and surrounding area.

Statistics from the listening sessions, questionnaires and the summary session show that of parishioners responding, 65% thought it was a wise decision, 35% thought it was an unwise decision, and a small number were undecided.

#### **Contingency Action Plan:**

Enrollment – School Council will develop and implement an aggressive marketing plan that would include expanding programs to increase our income and enrollment.

**Timeframe for completion:** November 1, 2008

Catholic Identity – A plan will be formulated by DCS that would address “catholic identity” - what really sets the Defiance Catholic School apart from other schools?

**Timeframe for completion:** December 31, 2008

Commitment to catholic education – St. John & St. Mary current parish leadership and administration must document their commitment to catholic education in Defiance for at least the next ten (10) years.

**Timeframe for completion:** Prior to purchase of the Anthony Wayne property

**Parish Finances - Stewardship of Treasure**

Last Week You Gave.....	\$11,679.00
Need Weekly .....	\$10,885.00
Above Budget.....	\$794.00
Contributions to Date .....	\$258,360.55
\$10,885 x 24 Weeks .....	\$261,240.00
Year to Date <i>Below</i> Budget .....	(\$2,879.45)

**Make the most of your Advent by:**

- Singing seasonal songs together as a family
- Praying for those we know who are hurting
- Sharing the stories of childhood
- Remembering a neighbor who lives alone
- Taking a ride together and enjoying the many ways people celebrate His coming

**“WALK WITH ME”** Cisco’s first full-length CD titled “Walk with Me” is already available. Cost is \$10. Should you wish to acquire a copy you may contact Cisco directly at [Ciscolloveras@cs.com](mailto:Ciscolloveras@cs.com) or by phone at 419-782-8684. Copies will also be available for purchase at the parish office.

In today’s Gospel Jesus tells us that the good news can be seen, touched, felt and heard through the lives of God’s people. We are now charged to take up the ministry of Jesus, but we can’t just ask people to take our word for it; our actions must speak for us.

**Since Christmas is a time of love and gift giving, please share in Jesus’ ministry by giving a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who are poor can know the good news of Jesus.**

*Wedding Banns*

Banns I & II Molly Newton & Chris McCann

**Daily Readings for This Week**

**Readings for the Week of December 16, 2007**

Monday:	Gn 49:2, 8-10/Mt 1:1-17
Tuesday:	Jer 23:5-8/Mt 1:18-25
Wednesday:	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Lk 1:5-25
Thursday:	Is 7:10-14/Lk 1:26-38
Friday:	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/ Lk 1:39-45
Saturday:	1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56

**WELCOME** to our parish community! We are happy to have you here with us. A *special welcome* to any guests who may be visiting. May your visit be blessed.

**Mass Intentions**

**Monday, December 17**

8:00 AM Communion Service

**Tuesday, December 18**

8:00 AM Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Steffel

**Wednesday, December 19**

9:15 AM School Liturgy at St. John

**Thursday, December 20**

8:00 AM John Newton

**Friday, December 21**

8:00 AM James Auer

**Saturday, December 22**

4:30 PM Bill Small  
Anna Hohenberger

**Sunday, December 23**

8:00 AM Adam & Ella Jurcevich  
9:30 AM Dr. H.C. Brown  
Helen Naylor  
11:30 AM Gerald Nussbaum  
Carl & Donelda Wagner

**Events For This Week**

**Monday, December 17**

Charismatic Prayer Group	7:00 pm PMC
SVDP	7:00 pm PMC

**Tuesday, December 18**

Reconciliation	12:00 pm Church
OLPH	4:00 pm Church
Reconciliation	5:00 pm Church
Advent Vespers	7:00 pm Church

**Wednesday, December 19**

Reconciliation	12:00 pm Church
Reconciliation	5:00 pm Church
Social Justice Mtg	5:00 pm PMC
Shepherds of Christ	6:00 pm Church
Youth Choir	6:00 pm Chapel
Youth Group	7:00 pm PMC
Folk Group	7:30 pm Church

**Thursday, December 20**

Reconciliation	12:00 pm Church
Cantor Rehearsal	5:00 pm Church
Reconciliation	5:00 pm Church

**Friday, December 21**

Reconciliation	12:00 pm Church
Reconciliation	5:00 pm Church
Spanish Prayer Group	7:00 pm Chapel

**Saturday, December 22**

Reconciliation	12:00 & 3:30 pm
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