

*2nd Sunday of Advent - December 10, 2023*

*The People of God called to form the Christian Community of*  
**Immaculate Heart of Mary Church**



**MISSION STATEMENT**

*"We reach out to all through prayer and service, as we live our Catholic faith in Christ with Mary."*



1571 S. Martine Ave. Scotch Plains, NJ 07076 PHONE: (908) 889-2100  
FAX: (908) 889-9477 EMAIL: [office@ihmparish.net](mailto:office@ihmparish.net)

Website: [www.ihmparish.net](http://www.ihmparish.net)

Facebook: [Immaculate Heart of Mary Church](#) | Instagram: [ihmparish\\_sp](#)



**SERVED BY**

Rev. Michael G. Ward, K.H.S., Pastor  
Rev. Robert Kunze: Weekend Assistant  
Deacon Jack Lynch  
Katie Wills: Director of Music Ministry  
John McGuire: Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation

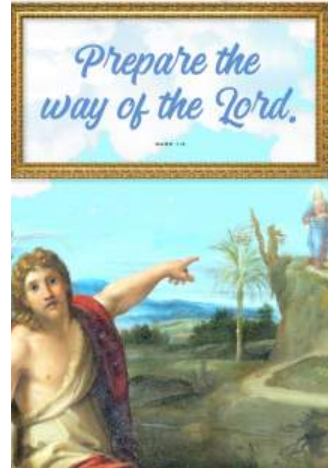


Mass will continue to Live Stream on Facebook and our website: [www.ihmparish.net](http://www.ihmparish.net)

**A NOTE FROM FATHER MIKE**

In listening to Mark’s description of John the Baptist in today’s Gospel, his community would have called to mind the prophet Elijah (John’s clothing and food are similar) whose coming heralded the coming of the Messiah, the exodus, the exile, and the return of the people of Israel to the promised land. He is indicating that Jesus will be the one who is to come, the messiah, the Christ. He also helps them, and us, to understand what we must do in order to prepare for this great event. We must make straight the way, remove the mountains and valleys that are obstacle to the Lord’s coming into our lives.

One sure way to do this is by recognizing our own sinfulness, seeking God’s mercy and then allowing that mercy to transform us as the people did with John the Baptist. In confessing our sins we are no longer held back, we become free to love and to receive love, the obstacles are removed and our hearts open more to the presence of Christ in our lives. We are better able to rejoice with awe at the coming of our Lord rather than fear and trembling. We hear the good news of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ and experience the comfort of God’s love more profoundly. Peace, Fr. Mike



*“In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*  
- Isaiah 40:3

**GLORY  
LET THERE BE PEACE**

**IHM + ST HELEN CHRISTMAS CONCERT**  
Friday December 15, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
St. Helen’s Church  
Located at 1600 Rahway Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090  
[www.sainthelen.org](http://www.sainthelen.org)

The Cathedral Concert Series Fifty-Second  
**Candlelight Carol Sing**  
Cathedral Choir and Instrumental Ensemble  
John J. Miller, conductor  
Kristin Johnson, organist

Wednesday, December 13, 2023  
and  
Thursday, December 14, 2023

Performances Begin at 8 PM  
Doors Open at 7 PM  
Ramped Entrance on Ridge Street

Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart  
Park and Clifton Avenues, Newark

For more information call 973-484-2400  
[www.cathedralbasilica.org](http://www.cathedralbasilica.org)

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)**

Saturday (Anticipated) 5:00 pm  
Sundays - 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 noon  
Weekdays & Saturdays - 7:00 am and 8:30 am  
National Holidays - 9:00 am  
Holy Days - 7:00 am, 12:00 noon, 7:00 pm

Morning Prayer - Monday - Saturday at 8:15 am  
Rosary: Monday - Saturday after 8:30 am Mass  
Novena to the Miraculous Medal & St. Jude:  
Saturdays after 8:30 am Mass  
Reconciliation: Saturdays from 4:15 - 4:45 pm

**Mass Intentions** For the week of December 10 - December 17, 2023

<b>Saturday December 9</b>	7:00am 8:30 am 5:00 pm	Thomas Masteller+ from the Pulliam Family Lee Heinzelmann+ from the Lewis Family Anne & Arthur Seeger+ from Joanne & Gary Cogswell
<b>Sunday December 10</b>	8:00 am 10:00 am 12:00 pm	Mary Jane Bergen+ from Mary Ann Sopko For the People of IHM Parish Mary Calabrese+ from Lori Lee
<b>Monday December 11</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	Diane McGuinness (living) thank you from IHM Parish Fr. Alex Pinto+ from Ro & Dan Kelly
<b>Tuesday December 12</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	John McNulty (living) thank you from IHM Parish Donald Clarkin Sr.+ from Rosemarie McCallion
<b>Wednesday December 13</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	Salwa Saouaf+ from Heba & Rich Fortunato Dominic Verdic Sr.+ from the Verdic Family
<b>Thursday December 14</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	Geri Smith+ from Al Smith James R. Kennedy+ from Family
<b>Friday December 15</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	Bernard Rooney+ from Ed Sullivan Mike D'Agostino+ from the D'Agostino Family
<b>Saturday December 16</b>	7:00am 8:30 am 11:00 am 5:00 pm	Carolynn Pulliam+ from Joan & Barry Pulliam Dorothy Lenartowicz+ from the Findlay Family Mass of Anointing Dolores Lestarchick+ from Marion & Marc Berger
<b>Sunday December 17</b>	8:00 am 10:00 am 12:00 pm	Bob Piasecki+ from Helen Piasecki Claire Rita Lewis+ from the Lewis Family For the People of IHM Parish


*Kindly keep our parishioner's family and friends, with health and other challenges, in your prayers*

- |                |                     |                  |                   |                   |                         |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| John Allen     | David Connell       | Mary Foster      | Jillian Lapidus   | Jacob Rivera      | Ryder Francis Spillane  |
| George Becker  | Colm Cosgrove       | Michele Gamako   | Mary Frances Leon | Jaxson Rivera     | Daniel Ventura          |
| Fran Boglioli  | Samantha Bridge     | Nicole Griffin   | Eileen Lynch      | Marisol Rodriguez | Sr. Elizabeth Vermaelen |
| Erin Brennan   | James Brown         | Ann Marie Harvey | William Maines    | Susan Rozborski   | Stephanie Vernace       |
| Anna Cassella  | John Burkert        | David Hens       | Jim Malfetti      | Dolores Rust      | Stephen Voorhees        |
| Paul Cassidy   | Ray Clark           | Kathleen Herron  | Bill Malone       | Diana Scariati    | Ben Wheelock            |
| Matthew Cassio | Matt Donovan        | Juliann Junio    | Marlene Mosko     | Arty Shapiro      | Evelyn Whitehorne       |
| Peter Cavanagh | Albert Fischer, Jr. | Marie Keller     | Hilda Pizza       | Elisa Silversey   |                         |
| Frank Chimento | Phyllis Fischer     | Dorothy Klein    | Diane Pricken     | Bernard Slaza     |                         |
| Edward Clark   | Emily Fleming       | Anna Koch        | Carmela Resnick   | Beverly Sopp      |                         |


Coping with Grief & Loss: A Bereavement Group at St. Paul's  
**Meeting on Thursdays at 5:45 PM**  
 December 7, 14, 21 and 28 + January 4, 11 and 18  
 To register call: 201-433-8500 | [griefsupport@stpaulrcc.com](mailto:griefsupport@stpaulrcc.com)  
 St Paul the Apostle. 14 Greenville Ave. Jersey City, NJ

If you have lost a loved one to death, we invite you to join us as we navigate this difficult journey. The group will meet on Wednesdays from 7PM- 8:30PM starting in April in the St. Bart's cafeteria. All are welcome to join. Please reach out to JoAnne at 908-889-7790 or Bernadette at 908-510- 0995, or contact Steven at: [sserafin@stbartholomewchurch.org](mailto:sserafin@stbartholomewchurch.org)

**Special Intentions for the week of December 10 - December 17, 2023**



**Sanctuary Light**  
 For the intention of:  
**Dominic Verdic Sr.+**  
 requested by:  
 the Verdic Family




**Altar Bread & Wine**  
 For the intention of:  
**MaryKate Schiller (living)**  
 Thank you from  
 IHM Parish



**Flowers for the Blessed Mother**  
 In memory of:  
**Virginia+**  
 requested by:  
 Madeline & Tom

**Remember  
Our Departed**



All Souls+

*2nd Annual* **HOLIDAY CELEBRATION & SHOPPING EVENT**  
FROM SPFPAL & IHM

**10 DECEMBER 11AM-3PM**

**Live Music**  
11am-12:30pm

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Live Nativity 11am-2pm  
FREE Cookies & Cocoa w/Santa

Questions? Contact Tracey (646)554-0001 or send an email to tsanguiliano@gmail.com



**LIVING NATIVITY**  
COME OUT WITH YOUR FAMILY TO SEE THE LIVE ANIMALS!

**Sunday, December 10th**  
11:00am - 2:00pm



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**  
We are looking for teen volunteers to dress up and handle the animals! We will have sheep, donkeys, an alpaca and more! Contact Rachael Flanagan, Coordinator of Youth Ministry at [ihmsp@boldym.com](mailto:ihmsp@boldym.com) or text 908-280-2893 to help out!

**FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**  
THERE WILL ALSO BE HOLIDAY SHOPPING BETWEEN 11AM-3PM, LIVE MUSIC FROM 11AM-12:30PM, CHILDREN'S CRAFTS AND FREE COOKIES & COCOA W/SANTA!

**BOLD**  
youth ministry by the 7000s

*High School Youth Ministry Christmas Party*

All in High School are invited to our Youth Ministry Christmas Party!

**Sunday, December 17th**  
7:00-8:30pm  
**IHM Nazareth Center**


Grab a friend, wear your most festive Ugly Christmas Sweater and join us for treats, games and prayer in anticipation of the Christmas season.

**RSVP By texting Rachael at 908-280-2893**

Questions? Contact: Rachael Flanagan at [ihmsp@boldym.com](mailto:ihmsp@boldym.com) or call/text 908-280-2893



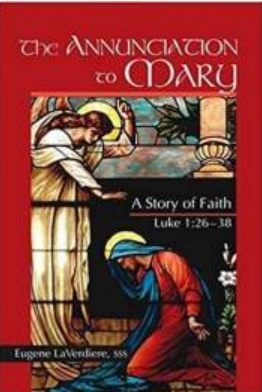
**Eucharistic Adoration**  
“In the Mass and in Eucharistic Adoration we meet the merciful love of God that passes through the Heart of Jesus Christ.”  
- Pope John Paul II



**Sign-Up to be an Adorer today!**  
Please contact the Parish Office at 908-889-2100 or email [office@ihmparish.net](mailto:office@ihmparish.net)

“God walks into your soul with silent step. God comes to you more than you go to Him. Never will his coming be what you expect, and yet never will it disappoint. The more you respond to his gentle pressure, the greater will be your freedom.”  
- Ven. Fulton Sheen

**The Annunciation to Mary: A Story of Faith**



The prologue of Luke’s Gospel is both simple and profound. As we prepare for Christmas let us take a close look at Mary of the scriptures.  
**We shall meet on Zoom on Tuesdays from 7:15pm until 8:15pm.**  
Please register at [FrRob@ihmparish.net](mailto:FrRob@ihmparish.net) and contact him if you have any questions or would like to obtain a book.

## Minister Assignments: December 16 - December 17

Saturday - Sunday	Lectors	Extra-Ordinary Ministers	Presider
12/16 5:00pm	Jim Brennan	Chris Zucosky Janice Good Piga	Fr. Rob
12/17 8:00am	Colm Keogh	Geraldine Keogh Jean Bagdonas Rich Wagner (C)	Fr. Rob
12/17 10:00am	Lou Zappo	Heba Fortunato Steve Prato Ed Sullivan (S)	Fr. Mike
12/17 12:00pm	Carol Kiley	Erlinda Fajardo Gil Fajardo	Fr. Mike



### Eucharistic Adoration Chapel Hours

Monday - Wednesday 9:00am - 9:00pm

Thursday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm

Closed Saturday, Sunday, Holy Days & Holidays

For more information contact Kerby at:

kpershay123@gmail.com | 908-406-0493

### IHM PARISH INFORMATION

#### Fall Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs. 9:00am - 4:00pm | Fri. 9:00am - 2:00pm

**Mass Intention Reservations:** Call or leave a message at the office (908)889-2100 or email [office@ihmparish.net](mailto:office@ihmparish.net)

**Religious Education:** [faithformation@ihmparish.net](mailto:faithformation@ihmparish.net)

**Baptisms:** Please call the office at (908) 889-2100

**Marriage:** Appointments should be made at least one year in advance. Contact the priest about a date and Pre-Cana information.

**New Parishioners:** Registration forms available at [www.ihmparish.net](http://www.ihmparish.net) or in the Nazareth Center office.

**Ministry to the Sick & Homebound:** Please notify the parish office of those who are sick or homebound, in hospitals or are unable to worship. For urgent calls, contact (908) 889-2100

**RCIA-Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults:** Religious education for adults who are either not Baptized or who are Catholic, but have not received all of their sacraments and would like to be Confirmed or receive Communion. We have flexible hours. Call (908) 889-2100. All are welcome!

**Reconciliation:** Saturdays: 4:15 - 4:45 pm  
Arrangements can be made at any time for private confession. Please call the office at (908) 889-2100

**Parish Schools:** St. Bartholomew Academy (908) 322-4265  
Union Catholic Regional High School (908) 889-1600

Website: [www.ihmparish.net](http://www.ihmparish.net)

Like us on Facebook: **Immaculate Heart of Mary Church**

Follow us on Instagram: **ihmparish\_sp**



## Rosary Altar Society News

♥ Thank you to all who attended our Annual Rosary Christmas Party on Sunday. The decorations, the food and the raffles as well as the wonderful friendships that we share on a daily basis made a rainy day full of light and warmth. Thank you to our "team of volunteers": Mary Ann Sopko, Betty Perfilio, Barbara Mrozek, Barbara Apgar, Alice Mansfield-Smith & Janice Good-Piga for making this annual celebration so special. Thank you as well to those who donated prizes for the raffles, Phyllis Manno, Eileen Wagner, Maureen Pecoraro, Ann Krivitski, Mary Anne Sopko. Thank you as well to Father Mike for his constant leadership, guidance and support and for Father Rob for his support. We are truly Blessed to have such a wonderful organization! We collected Over \$1,000 in donations for The Missionaries of Charity as well.

♥ We will once again be collecting Costume Jewelry for the children of St. Joseph's Social Services in Elizabeth to select, wrap, and give to their significant others at Christmas time.

For some, it may be the only gift that they receive this Christmas. Please contact Janice (908-759-6729) with questions or jewelry donations. Men's jewelry/watches are also welcome. Many thanks for your generosity. Deadline for collections will be December 12th!

♥ Kindly mark your calendars for Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 at Noon (Snow Date January 16th) for our Annual Rosary Winter Luncheon. We will have a Gourmet Lunch at Max's Bistro on Park Avenue in Scotch Plains. Lunch will include Appetizers, Choice of Three Entrees, and Dessert. Kindly reserve your spot by mailing your check (Payable to IHM Rosary Altar Society) for \$33 to Alice Mansfield-Smith, 3 Kennedy Drive, Clark, NJ 07066 by January 2, 2024. Spouses & friends are also welcome! And there will be door prizes!

♥ May your week ahead be a Blessed one filled with the joy of the Advent season and the preparation for our Christmas celebrations. Please remember to take a moment to breathe in the fresh, crisp air, and to thank God for all of the beautiful gifts that he showers upon us daily. As we continue our Advent journey, may you find a renewed sense of peace and joy. You remain in our daily thoughts and prayers. May your Blessings be countless!

♥ Janice



The next meeting of the Women's Prayer Group will be **Thursday night January 11th, 2024 at 7:30PM on ZOOM**. Please contact Tracey at [tefoleyihm@gmail.com](mailto:tefoleyihm@gmail.com) for more details. Prayer connects us all!



**CENTERING PRAYER-** Join us for Lectio Divina, Reflection, Discussion & Quiet. Three times monthly at the Nazareth Center. **Thursday mornings from 9:30-10:45 AM**. Contact Phyllis at [tman18912@comcast.net](mailto:tman18912@comcast.net) or call the office at 908-889-2100 for details or to sign up.



There will be a Men's Cornerstone Mass on **Thursday December 14 at 7:00 PM in the chapel**. Followed by a virtual ZOOM session **Thursday December 21 at 7:30 PM**. Contact David at [dndiken@aol.com](mailto:dndiken@aol.com) for details.

We have been reporting our weekly collection "target" to reflect what was submitted in our budget to the Archdiocese. However, this number does not give us a balanced budget. So moving forward, we have revised our "goal" to balance our budget.

<b>Collection Report</b>		<b>November 26, 2023</b>	
Weekly Target:		\$11,765.00	
Collection (Mass + Parish Giving)		\$9,502.32	
Surplus/(Deficit)		(2,262.68)	
<b>Fiscal Year to Date:</b>			
Budget		\$256,740.00	
Actual:		\$242,307.17	
Surplus/(Deficit)		(\$14,432.83)	
<b>Rolling 4 Week Averages:</b>			
Average Collection:		\$10,679.64	
Average Surplus/(Deficit)		(1,085.36)	



More highlights from this year's Embolden retreat at Camp Tecumseh. Thanks to everyone in attendance. It was a blast!



**A BIG THANK YOU** to Marian Berger and the ladies of the Prayer Shawl/Knitting Club for creating this beautiful "Alpha-inspired" garment to share with the parish. The Prayer Shawl/Knitting Club meets every 3rd Sunday of the month at 11AM in the Nazareth Center. Contact the office for more details. [www.ihmparish.net/alpha](http://www.ihmparish.net/alpha)

## IHM SPECIAL EVENTS FOR THIS WEEK

<b>Sunday 12/10</b> 10:00am - Food Pantry Sunday (Open until 11:30am) 11:00am- [Youth Group] Living Nativity (Open until 2:00pm) 11:00am- IHM Christmas Market (Open until 3:00pm)
<b>Monday 12/11</b> 7:00pm- Confirmation Prep: Year 1 7:30pm- Alpha Episode 13 LIVE Season Finale
<b>Tuesday 12/12</b> 7:15pm- Spirituality Seminar Annunciation Mary on ZOOM
<b>Wednesday 12/13</b> 10:00am - Food Pantry (Open until 11:30am) 7:00pm- Adult Choir Practice 7:00pm- Pastoral Council Meeting
<b>Thursday 12/14</b> 9:30am- Centering Prayer LIVE @ Nazareth Center 7:00pm- Men's Cornerstone Mass @ Chapel
<b>Friday 12/15</b> 7:00pm- Christmas Concert @ St. Helen's Church
<b>Saturday 12/16: Los Posadas</b> All Day- Saturday Basketball 10:00am- Confessions 11:00am- Mass of Anointing
<b>Sunday 12/17</b> 11:00am- Prayer Shawl/Knitting Meeting @ Nazareth Center 7:00pm- [Youth Group] Christmas Party @ Nazareth Center

### A Message from Faith Formation Pastoral Associate: John McGuire

Who are you spending more time preparing for this Advent, for the coming of Christ our Lord or Santa Claus? I think this second week of Advent, that is the most important question to ask. Making way for either of these people takes a certain level of devotion, and preparation. While there is some overlap, there are distinct differences. Preparing to welcome Santa Claus is somewhat external. Trim the tree, set the table, bake the cookies, and shop, shop, shop for the gifts. Parents harry themselves, and children are called to behave, lest they receive coal for the fireplace. The modern concept of Santa is applied to instill a sense of wonder, but also compliance. Listen to your parents, teachers, and authorities, or there won't be gifts (though Santa almost always seems to come through ;) Preparing for the coming of Jesus requires much more. Our Lord requires transformation over compliance. We are called to change our hearts to love, and not just those who are easy to love. Rend your hearts for those who already break them. Prepare your hearts, not just your homes. Care for those who are hungry, thirsty, imprisoned, and sick. Then you are ready for Jesus. So, even as we prepare for Santa, let's spend some extra time in prayer and action, to ready our hearts for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, both in His birth celebrated at Christmas, but also as He comes again!  
God Bless and have a wonderful Advent.



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