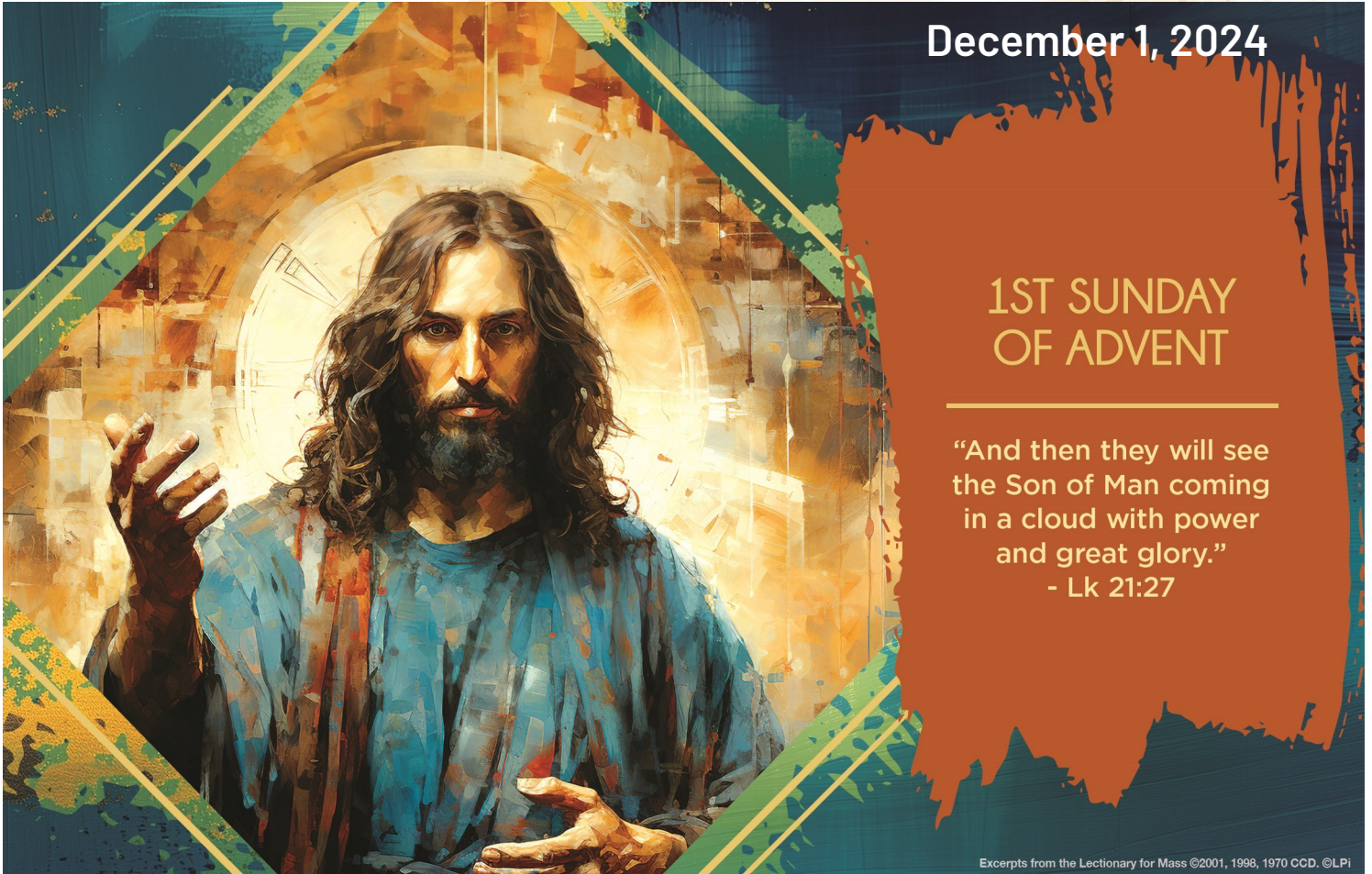




# St. Mark Parish

St. Mark is a Catholic parish committed to fostering discipleship through the Word of God and the Sacraments. We are dedicated to providing Catholic education to our youth, to bringing a deeper relationship with Christ to our adults, and to supporting those in need through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. We encourage all of our parishioners to participate in the shared responsibility of worship, prayer, study and service.

December 1, 2024



## 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“And then they will see  
the Son of Man coming  
in a cloud with power  
and great glory.”  
- Lk 21:27

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. ©LPi

## PASTORAL STAFF

**Rev. Adam Zajac**  
Pastor

**Mrs. Karen Cocita**  
Principal

**Mrs. Meaghan McCarthy-Silver**  
Pastoral Minister

**Mrs. Julia Wallace**  
Music Ministry Director

**Mr. Michael Kay**  
Youth Ministry Director

**Mrs. Jeannette Puckett**  
Parish School of Religion  
(PSR) Director

## COMMUNITY & SACRAMENTS

**New Parishioners:** All are welcome to join the parish! Visit the website or call the parish office to arrange to meet a pastoral staff member.

**Become Catholic:** Interested in becoming Catholic? Call the parish office for an appointment with a pastoral staff member to learn more.

**Infant Baptism:** As you celebrate a new birth, make sure to arrange for the child's baptism. The third Sunday of the month is our regular schedule.

**Reconciliation:** Mercy and peace are here for you. Confession is available on Saturdays from 3:00pm to 3:45pm, or by appointment.

**Marriage:** Over six months we will prepare you to exchange vows before the altar. Whether engaged or civilly married, contact us to get started.

**Anointing of the Sick:** If you or a loved one is seriously sick, please call the parish office to arrange for a priest to visit and anoint.

**Homebound:** We are happy to bring Communion to you if you are unable to participate in the celebration of Mass.

# LITURGY AND PRAYER INTENTIONS

## Papal Intention

**December:** For pilgrims of hope. We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

## Liturgy Schedule

Scripture readings can be found online at:  
[bible.usccb.org](http://bible.usccb.org)

### Monday, December 2

8:30am Mass.....**Presider's Intention**

### Tuesday, December 3-St. Francis Xavier

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass .....Connie Surovec

### Wednesday, December 4

### Thursday, December 5

8:30am Mass..... Luke McGraw

### Friday, December 6

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

### Saturday, December 7-St. Ambrose

3:00pm Confessions

3:00pm Confessions @ St. Mel

4:00pm Mass .....Living Intention Lena Sunyak

4:30pm Mass @ St. Mel

### Sunday, December 8-Second Sunday of Advent

7:00am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass..... Mike & Maureen Gale

10:00am Mass @ St. Mel

11:30am Mass ..... Loretta Oakar

12:30pm Rite of Acceptance

## Pray for the Sick

We commend to your personal prayers parishioners who have asked to be prayed for:

William Adams	Irene Gurchensky	Nora Sudetic
Gianna Andolina	David Kurth	Lena Sunyak
Carol Behnke	Pat McAndrew	George Surovec
Jack Behnke	Gerald McArthur	Herb Tippie
Katy Brent	Jim McIlwee	Georgieann Treible
Henry Buehner	Mary Miller	Shirlee Toth
James Coyne	Maisie Nowlin	Joe Wantz
Matthew Craven	Bill Retzer	Charlotte Whiting
Nicole Foerstner	Mary Stark	Lillian Zahara
Mary Frantz	Sr. Josette Obodzinski	Lew Zahara Jr.
Theresa Fridrich		Joseph Zavatchen Jr.

## Pray for the Deceased

Fr. Neil D. O'Connor

May perpetual light shine upon them

## Other Intentions

Weekly Luke McGraw Memorial Candles Intention

Luke McGraw

Liturgical Ministers	emHCs	Lectors	Servers
Saturday, December 7 @ 4:00pm	Bridget Blayney John Levis NOT FILLED	Lou Toth	Mary Kugler-Blayney William Lentz Nolan Lentz
Sunday, December 8 @ 8:30am	Mary Stamper Annamaria Masterson NOT FILLED	Laura Skonce Monica Svetz	Luke Meisterics Gabriela Santos Colin Weaver
Sunday, December 8 @ 11:30am	Eileen Andrews Michelle Biggins Cari Foster	Eliza Kratt Deborah Roscoe	Kate Dillinger Ian McCoy Cadhla McKenna



## Offertory Collections

In-Pew Collection (11/17 Sunday).....\$ 3,135.00  
Faith Direct (past month total) .....\$ 5,331.00

Thank you for your generosity!

## Parish News

Friends,

The papal intention this past month was “for anyone who has lost a child, that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community and receive peace and consolation from the Holy Spirit.”

I don't think there is anything I have done as a priest that is harder than funerals for children. A late pregnancy miscarriage, a twin that did not survive being born, an infant who only lives a few weeks... those are vivid memories for me. Difficult in another way is when a young adult dies. Usually by that point parents have stopped worrying about their children in the way that a pregnant couple knows that pregnancies can be risky and complicated or young parents watch over their little ones who can get into so much trouble.

In the funeral rites, one of the phrases in the closing prayers at the gravesite or sometimes at the wake says, “may the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, guard your hearts and minds”. For parents who have lost a child, I always hope they hear those words. I hope they hear the church saying, “this doesn't make sense and we know you have no hope in this moment, but God is still with us.”

The papal intention was about more than peace and consolation from the holy Spirit, of course. We prayed that the community would be a support to these parents as well. Sometimes we know what another parishioner is dealing with in life and sometimes we don't. Sometimes we realize that any given day might be a dark anniversary and sometimes we don't. What we can do is accept the people who are struggling for whatever reason, not demand that they be smiling and happy, but realizing that there are times when we sit with each other in patience and prayer.

This month of December the papal intention will be “For pilgrims of hope, that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.”

In Christ,



Fr. Adam

## We Give Catholic

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

St. Mark will be raising funds for parish grounds improvements this year through We Give Catholic. Continuing our desire to ensure St. Mark remains a thriving and vibrant parish and school community, we will be planting new trees, improving the landscaping and installing new signage throughout the campus. Replacing some of the original majestic oak trees with new ones, helping people know which building is for mass and which is for sports and a sprinkling of beautiful color all sound good to us. We hope they sound good to you as well. Please consider supporting St. Mark on December 3rd with a donation through We Give Catholic.

[Wegivecatholic.org](http://Wegivecatholic.org) ~ search for St. Mark Parish



## St. Mark Giving Tree

Preparations are underway for our St. Mark Giving Tree ministry! We will be serving the following organizations: May Dugan Center, Fatima Family Center, St. Thomas School, University Settlement Adult, University Settlement Youth, St. Francis School and St. Mark Parish and School. Ornaments will be placed on the Giving Tree located at the front of the church beginning the weekend of November 30 and December.

If you take an ornament to purchase a gift, please remember to attach the tag to the outside of the wrapped gift or gift bag as the gifts are sorted by organization and checked that each gift has been returned prior to delivery. Please note that if multiple gift ideas are listed on the ornament, you need not purchase every item listed. Or, if you are unable to find a requested item, it is no problem to purchase a similar item or gift card.

If you are ordering gifts online, please be mindful of delivery dates and possible shipping delays. **Please return all wrapped gifts under the Giving Tree by Noon on Sunday, December 15.** At that time, the fits are prepared for delivery.

So many people make this ministry a huge success every year and we could not make it all happen without many helping hands. Thank you for your generous support and making Christmas wishes come true for so many people in our community.

# NEWS AND EVENTS

## Parish News

### The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Monday, December 9th. Holy Day of Obligation

Mass Schedule as follows:

Monday, December 9th 6:45am @ St. Mel

Monday, December 9th 8:30am @ St. Mark with School

Monday, December 9th 12:00pm @ St. Mel

Monday, December 9th 7:00pm @ St. Mark

### Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Altar Servers

Please see sign-up sheets in the Sacristy for The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Christmas masses and The Solemnity of Mary.

### Music Ministry

JWallace@stmarkcleveland.com

There is much to celebrate about the music ministry at Marks and Mels!

There are over thirty students participating in Saint Mark Singers Youth & Children Choir this year. Enjoy their lovely singing every other week at the 11:30 mass (11/24, 12/8, 12/24).

**Mark your calendars: Sunday, December 15th, 3PM** the SMS Youth and Children Choir will be performing at the Lakewood Cluster Annual Advent Concert, at St. Luke Church. They'll sing with a chamber orchestra & neighbors from LCA. Bring your kids for cocoa & gingerbread house-building after the concert. The music is arranged by former Marks music director, Lawrence Wallace, and conducted by Julia Wallace. It is a truly lovely event.

**Christmas Choir: Call for singers!** Consider joining us as a chorister or cantor for this year's Christmas masses. Drop in our **rehearsals 12/3, 12/10 & 12/17; 7PM, St. Mark Choir loft.**

12/24 T Mark 4PM Children's Choir  
12/24 T Mel 6PM Adult Choir (Possible)  
12/25 W Mark 8:30AM Adult Choir

**Encouragement:** This fall, Fr. Adam has emphasized the importance of collective singing to the school children. Their response has been great! Consider attending a school mass so that you can witness the joy of congregational singing in action.

*Julia*

### Advent Prayer Nights

Peaceful meditation on sacred scripture

Join as Fr. Adam teaches *lectio divina*, a traditional way of meditating on sacred scripture that has been taught since the earliest days of Christianity in monastic communities. Enter into the prayer and peaceful anticipation of Advent with this devotion! After the guided silent meditation, there will be an optional social. Join us Thursday, December 5th and December 12th at 7:00pm [in the church/at St. Mel]

## Reminders and Regular Events

### Markers/Mels 50+

Ugly Sweater Christmas Party

Saturday, December 14th - 5-8pm St. Mark Social Hall.

Catered dinner with beverages provided. \$25 per person. A dessert to share would be greatly appreciated.

To RSVP, call or text Mary Kay at 216-402-8570 by December 9th.

Please bring a wrapped gift for the white elephant gift exchange! Enjoy our great entertainment and be sure to wear an ugly sweater!

### St. Mark Prayer Group

Relax, pray and grow in faith

The parishioner-led prayer group will meet on Thursday, December 5th at 7pm in the Servers Sacristy. There is a book available near the Sacred Heart Statue in the Church for prayer requests. These will receive prayers by this group. Feel free to share answered prayers here also. Please join us! There is no need to sign up.

### Donut & Coffee Social

Once a month after all masses in the Social Hall. Gather with fellow parishioners. For questions contact Michael Kay at [mkay@stmarkcleveland.com](mailto:mkay@stmarkcleveland.com)

Upcoming Date: November 30 & December 1

Reminders and Regular Events

**St. Mark Youth Group**

CLE2:16 Conference

CLE2:16 Youth Conference:

Join fellow St. Mark Youth Group high schoolers at the diocesan high school youth conference at John Carroll University! This is a day-long conference on Saturday, January 4, 2025, complete with speakers on different faith topics, mass, and time for building community with others! Tickets are limited, please reach out to Michael Kay for more details and to reserve your tickets to attend.

Stay tuned for next week's bulletin for our upcoming December events!

Youth Group is open to all 9th-12th Grade Students! Please contact Michael Kay at [mkay@stmarkcleveland.com](mailto:mkay@stmarkcleveland.com) or 216-904-4774 with any questions and to RSVP!

**BSA Troop 293 Christmas Tree Sale**

Freshly Cut Frasier-Fir Christmas Trees

Friday, December 6th - 5-9pm

Saturday, December 7th - 10:30am - 7pm

Sunday, December 8th - 12pm-3pm

St. Mark Pavilion. Cash and check accepted. Bring the bulletin for \$5 off!

**Breakfast with Santa!**

Sponsored by St. Mark School 8th Grade Students

Please join Santa and his elves for a delicious pancake breakfast on Saturday, December 14th. Select one of two seating times - 9:15 or 10:30am. The cost for breakfast is \$8 for adults, \$6 for children 4 and older and \$4 for children under 4. This festive event is brought to you by the St. Mark School 8th grade class. **Reservations are due by Friday, December 6th.** Reservations are required; no walk-ins will be taken. The Reservation form can be found on the school website at [www.stmarkwestpark.com](http://www.stmarkwestpark.com)

There will be a cash only bake sale table selling tasty treats too! Make your reservations soon, this event sells out every year!

General Parish Calendar

<b>Saturday,</b>	<b>November 30</b>	
3:00 pm	Confessions	
4:00 pm	Mass	
	<b>Donut Social</b>	
	<b>Giving Tree</b>	
<b>Sunday,</b>	<b>December 1</b>	
8:30 am	Mass	
9:30 am	Rosary	
11:30 am	Mass LS	
6:00 pm	Youth Group	SH
<b>Monday,</b>	<b>December 2</b>	
8:30 am	Mass	
9:30 am	School Confessions	CH
2:00 pm	Youth Choir Prac.	CH
4:00pm-9:00 pm	Basketball Prac.	G
6:30 pm	PSR Class Gr. 1-8	CR
6:30 pm	PSR Confessions Gr. 3-8	CH
<b>Tuesday,</b>	<b>December 3</b>	
8:30 am	Mass w/1st Floor	
2:30 pm	Children's Choir Prac.	CH
4:00pm-9:00 pm	Basketball Prac.	G
7:00 pm	Choir Practice	CH
<b>Wednesday,</b>	<b>December 4</b>	
4:00pm-9:00 pm	Basketball Prac.	G
4:00 pm	RCIA	CC
<b>Thursday,</b>	<b>December 5</b>	
8:30 am	Mass	
6:00 pm	Scout Pack #268 Den Mtg.	SH
6:30 pm	Advent Lectio Divina @ St. Mel	
7:00 pm	Troop #293	SH/PP
7:00 pm	Prayer Group	SS
<b>Friday,</b>	<b>December 6</b>	
9:00 am	School Adoration	CH
3:30 pm	Eucharistic Adoration	CH
5:00 pm	Family Friendly Adoration	SH
5:00pm-9:00 pm	Christmas Tree Sale	PP
6:30 pm	Snowflake Ball	G/CC
	<b>NO GYM</b>	
<b>Saturday,</b>	<b>December 7</b>	
9:00am-1:00 pm	CYO Basketball Games	FR/G
10:30am-7:00 pm	Christmas Tree Sale	PP
3:00 pm	Confessions	
4:00 pm	Mass	
	<b>Giving Tree</b>	
<b>Sunday,</b>	<b>December 8</b>	
8:30 am	Mass	
8:30 am	Sunday PreSchool	CR
9:30 am	Rosary	
9:45 am	Confirmation Service Mtg.	SH
11:30 am	Mass LS w/Children's Choir	
12:30 pm	Rite of Acceptance	CH

**Note: (LS)=Livestreamed**

# St. Mark Parish



17 November 2024

Friends,

I few weeks ago I introduced the possibility of doing a minor renovation of the sanctuary, including the removal of the St. Mark portrait and returning the crucifix to the wall. I received 108 responses from the 424 people in attendance at mass, a response rate of 25%. Of those responses 93 or 86% were in favor of obtaining some samples of what the renovation could look like. Only 11 responses (10%) were opposed, and 4 (4%) were neutral. Thank you all who responded to the survey to help me understand the general mind of the parish.

We will move forward with getting sample renderings and cost estimates before stepping back again to consider what we want to do.

I have had good conversations with many of you about this idea. Among those, the younger PSR students were initially very opposed to the idea of changing anything, but they were much happier when I said that we would do something just as nice to replace the portrait. It occurs to me that for them, the visual appearance of the sanctuary is all they have ever known, and change can make us uneasy. If you have little ones at home this is something worth talking to them about; make sure that they feel that the church is part of their home and that they can be excited about something new happening.

With the coming of Advent, Christmas, and then not very long before Lent and Easter, there will be many more important things for me to be focused on. My hope is to get the sample renderings in process so that the contractors can develop them in the meantime, and be able to update the parish again when there is a good opportunity.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adam".

Fr. Adam



# PARISH GRADE SCHOOL

We have had some very busy weeks here at school. Here are a few things that we have been up to:

- In order to follow up their reading of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, our Eighth Grade Students visited the Face to Face program put on by the Kol Israel Foundation. Students learned about the Jewish Faith, attended sessions on different historical events of the Holocaust, and ended the morning hearing Holocaust survivor Jeanette Buchwald tell her story. The stories were heartbreaking, but Mrs. Buchwald left the students with a simple but powerful message: we need to replace hate in the world with love. The 8<sup>th</sup> Graders loved everything about this experience and did not want to leave without giving Mrs. Buchwald personal hugs.
- Our Prayer Partners met for the first time back in October. Since then, they have had several get togethers, including the Thanksgiving Prayer Partner Mass. During their initial meeting, they completed a service project for Habitat for Humanity. Every one of them made a bookmark to go with the books we were donating to children's home libraries in the homes being built by Habitat for Humanity.
- Speaking of our school's Thanksgiving Mass, we collected and donated 68 bags of food for the poor. Students were asked to earn their food donation by doing an act of service which would benefit someone at home. All food donations went to St. Edward's Labre Ministry for the poor. Pope Francis in his most recent encyclical, *Dilexit nos*, encourages us to have a devotion to the Sacred Heart that inspires us to live out our faith in concrete acts of love and service toward others. Our children inspire me every day to do more because I see it in them. Hopefully after reading about some of these, you also will feel inspired too!
- The Potato Olympics occurred two weeks ago in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. Each student decorated a potato and participated in the following events: the Luge, Slalom Skiing, Figure Skating, Bowling, Gymnastics, and Bocce Ball. Students represented different countries and competed for First Place! It was great fun to watch them compete and record their times and measurements. Congratulations to Mrs. True and Mrs. Baillis on running such a fun event!
- St. Ignatius Latin teachers visited our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade classes presenting a mini-lesson on the day in the life of a Roman soldier. The lesson consisted of a presentation of historical elements as well as a demonstration of replica armor and weaponry. The students really enjoyed the presentation; I could barely pick up some of the armor let alone try wearing it!
- Our St. Mark after school Running Club took on a Thanksgiving spin by having a turkey trot! From the smiles, they all enjoyed themselves!
- The 7th Grade Prayer Partners helped their 3rd grade Partners complete dream catchers. Students added beads and feathers. The 3rd graders then read a summary of the story *The Dream Catcher* to their partners. Such pleasant dreams!
- Some of our 1<sup>st</sup> Graders in Miss Dunleavy's class created items and then hosted a Fall Scavenger Hunt. Seeing their smiles makes everything we do so worthwhile!

I heard from so many Veterans regarding our Veterans Day celebration. I wanted to share an email I read to the students: "Over the years, my husband has gone to quite a few programs St. Mark School has done to honor Veterans. My husband served four years active service and twenty-four years in the Navy Reserves. You will rarely hear him talk about the job he retired from, but when he talks about his time in the Navy, you can tell how important it was. The respect and recognition that you and your school and the students pay to these Veterans means a great deal to them and is greatly appreciated by them and their families. Thank you for doing this."

I am so proud of our Student Council and our students. Have a blessed week!

Mrs. Cocita

