

*“The Shepherds went in haste to
Bethlehem and found Mary and
Joseph, and the infant lying in the
manger.”*

(Luke 2:16)



THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

MASS INTENTIONS

DECEMBER 29, 2019

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2019

5:00 PM + John Melhorn

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2019

8:15 AM – People of the Parish
11:15 AM + Diane Frey

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2019

NO MASS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2019

5:00 PM – People of the Parish

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2020

10:00 AM + Jim Drummer

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2020

9:00 AM + Theron & Brenda Menges

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2020

9:00 AM + Ron Filliben

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2020

9:00 AM + Warren Glass
5:00 PM + Tom Harbaugh

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2020

8:15 AM – People of the Parish
11:15 AM – Special Intention of Carmen Miranda on her birthday

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

SICK OF THE PARISH – Please keep our members in your thoughtful prayers: Fred & Yvonne Staub, Kenneth & Alice Williams, Helen Lawrence, Marilyn Drummer, Louise Snoots, Norma Woerner, Brenda Freed, Ken Jacoby, Syndia Helmers, Addie Mannarino, Carmen Miranda, Kai Goley, Richard Doll, Scott Hale, Nickolas Willis, Loretta Gambrell, Judy Goley, Steve Luckenbaugh, Candi Gilbert, Easton Tolson, Sharon Nowakowski, Stephen Nowakowski, Rose McMaster, Dianne Giampietro, Sarah Arigo, Dawn Kuhn, Jerome & June Rahm, Bernard Noel, Mary Ann Staines, Bobbi Pfaff, David Hartlaub, Bill & Marie Hallisey, Holly Fletcher, Jeffrey Stimer and Dave Wolford.

FAMILY PERSPECTIVE – Today's gospel says Joseph "made his home" in Nazareth." A "home" is built on the foundation of love, commitment and a shared history and is decorated with forgiveness, acceptance, rituals, discipline and mutual support. The Holy Family challenges us today: Don't live "anyplace," live at HOME!

NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE

Dec. 31st - New Year's Eve
5:00 PM - Vigil

Jan. 1st - New Year's Day
10:00 AM

MISSION FOR LITURGY AND WORSHIP

ALTAR SERVERS for Sat/Sun Jan. 4-5

5:00 PM Mass: Hannah Fletcher, Madilyn & Keira Slonaker

8:15 AM Mass: Ian Frantz, Dempsey Bodan, Ryan Gebhart

1:15 AM Mass: Ava & Brielle Baughman, Audrianna Dusseau

Coordinator is Kelli Maysilles.

LECTORS for Sat/Sun Jan. 4-5

5 PM MASS – Betsy Miriello

8:15 AM MASS – Kevin DePaulis

11:15 AM MASS – Jess Socrates

Coordinator is Dianne Giampietro.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC) for Sat/Sun Jan. 4-5

5:00 PM: Steve Hoffman, Jen Gentile, Dan Landis, Dan & Barb O'Brien

8:15 AM: Kim Aiello, Doug Barnhart, Jason Duty, Ken Glass, Midge Stokes

11:15 AM: Andy Altobelli, Joyce Menges, John Schlaline, Jr., Leland Steinke, Barb Wantz

Coordinator is Claire Wentz.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS – Honor your father and mother, your wife, your husband, your children, your brother, your sister. Family ties bind us in love and root us in faith. What will you do to strengthen your family ties? (Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14). If God may be calling you to the priesthood or consecrated life, visit our website at www.hbgdiocese.org, call Father Jonathan Sawicki at 717-657-4804 or write: frjsawacki@hbgdiocese.org.

IN THE CHARITY OF YOUR PRAYERS, please pray for the repose of the souls of those who died this week: James Egan, father of Laura Sabold and Angie Dill, sister of Brian Bowling.

Message from the Pastor

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

WHEN: Every First Friday of the month beginning
Jan. 3, 2020

WHAT: Two Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

WHERE: Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

TIME: 7 PM – 9 PM

We have in our midst the greatest gift of the Living Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. We are all invited to sign up for a half hour or just drop in to spend some quiet time with the Lord present to us in the Eucharist after a busy week. Two people must be in the church during the Exposition over the two hours, hence a sign-up sheet to commit, but folks are free to just stop in for a shorter time as well. Have a blessed Christmas and our first evening of Adoration can be our Thanksgiving for this tremendous gift the Lord has given us.

HIMSELF.

Rev. Philip Burger

GROCERY CERTIFICATES – Please know how very grateful we are to all of you who support our Grocery Certificate Program and ultimately our Religious Education Program. IHM receives a 5% profit from the sale of all the grocery cards purchased. **Before going for groceries, please consider purchasing Weis or Giant cards after each Mass at the front entrance.**

Cards can also be purchased in the parish office during the work week. Thank you for your support of this wonderful program! During the week of Dec. 22, 2019 we sold \$1770 for a profit of \$88.50.

ABBOTTSTOWN/EAST BERLIN FOOD BANK – The food pantry in East Berlin held on Dec. 4th served 50 families which included 128 individuals. The number of families served at the Abbottstown location on Dec. 5th was 25 for a total of 72 individuals. The link to the Time to Sign Up page for the food pantry on **Friday, Jan. 3rd** at the East Berlin location is www.volunteersignup.org/WHYBM and **Thursday, Jan. 2nd** at the Abbottstown location is www.volunteersignup.org/RBJ3T. Please remember to drop off health/beauty items, such as soaps, toothbrushes, diapers, as well LAUNDRY DETERGENT, etc. and place them in the food pantry barrels.

FUSION - Fusion is Immaculate Heart of Mary's youth ministry; open to all teenagers in grades 8 to 12.

Coming in 2020 – Amplify (middle school ministry for all youths in grades 5 to 7). Volunteers wanted – both members of Fusion and adults. Please contact Paul as soon as possible.

Jan 12, 2020: Pro-Life Night, 5 – 7:30 PM

Jan 26, 2020: Youth Night, 5 – 7:30 PM

For more information, please call or email Paul Oakes:
(717) 259-0611 ext.8 or poakes@hbgdiocese.org

LIFETOUCH PHOTOS – Anyone who hasn't picked up their complimentary 8 x 10 photo can find them down in the social hall on the table outside the kitchen.

END OF THE YEAR NOTICES – Most taxpayers will no longer need to itemize their deductions and will take the standard deduction amount. Therefore, since many people no longer use the end-of-year statements for tax purposes, we will only send out to those who request them. If you are interested in receiving a statement, please contact Anita in the parish office. The Diocese will no longer automatically generate year end statements, unless it is requested by the donor. You may contact the Office of Stewardship & Development at the Diocese at 717-657-4804 ext 245.

SUB SALE – The Knights will be selling subs. Pickup dates are after the Masses on the weekend of Feb. 1 and Feb. 2. Orders must be returned by January 26th. The order form along with payment can be placed in the collection basket marked "subs" or you can give it to one of the Knights. We will also be selling after the Masses on the weekend of Jan. 19th and Jan. 26th.

SAVE THE DATE: Friday, Jan. 17, 2020

The film **UNPLANNED** will be shown in St. Joseph's Social Hall, 5125 Grandview Rd., Hanover at 7 PM. This movie is rated "R" and anyone under the age of 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY – "Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven." (Pope Francis)
Abortion continues to hurt people long after it happens. Depression, anxiety, nightmares, addictions, strained relationships, and trouble relating to babies or children – all of these can be caused or intensified by a past abortion. The Church desperately wants to help you heal. **Project Rachel Ministry** is a *confidential, compassionate, and non-judgmental* service that meets you where you are at then helps you to discern what kind of help you most need. We then discretely pair you with people who can help – whether through confession, spiritual counseling, professional therapy, small group discussions, or a weekend retreat, there are many avenues for healing. Contact the *Project Rachel* network today: prm@hbgdiocese.org or 717-857-2282.

THANKS TO

* * * * *

* * * * *

Parish for our use. As you think about your personal philanthropy at the end of the year, please consider your Parish and the many programs supported by the Diocese that benefit our parish.

WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE Dec. 15th – 21st

**Sunday, Dec. 15th – Religious Education from
9:30 – 11 AM**

**Sunday, Dec. 15th – Adult Enrichment Class in
The social hall, 9:30-11 AM**

Monday, Dec. 16th – Cub Scouts, 6:30 PM

**Monday, Dec. 16th – Legion of Mary in Rel Ed Bldg
Room 4, 7 PM**

**Monday, Dec 16th – Charismatic Prayer Group in
Social Hall, 7 PM**

Wednesday, Dec. 18th – Boy Scouts, 6-9 PM

**Thursday, Dec. 19th – Faith Sharing Group in Den
after 9 AM Mass**

WELCOME! We welcome the following new members into our parish family:

Clyde & Barbara Krebs & family, Abbottstown

Julianne Rowe & family, Hanover

Brian & Ruth Kaley, Dover

Derek & Amanda Albin & family, Spring Grove

Mark & Amy Gingrich & family, Dover

HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES - We urge and encourage those of you who are in need of this service to please use them. They are so much closer to the Church. You may use the **CHURCH EXIT** to get into the spaces on Saturday night or for 8:15 Mass on Sunday. **For the 11:15 Mass, you may use this entrance until 10:45** and be parked before the children are being dismissed from Religious Education classes. **For safety reasons, please do not come in the EXIT and park the wrong way along the side of the Church.** Please note ~ the same rules apply here as elsewhere in using these spaces. You must have a Handicapped Placard or it be indicated on your license plate. Thank you!

PARISH CARING COMMITTEE – Assists parishioners on an as needed basis, in times of need or stress and provides visitation, care giver relief, meals, errands, light household chores and local transportation. To request assistance or to become a Caring Committee Volunteer, contact Cathy Gunzelman at 717-225-5059.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students at Delone Catholic High School for achieving honor roll status:

FIRST HONORS: Audrey & Abigail Sell, Jacob Fleming

SECOND HONORS: Harrison Smith, Avery Kuntz & Julia O'Brien

2019 DIOCESAN ANNUAL CAMPAIGN - The 2019 Diocesan Annual Campaign (formerly known as the Bishop's Lenten Appeal) is coming to a close. Pledge reminders have been mailed to all donors who have a pledge balance for the 2019 effort. Our parish benefits from the many ministries and educational programs that the Diocese supports. Please be sure to honor your commitment for the Diocesan Annual Campaign. Gifts made before Dec. 31, 2019 may provide tax benefits to you.

If you have not made a gift to this year's campaign, it is not too late. You can make your gift securely online at www.hbgdiocese.org/dac. 100% of the monies collected over our parish goal are returned to the

CHILDREN'S LITURGY - As you know, our children (ages 3 through 2nd grade) have a wonderful opportunity at the 11:15 Mass when they are called forth and dismissed for "Children's Liturgy of the Word," the ability to learn about the scripture readings on their level. We are in **great need of more volunteers**, who have Diocesan clearances to participate in this ministry. If we have a pool of at least 6 to 8 volunteers, then everyone only has a turn every 6 weeks or so. **PLEASE** consider offering your services for this wonderful ministry for our children. If you are able to help out, please call Sister Rosanne @ (717) 259-0611, ext. 7

OCTOBER FINANCIAL REPORT –

Monthly Budget	\$ 36,400.00
Income for Nov. 3rd	\$10,129.50
Nov. 10th	10,991.06
Nov. 17th	10,292.00
Nov. 24th	8,932.05
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME	\$ 40,344.61

ADDITIONAL COLLECTIONS:

Capital Improvements	\$1,714.00
All Saints Collection	1,713.00
Military Collection	1,858.50
Matthew 25 Collection	2,100.37

ART CONTEST – The Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (HDCCW) invites girls in grades 9-12 in the Diocese of Harrisburg to enter an art contest. The task: design the cover for the 95th Annual HDCCW Convention on April 25, 2020. The art work should be an original drawing or painting for a 9 x 12 folder and based on the Convention theme “Rejoice and be Thankful”. The grand prize is \$150, second prize is \$75 and third prize is \$50. The deadline to enter is Jan. 20, 2020. For complete details and Contest Guidelines, please refer to the HDCCW website <http://hdccw.webs.com/>. You may also contact HDCCW at 717-860-0700 or email hdccw1@gmail.com with questions.

RUTH’S HARVEST – Ruth’s Harvest packing will be Wednesday, Oct. 23rd from 10-11 AM at the Abbottstown Fire Hall. Consider joining others in this ecumenical ministry as we bag single-serving food items for elementary school students to take to their homes. For more information, call Pat Renaut at 717-637-1110.

PARISH FLOWER BEDS – Fall is officially here and it is time to clean out the flower beds for the winter. Anyone who “adopted” a flower bed needs to trim back and clean out their respective flower beds. Thank you for making everything look so beautiful!

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS – We are often asked about which items are most in need. Well, the answer would include a number of non-food items because those items are very much needed but not donated as often as food. These items include such essentials as shampoo, soap, toothpaste, dental floss, toothbrushes, deodorant, toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, and laundry detergent. Of course, we can also use food donations; but we ask you to donate items with good expiration dates (or expired in the current year). Also, all donated items must be unopened. Any questions contact Pat Renaut at 717-637-1110 or patrenaut@hotmail.com.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER

From the middle of September until the beginning of May, Religious Education Classes are in session! Please be extra mindful of **SAFETY** on Sunday mornings after the 8:15 Mass as you are leaving the parking lot (especially if you are parked on the side of or behind the Church). That is when our children are being dropped off for CCD. Cars are moving and children are walking and most likely “aren’t looking/noticing” that cars are backing up and pulling out.

Also around **11:00 AM** when children are being dismissed from the Religious Education Center and are waiting for their parents to “pull up in the car line” to pick them up. There are 150 children in the CCD and they and their safety are our #1 priority!

If you are in need of a “Handicap Parking” spot, please plan on coming to the 11:15 Mass by **10:55 AM**. You can come in the **EXIT** driveway and pull right into one of the spots. Parents pick their children up beginning at 11:00 AM. Once their cars start moving, it is about safety! If you choose not to do this and you get in the “parent car line” then please **be patient**. Please do not try and come up along side the cars that are in line. Most of the time all children get in their cars on the right hand side where adults are right there with them. Occasionally, the children need to get in on the left side because of infants in the car. It takes about 7 minutes to get every child in their car and on their way home safely. Thank you for your understanding!

AERO ENERGY HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM –

This program was established to provide Aero Energy customers an opportunity to give to our church. To participate, Aero Energy customers sign up by phone or online and Aero Energy donates 4 cents for every gallon of fuel they use to us. Please call if you are not already part of this wonderful program. It’s an easy way to benefit Immaculate Heart of Mary. Last heating season, IHM was among the top 5 churches in donations received! To sign up, call 888-827-17136.

HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM

We would like to express our most sincere gratitude to all those who participate in the Aero Energy House of Worship Program. Our parish received a check in the amount of \$527.16 from this past heating season! IHM receives 4 cents per gallon for anyone using heating oil or propane that is a current customer of Aero Energy or anyone who becomes a NEW customer. If you are not already participating in this program and would like to, please call Aero Energy at 888-827-1713 to sign up for the House of Worship Program. There is no additional cost to anyone who participates – it is a donation from Aero Energy to our church. Thanks to all who participate!

OFFERTORY PROCESSION – For the benefit of you, our long-time parishioners as well as you, our **NEW** parishioners ~~ we invite you and your family to participate in the Offertory Procession when you come to Mass on Saturday night or Sunday.

Perhaps you have NOT noticed the 3 crosses and the picture frame on the ledge behind the last pew (**right hand side**) as you come into Church. There is an invitation from Fr. Burger in the frame for you to bring forth the gifts at the Offertory time. You just need to take the 3 crosses to the pew with you, and when the altar server goes to the back of the Church with the Processional Cross, you get out of your pew and head to the back of the Church. One of the ushers is there to assist you, if necessary. The gifts (the paten of hosts and the cruet of wine) are on the ledge by the picture frame. You bring those gifts, as well as the collection basket forward, following the altar server with the cross. Please consider having your family participate in the Offertory Procession. This is a simple way to participate more fully in the celebration of the Mass.

SCAM ALERT! Once again someone is using the Pastor's name to scam people into buying gift cards or giving their cell number to them. Neither Fr. Burger, nor any Diocesan Priest, will ever ask you to supply him with gift cards or give your cell number in order to help him out. Please **DO NOT** respond to any emails you may receive or any text message asking if you are available to do him a favor and purchase gift cards for someone who is sick.

HEALING HEARTS is a support group for widows and widowers. The group will meet once a week on Thursday nights from 6pm until 7:30 pm at Kim Aiello's house at 1650 Pine Run Road, East Berlin. The meetings will consist of prayer, bible study, share time, Christian music, group social outings, like going to see a Christian movie, attending a Christian Concert, or listening to a Christian Speaker. The support group goal is to help heal the broken heart and replace sorrow with joy, by finding peace through a personal relationship with the Lord. Contact Kim Aiello at 717-476-7504 or emailing her at jkilo1@hotmail.com.

SUMMER WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 5 PM,

Sunday 8:15 AM and 10:15 AM

ARE YOU CARING FOR AN AGING PERSON?

There is a safe website where you can get help and ideas. Go to www.agingcare.com. You can sign up for

their emailed newsletter at the bottom of the home page. I have been following the newsletters and find a lot of articles which may be useful. If I can be of any help, please contact me at roywainwright3@gmail.com or 717-619-7243.

FLOWERS – Looking for a way to memorialize a loved one or celebrate a special occasion? A beautiful way would be to order flowers on the altar. Most weekends are available from now through the end of the year. **Please call Anita in the parish office** to make arrangements.

MASS INTENTIONS – Mass intentions are a wonderful way to celebrate a special occasion, remember those who have died or are sick and in need of our prayers. Please consider this as a "gift" for someone. Call Anita in the Parish Office to arrange your Mass intentions.

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snare of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELING SERVICES:

Depression and anxiety can occur when we have a loss or a major change in our life. A licensed skilled therapist can help you by listening, processing, and giving you the power to make positive change. Catholic Charities Counseling Services is accepting new clients for four office locations throughout the Diocese. Catholic Charities Counseling is for anyone: children, adolescents, adults, and couples. Services are provided in a confidential office setting. Services include individual and family therapy, marital counseling, and parent-child counseling. We accept Medical Assistance, or clients can pay for services (discount fee schedule available). Just call for an appointment: Capital Region 717-233-7978; Lancaster 717-299-3659 or 717-392-2113 (Espanol); York 717-845-2696; Paradise School Office (Abbottstown) 717-259-9537. Visit www.cchbg.org for more information.

Don't Get Scammed!

Scammers are now posing as priests and other clergy. In this latest scam, you might receive an email or a text message that appears to be from your Pastor or another priest that you may know. The scammer ask you to help someone in need by purchasing a gift card and to provide the codes on that card.

Here's how to protect yourself from being scammed.

1 – Know that scammers are out there. Be suspicious of any request for funds of any type via an email message or a text message. Verify any request with a call to the person who supposedly sent it or a call to the phone number of the text that you received.

2 – Know that any email from a priest should be from a diocesan or parish email account. Messages sent from free services, such as Gmail or Yahoo, are more likely to be scammers.

3 – Many clergy do not share their cell phone numbers publicly. If you receive a text message from someone not on your phone's contact list, be suspicious.

4 – Know that priests will NEVER ask for financial transactions via email or text messages.

IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR HANOVER HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS – The Hanover Hospital – UPMC Pinnacle Health has issued the following changes to their policy effective December 2018.

1. Clergy will not be able to view denominational lists at the front desk.
2. Clergy will not be able to obtain patient information at the front desk unless they have the patient's name.
3. If the patient indicates a congregational affiliation in the admissions interview, the Chaplain will call the congregation. If the patient indicates to the Chaplain on his or her rounds that he or she belongs to a particular congregation and gives permission the Chaplain will call the congregation.
4. In an emergency situation if the patient or family indicates a congregational affiliation to the Chaplain or other staff and gives permission to call the congregation, every effort will be made to notify the congregation.

Because of these changes, it is very important that a family member contacts the parish when someone is admitted.

WEEKDAY MASS PARKING – Anyone attending the weekday Masses are asked to park in the lot beside and behind the Church whenever there is snow and ice. This parking area will be made ready first for anyone on the property.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – It has been noted that some people, who are dropped off or picked up for Mass, are doing so at the steps right along West Canal Road. Especially at night, and given the adjacent hill, it is deemed this is unsafe given the speed and flow of traffic. For accessible and safe access to the Church at all times, please use the side social hall doors. Thank you.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY – CAN YOU DONATE NEW YARN? During the last year, the Prayer Shawl Ministry has made over 50 items for our own parishioners, Rachel's Vineyard retreatants, Cross Keys Village Skilled Nursing patients, Spiritrust Lutheran hospice and Hanover Hospital Maternity. **We rely on your donations to help with our yarn expense.** We can always use red, white and blue yarn for military veterans in hospice care. Please drop off your donations in the covered gray boxes at the entrances to the church. If you know of anyone who would benefit from a prayer shawl, please call the parish office at 717-259-0611. Thank you!

SUGGESTION CARDS are available on the back ledges and at the entrances of the church. If you have any suggestions on how to make our parish better, please fill one out and return it in the collection basket.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION – Please keep collecting and sending in those BoxTops for Education for St. Teresa School. If you'd like to help out trimming those BoxTops, please contact kwenger@hotmail.com. All help is appreciated!

EVENT NOTICE – I have been a parishioner at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church for more than 40 years and employed in the newspaper business for more than 20 years. We have many wonderful events happening here at our parish and we'd like to get the word out to the public. Please feel free to send me any events that would be of interest to our local community – from Lenten dinners to youth events to Bible studies and everything in between! You can send information to: 6fletch@embarqmail.com. Don't forget to tell me the following: WHAT is the event? WHO is invited? WHEN is the event? WHERE is the event? WHY should people attend? HOW can they get more information? If you have any questions, feel free to call or text me at 717-357-8051. Thank you!

Holly Fletcher

HEARING IMPAIRED – Anyone who is hearing impaired may find it helpful to sit in Pew #9 on the Sacristy side. You will notice "hearing impaired" stickers on the side of the pew to indicate the best place to sit if you are hearing impaired.

HANDICAP PARKING – Please note that handicap parking spaces are available for parking near the social hall entrance to the Church. If you are attending the 11:15 AM Mass, in order to avoid the traffic associated with religious education letting out, the following two options are recommended: EITHER come in the EXIT lane BEFORE 11 AM, OR come in the usual entrance way AFTER approximately 11:07 AM.

Tips for talking to children about difficult subjects/news reports

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL – For everyone's information, especially for those who may be new to our parish, there is a so-called **Children's Chapel** or **Cry Room** here in the Church. It's located in the front left corner of the church, where a restroom is also located. As a parish family, we want children and families to be welcome here at Mass, and so it's important to have an appropriate place in the church for babies and young children when they get fussy and need extra attention. We really want to encourage parents to use this space to tend to their children as needed. Please, feel free to just get up when need be from the body of the church, and utilize this space. Then you can better tend to your children without feeling like you're being watched. And this will also allow the other parishioners to be able to more fully focus on worshipping.

CREMATION

Since 1963, Catholics have been allowed to choose cremation over burial as a means of laying a loved one to rest. Cremation is a popular choice since it is less expensive and more manageable than a full burial. Cremation, like death, is final. But that doesn't mean you won't have second thoughts. Susan Skiles Luke, a marketing consultant in Columbia, Missouri, had her mother cremated and buried in a family plot. Now, she wishes it was her mother's body and not just the cremated remains that was in the grave. "When I go there, which isn't often, I want to feel like her body is under ground, right alongside my grandparents and beloved great aunt, all dressed up in their Sunday best..."

Although cremation is permitted, some Catholics have not been dealing properly with their loved ones remains. Common practices include scattering ashes, parting ashes out to friends and relatives, and keeping the ashes in a common area, such as a living room. While scattering ashes may seem romantic to some (but is also contrary to Catholic teaching), there's something to be said about keeping your loved one in one place, and then marking that place with a name. "We mark the graves of our loved ones with a headstone to memorialize them, so we don't forget them". When visiting that person's grave, just seeing his or her name can give comfort.

To instruct the faithful in this regard, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has issued updated guidelines. According to these, burial is still preferred, but cremation is an option. When a loved one has been cremated, their ashes must be kept intact, the same as one would treat a body. The ashes may not be separated or scattered. Instead, they should remain in a proper vessel that is interred in a proper place, such as a cemetery or church. Finally, the document stresses that Catholics who choose cremation for reasons contrary to the faith, (e.g., to have their ashes scattered) must be denied a Christian funeral.

In the end, whether cremation or burial is chosen, we await from the grave the second coming of Jesus Christ and the blessed Resurrection of the Dead.

The topic of sex abuse, particularly child sex abuse, is a daunting one for parents. Every parent must consider many factors including the best age-appropriate way to discuss the topic. Below are some points to consider adapted from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, and First Things First.

1. Make sure you are composed before you talk with your child.
2. If you believe your child is aware of news concerning abuse in the diocese, start the conversation. Not talking about a difficult event can make the event even more threatening in your child's mind.
3. Listen carefully to what your child is asking or talking about.
4. Clarify just what any concerns are before you answer. Sometimes we make assumptions and give far more information than what the child needs.
5. Keep your answers simple and brief. Don't answer questions that have not been asked. Do not overload your child with information that is beyond his/her level of understanding.
6. Assure your child that you and other adults that are in charge are doing everything possible to make sure they will be safe. This will give them a sense that adults are actively taking steps to protect those who are currently suffering.
7. Don't make guarantees that such a thing can never happen again. Words like "never" and "always" should be used very carefully because small children trust that this is a promise from you.
8. Explain that we do not know why people treat other people badly.
9. Try to limit your child's exposure to media coverage. A child believes what he or she sees on television, or in the newspapers is always true.
10. Let your children know about successful community efforts. You may want to share positive media images, such as reports of individuals helping those in need.

Additional information is available at www.YouthProtectionHBG.com

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

