

CHURCH OF SAINT MONICA



DECEMBER 8, 2024

Our Parish is Served by:

Reverend Alex Enriquez, Pastor
Deacon Christian Knoebel
Deacon John L. White

We invite you to celebrate with us

website: www.saintmonica.com

Parish Office: 732-928-0279

Email: parishoffice@saintmonica.com

Fax: (732) 928-1853

Religious Education: 732-928-4038

Email: stmonicacd@yahoo.com

Confessions

Saturdays

3:15 pm

to 3:45 pm

1st Thursdays 7pm

or by appointment

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/ParishofStMonica/)

[ParishofStMonica/](http://www.facebook.com/ParishofStMonica/)

Masses

Mon. to Thurs. 9 am

Saturday 4 pm

Sunday 9 am & 11 am

679 W. Veterans Highway

Jackson, NJ 08527



The Church of St. Monica is a warm, accepting, and caring parish that worships God, teaches and lives the message of Christ, seeks to support and strengthen family life, and serves those in need through parish ministries and organizations.



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 8, 2024

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 7

4:00 pm Sylvester Cascio & Joseph Anzalone
(Anzalone Family)

Sunday, December 8

9:00 am Anthony Sasso (Karen Badach)
11:00 am Madison Gross
(Dcn John & Caroline White)

Monday, December 9

Immaculate Conception

9:00 am Parishioners
7:00 pm Parishioners

Tuesday, December 10

9:00 am Available

Wednesday, December 11

9:00 am Available

Thursday, December 12

9:00 am Available

Saturday, December 14

4:00 pm Bob Dushanek (St Monica)

Sunday, December 15

9:00 am Frances Panicola
(Dcn John & Caroline White)
11:00 am Alexander Schpakow
(William & Linda Patullo)

To secure your Mass Intentions, contact the Parish Office.

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Micki Smith, Joyce Picon, Carol Atherton, Beth Kujawski, Chuck Smith, Toni Hetteroth, Dianne Smith, Andy Sabine, Elaine Gibblock, Marie Gould, Steve Andolora, Doris Garbarino, Melissa Staiger, Bonnie Holton, Arlene Toth, Judy Bocchicchio, Leo Diaz, Glory D'Acunto, Josephine Brennan, Frank Trimboli, Gabrielle D'Acunto, Anthony Pelle, Jr, Joey Brune, Phillip Wenz, Robin Trombino, Mary Miniscalchi, Lane Morell, Frank Falesto, Jean Stein, Ann Rosetto, Elaine Stemmler, Tom Martin, Dorothy Palumbo, Jacob Rivera, Jaxson Rivera, Jennie D'Angelo, Paul Hetteroth, Cheryl Vega, Carol Spezzano, Michael Seiler, Shannon Hubert, Ronald Nuzzola, Ray Kijowski, Nicholas Biddle, Matthew Biddle, Dennis Shwiner, Laura Stoyer, Mike Scott, Andrew G Sabine, A.J. Sabine, Stephen Alexander, Angela Belmont

Contact the Parish Office to let us know of anyone to be remembered in prayer, so we may include them or, if they can be removed.

Readings for the Week - December 8, 2024

Monday, December 9, 2024 Gn 3:9-15, 20 Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 Eph 1:3-6, 11-12 Lk 1:26-38

Tuesday, December 10, 2024 Is 40:1-11 Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13 Mt 18:12-14

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 Is 40:25-31 Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10 Mt 11:28-30

Thursday, December 12, 2024 Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab Jud 13:18bcde, 19 Lk 1:26-38

Friday, December 13, 2024 Is 48:17-19 Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 Mt 11:16-19

Saturday, December 14, 2024 Sir 48:1-4, 9-11 Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19 Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, December 15, 2024 Zep 3:14-18a Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 Phil 4:4-7 Lk 3:10-18

**Advent/Christmas/New Year
Schedule of Services**

†
Second Sunday of Advent
 Saturday, December 7 Mass 4:00 pm
 Sunday, December 8 9:00 am & 11:00 am Mass

Monday, December 9
Immaculate Conception (Holy Day)
 9:00 am & 7:00 pm Mass

Daily Masses:
 Monday – Thursday
 9:00 am (through December 19)

Simbang Gabi – Christmas Novena, Rosary & Mass
 Saturday, December 21
 Rosary 6:30 pm
 Mass 7:00 pm

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Sunday Obligation)
 Saturday, December 21- 4:00 pm
 Sunday, December 22 - 9:00 & 11:00 am

Monday, December 23
 No 9:00 am Mass

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24 (Holy Day)
 4:00 & 10:00 pm

Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25 (Holy Day)
 9:00 am & 11:00 am

New Year's Eve - Tuesday, December 31
 9:00 am

Solemnity of Mary - Wednesday, January 1
(Holy Day)
 Mass 9:00 am & 7:00 pm

**FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP COLLECTIONS
NOVEMBER 18 - 24, 2024**

Total \$5,639.00

Thank you for your contributions as we support the ministries, programs and facilities of our parish.

ONLINE GIVING

Online Giving is a way to simplify your giving and provide steady, consistent support that helps St Monica be ready with programs, services and ministries for families in our community and the maintenance of our facilities. Your recurring gifts help strengthen our parish and sustain our ministries through the year. It's easy to get started. Here are the ways to sign up:

- Visit our website: www.saintmonica.com
- Scan the **QR code** below or
- Contact Liz Hills in the parish office **732-928-0279** or email: parishoffice@saintmonica.com



Thank you and may God bless your generosity.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS SINGERS

Rehearsal Schedule is Tues. @ 7 p.m.:

- Dec. 10
- Dec. 17

Direct your questions to the Parish Office at **732-928-0279** or to parishoffice@saintmonica.com



CHRISTMAS MASS INTENTIONS

Intentions for the living and deceased will be remembered at all Christmas Masses. Intention envelopes were mailed in our Christmas mailing. Additional envelopes are available at the entrances to the church and from the Parish Office. Intentions may be returned in the collection basket or dropped off at the Parish Office no later than Dec 15.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 8, 2024

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Please return Giving Tree gifts with their tags no later than Sunday, December 15. We are also looking for anyone wishing to adopt a family by donating a box of food for Christmas. Please see signup sheets at the back of the church for details. Grocery gift cards are also welcome and may be placed in the collection baskets marked "Social Concerns Ministry." For questions, please contact the Parish Office. Thank you in advance for your generosity in helping these families.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE SALES

The Knights of Columbus holding its annual **CHRISTMAS TREE FUNDRAISER** in support of St. Jude's Children's Hospital and other local charities.

Please visit us at our new location Premier Design located at 138 N. County Line Rd. in Jackson. Quality, freshly cut trees, grave blankets, and wreaths are available for purchase beginning November 29th while supplies last.

Hours are weekdays 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and weekends 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

New this year: a **HOLIDAY PHOTO STATION** & an **appearance by SANTA!** Please come out and support those in need this Christmas Season!



HELP DECORATE OUR CHURCH

We're looking for volunteers to assist with decorating our Church for Christmas. We will gather on Sunday, Dec. 22 at 12 noon. This is an opportunity for student service hours.

See signup sheet at the back of the Church, or call Liz Hills in the **Parish Office 732-928-0279**, or email: parishoffice@saintmonica.com.

BLESSED SALT

There is a renewed interest today in the ancient sacramental of blessed salt. As in the case of all sacramentals, its power comes not from the sign itself, but by means of the Church's official prayer of blessing—a power the Church derives from Christ himself (*see Matt. 16:19 and 18:18*).

Blessed Salt is a sacramental. Bottles of salt for blessing to become Blessed Salt are for sale after all Masses during Advent. Jesus said to the disciples, "You are the salt of the Earth," in Matthew 5:13.

Blessed Salt can be used to: create a spiritual barrier in your home to ward off evil spirits; bless those in your charge; be sprinkled on your threshold or foundation; as food; or spiritual protection while traveling.

Each bottle is \$10. If you choose to purchase Blessed Salt or order several bottles to be used as gifts, **AFTER** its purchase, Father Alex or the Deacons will bless it.

This is a fundraiser to assist in church maintenance. What a great gift this would make for just about anyone! For questions, please contact Caroline White or the Parish Office.

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 8

9:00 am Mass
 11:00 am Mass
 7:00 pm Adult Choir

**Monday, December 9 - Immaculate Conception
 Holy Day of Obligation**

9:00 am Mass
 7:00 pm Mass
 No Religious Ed Classes
 Parish Offices Closed

Tuesday, December 10

9:00 am Mass
 5:30 pm Rel Ed Class
 7:00 pm Yth Christmas Choir (Church)
 7:30 pm Legion of Mary (LC)

Wednesday, December 11

9:00 am Mass
 5:30 pm OCIA (LC)
 7:00 pm K of C CUF (Church)

Thursday, December 12

9:00 am Mass
 10:00 am Grief Share Mtg (LC)
 1:00 pm Bible Study Grp (LC)
 7:00 pm K of C Mtg (Parish Hall)

Saturday, December 14

12:00 pm Altar Server Pizza Party(Hall)
 3:15 pm Confessions
 4:00 pm Mass

Sunday, December 15

9:00 am Mass
 11:00 am Mass/Rite of Welcome/Acceptance
 7:00 pm Adult Choir

Monday, December 16

9:00 am Mass
 4:30 pm Rel Ed Class
 6:15 pm Rel Ed Class

Tuesday, December 17

9:00 am Mass
 5:30 pm Rel Ed Class
 7:00 pm Yth Christmas Choir (Church)
 7:30 pm K of C Officer Mtg (LC)
 7:30 pm Legion of Mary (Parish Foyer)

Wednesday, December 18

9:00 am Mass



Join Bishop David O'Connell
 in Celebrating
THE JUBILEE HOLY YEAR



DECEMBER 28, 2024
Mass 5:30 pm
 Cathedral St. Mary of
 the Assumption, Trenton
 151 N Warren St, Trenton, NJ 08608



DECEMBER 29, 2024
Mass 10:00 am
 Co-Cathedral St. Robert
 Bellarmine, Freehold
 61 Georgia Rd, Freehold Township, NJ 07728

DIoceseOFTrenton.org/Jubilee-2025

The Diocese of Trenton
 presents
 George Frideric Handel's
Messiah
 Part One

featuring the combined
 choirs of the Diocesan Festival Choir &
 the Choir of the Red Bank Oratory
 with the Orchestra of St. Cecilia
 under the direction of Shawn Mack

Sunday December 8, 2024 3:30 p.m.

Admission: Adults \$20
Seniors & Students \$15
under 8 free

(Tickets may be purchased
 at the door or in advance online at
[https://dioceseoftrenton.org/
 diocesan-festival-choir](https://dioceseoftrenton.org/diocesan-festival-choir))

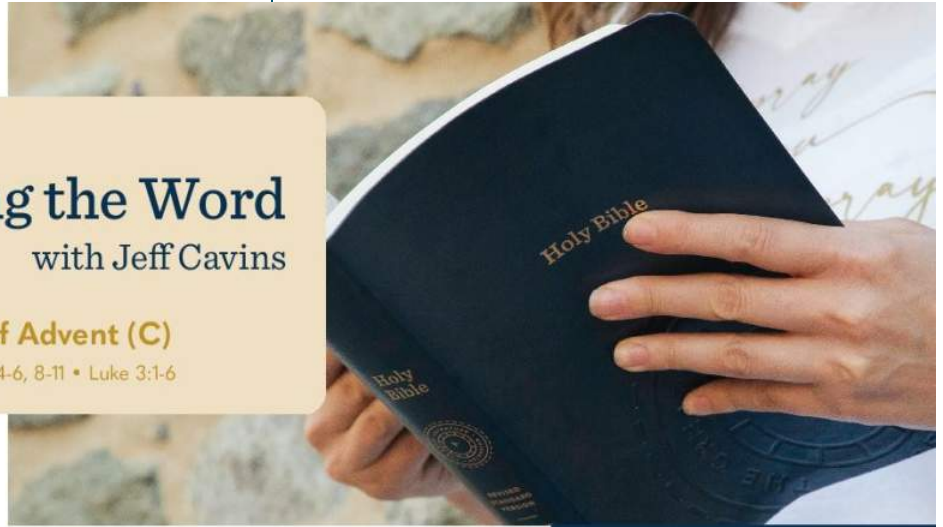
For Further Information contact
 St. Aloysius Church
 935 Bennetts Mills Road,
 Jackson, NJ 08527
 Phone: 732-370-0500

Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

Second Sunday of Advent (C)

Baruch 5:1-9 • Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11 • Luke 3:1-6



Repentance Prepares Us

Today in Luke 3, we find John the Baptist at the Jordan River in the wilderness of Judea, speaking to a group of people about preparing their hearts for the coming of the Lord.

It is interesting that John is in the wilderness. I don't know about you, but there are times in my life when I experience a "wilderness." The roads seem winding and very rough, and I want to get back to a peaceful place.

At the river, speaking to these people about getting ready for the coming of the Lord, John the Baptist proclaims, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "A voice of one crying out in the desert: / 'Prepare the way of the Lord, / make straight his paths. / Every valley shall be filled / and every mountain and hill shall be made low. / The winding roads shall be made straight, / and the rough ways made smooth, / and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

When I feel like I am in the wilderness, I need to turn my life around by listening to John's message of the baptism of repentance, *metanoia*. That word means turning from what hurts you back to the right way. God is calling us to do just that this Advent. He wants us to examine our hearts, the way we are living our lives. If we are doing things that are contrary to the Lord, then God is asking us to turn away from what is hurting us or turn from the wrong way back to the right path. That's repentance. It is a change of heart that all of us need to make.



The Preaching of John the Baptist by Bartholomeus Breenbergh

Live the Gospel

Jeff Cavins says, "God calls you to correct your life in midstream. So I encourage you to do what I'm going to do: go to Confession. There, we confess wrong directions and promise to go the right way. If you've never experienced the Sacrament of Penance or if you haven't gone to Confession in a while, go. Feel that change in the confessional. Wake up on Christmas morning knowing you are going in the right direction. Prepare the way for the Lord!"

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to:

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/second-sunday-of-advent-c/>

Ponder and Pray

» Can I sense the Holy Spirit calling me away from sin and back to God's friendship?

Four horizontal lines for writing a response to the first question.

» Is my preparation for the Lord's coming joyful? If not, why not?

“ Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. -Luke 3:4 ”

Four horizontal lines for writing a response to the second question.

» Are material things getting in the way of my drawing closer to the Lord?

Four horizontal lines for writing a response to the third question.

» What specific sins might I need to renounce to experience the friendship of God?

Two horizontal lines for writing a response to the fourth question.

Make It Your Own

You and others in your household may use this space to write anything about today's Mass. Your view of Jeff Cavins's reflection, your priest's homily, your answers to the questions on this page—anything to help you and your household get the most out of today's Mass.

Five horizontal lines for writing a personal reflection.

Jeff Cavins is the author of The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation and the creator of the video series Sundays with Ascension, from which this reflection was adapted. © 2024 Ascension Publishing Group, LLC. This product is intended for reproduction in parish bulletins in either electronic or printed form. Excerpts were taken from the Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, Second Typical Edition © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of the Lectionary may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner. This work is not for resale.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 8, 2024

PILGRIMAGE TO FINLAND, SWEDEN, DENMARK, NORWAY, ICELAND



Helsinki, Stockholm, Linköping, Varnhem Abbey, Gothenburg, Copenhagen, Tivoli Gardens, Oslo, Reykjavik

DAILY MASS WITH FR. ALEX ENRIQUEZ

September 01-13 2025, for 13 days. Tour Cost: \$4,899.00 LAND ONLY Plus Airfare \$1,000.00=\$5,899.00

Early Registration Discount \$200.00 if Registration & Deposit Submitted before January 10, 2025

Tour Price Includes

Hotel accommodation at tourist-class hotels. 2 nights on cruise. Daily breakfast and dinner, except Reykjavik. Round trip transfers from Airport to Hotel. All entrance fees in the itinerary. Touring in the itinerary with a deluxe air-conditioned motor coach. Daily Mass arrangements. Baggage handling at hotels. Only one piece of luggage per person. Hotel taxes and service charges. Not included: Lunches, gratuities for guides and driver and anything not mentioned.

ITINERARY

Day 1, September 01, Monday, Departure to HELSINKI (FINLAND)

Our pilgrimage begins as we leave our hometown for an overnight flight to Helsinki, Finland. Dinner and breakfast are served on board.

Day 2, September 02, Tuesday, Arrival to HELSINKI

Upon arrival, meet your driver and transfer to your hotel in Helsinki. Dinner and overnight in Helsinki.

Day 3, September 03, Wednesday, HELSINKI – STOCKHOLM (SWEDEN)

After breakfast, we will have a city tour of Helsinki. Famous sights include the Senate Square, Uspenski Cathedral, Parliament House, Finlandia Hall, Sibelius Park & Monument, and Underground Temple. Late afternoon, we will board an overnight cruise ship to Stockholm. Dinner and overnight on board.

Day 4, September 04, Thursday, STOCKHOLM

Scandinavian buffet breakfast is being served on board. After disembarkation, we will celebrate Mass at Saint Eugene or Saint Eric Church. After mass, we will start the 4-hour guided tour of Stockholm. Famous sights on the tour include the Royal Palace, the Parliament Buildings, the island of Djurgården, and the Old Town (Gamla Stan), with its narrow streets and numerous antique shops. The highlight of the tour is a visit to City Hall with its famous Blue and Golden Halls, where the Nobel Prize Banquet is held each year. After visiting the unique Vasa Ship Museum, free time for shopping in Stockholm.

Day 5, September 05, Friday, STOCKHOLM, LINKÖPING, VRETA ABBEY, MOTOLA

After breakfast, we will drive to Linköping to visit the Cathedral, located where a small church in the form of a cross was built in the 12th century. Then we will continue to drive to Vreta Abbey, founded at the beginning of the 12th century by King Inge the Elder and Queen Helena, at Pope Paschal II's request. The next visit is to Vadstena Abbey, Motherhouse of the Bridgettine Order, located on the shores of Lake Wetter. We will celebrate Mass at Vadstena Abbey. Dinner and overnight in Motola.

Day 6, September 06, Saturday, MOTOLA, VARNHEM ABBEY, GOTHENBURGH

After breakfast, we will drive to Sweden's oldest Christian place, Varnhem Abbey, where you'll find a churchyard from the Viking era, evidence of their conversion to Christianity over 1,000 years ago. We will continue to drive to Gothenburg to visit the splendid Botanic Gardens, one of the largest and best in Europe, with over 16,000 species of plants in different greenhouses and areas like the rock garden and herb garden. Dinner and overnight in Gothenburg.

Day 7, September 07, Sunday, GOTHENBURG – COPENHAGEN (DENMARK)

After breakfast, we will drive to Copenhagen. On the way, we will visit Lund Cathedral. The Cathedral was consecrated in 1145 and contains many well-known artifacts and features of considerable historical interest. Then, we will drive to Ystad to visit the Franciscan Ystad Monastery. Founded in 1267, this is the oldest medieval monastery in Sweden and, together with Vadstena Abbey, one of the best preserved. Dinner and overnight in Copenhagen

Day 8, September 08, Monday, COPENHAGEN

Today, we will explore Copenhagen; Meet Hans Christian Andersen's Little Mermaid gazing wistfully across the harbor, then visit the Christiansborg Palace, the seat of the Danish Government. Celebrate Mass at Saint Ansgar's Cathedral. Saint Ansgar is known for his missionary activities in Scandinavia, bringing the message of Christ to the people of these lands. After dinner, we will visit the world-famous Tivoli Gardens. Dinner and overnight in Copenhagen.

Day 9, September 09, Tuesday, COPENHAGEN – ROSKILDE – COPENHAGEN – OSLO (NORWAY)

After breakfast, we travel to Roskilde to visit the Cathedral, the earliest major ecclesiastical building in northern Europe. It is noteworthy for successive architectural styles used in the ancillary chapels and porches added over many centuries, during which it has served as the mausoleum of the Danish royal family. Then we will visit the fascinating Viking Ship Museum. At the end of the tour, we will return to Copenhagen to board our overnight cruise to Oslo. Enjoy a delicious Scandinavian buffet dinner on board on the way to Oslo.

Day 10, September 10, Wednesday OSLO

Scandinavian buffet breakfast is being served on board, as you sail up the exciting Oslo Fjord to reach the Norwegian capital. After disembarkation, We will celebrate Mass at Saint Olav's Cathedral, the primary Catholic sanctuary in Oslo. Pope John Paul II visited the Cathedral in 1989. After Mass, proceed for an Oslo tour to visit Frogner Park, Akershus Fortress, founded in 1299 during the reign of King Håkon V. The medieval castle was modernized and converted into a Renaissance royal residence. Dinner and overnight in Oslo.

Day 11, September 11, Thursday, OSLO – REYKJAVIK (ICELAND)

After breakfast transfer to Airport. Upon arrival at Keflavik Airport, transfer to the hotel in Reykjavik. Dinner on your own. Overnight in Reykjavik.

Day 12, September 12, Friday, REYKJAVIK

After breakfast, we will have a city sightseeing tour of Reykjavik including the town of Hafnarfjörður where we visit the Fish Market, the Open-Air Museum Arbær, one of the open-air swimming pools, and the towering Hallgrím's Church, old town, the harbor, the summit meeting house Höfði, and the House of Parliament. Afternoon visit the majestic waterfalls at Gullfoss and the famous erupting hot springs at Geysir with its colorful pools and leaping hot springs. Dinner on your own. Overnight in Reykjavik.

Day 13, September 13, Saturday, DEPARTURE -HOME

After breakfast, we will go to the Blue Lagoon, a mineral-rich azure lake where you can luxuriate in the warm, rejuvenating waters before we take our flight

For more information and reservations please contact

MARLENE & JUN OSMA (973) 953-5033 Email: marleneosma426@gmail.com
FR. ALEX ENRIQUEZ :(908) 902-7671 EMAIL: alexce101@msn.com

*The Eucharist - St Monica***Masses & Reconciliation**

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am--3:30 pm
 Saturday 4:00 pm
 Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 am
 Holy Days As Noted
 Reconciliation: Saturday 3:15 - 3:45 pm
 1st Thursday of the month 7:00 pm
 or by appt.

Exposition of the Holy Sacrament & Benediction

1st Wednesday of each month 9:30 am
 1st Thursday of each month 7:00 pm with
 Confessions

Parish Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Baptisms

Celebrated outside of Mass. Parents and godparents are required to attend our Baptism preparation program. Please call the Parish Office to register.

Visits to the Sick and Homebound

May be arranged by calling our parish office.

Knights of Columbus Council #11529

The Knights of Columbus were founded in 1882 by Blessed Father Michael McGivney. It an international order of more than 2 million Catholic men who are called to lead with faith, protect our families, serve others, and defend Catholic values in a busy changing world. St Monica Council #11529 has a long history of support for the parish and many local charities. If you would like to join, simply scan the QR Code or go to KofC.org/join and enter council #11529.

*St Vincent de Paul Society*

Emergency Assistance Helpline: 732-370-0098

Bereavement Ministry

Please contact the parish office for more information.

Grief Support

For those grieving the loss of a loved one or close friend. This is a Catholic centered Support Group offering a caring, compassionate, and confidential environment to support your journey from grieving to healing. For registration and details contact Deacon

John White 848-992-1652 or dcjohnw@gmail.com

Youth Group

Open to all children of St Monica registered families and we would love to have you join us. For more information, call Theresa Calsetta 732-299-0261.

RCIA/OCIA

Rite/Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

For those who are seeking full membership in the Catholic Faith, please contact the parish office.

New Parishioners

Welcome to our parish family! Registration forms may be downloaded at www.saintmonica.com
 Please contact the parish office for further info.

Adult Faith Formation Core Team

Our mission is to encourage and support parishioners in their lifelong learning in the faith in order to grow closer to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit through discipleship and evangelization.

Marriages

The Catholic Dioceses of New Jersey request a one year period of preparation for marriage in The Church. Contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.

Religious Education

Children are expected to receive a Catholic-Christian upbringing in their family life, to worship regularly at Sunday Mass, and to participate in on-going Religious Education classes. Our program includes grades 1-8. Please contact Karen Badach, Coordinator of Religious Education 732-928-4038 or stmonicaccd@yahoo.com

Legion of Mary

Members participate in the life of the parish through a program of prayers and service. The Legion of Mary is open to all Catholic men and women over 18 years of age who have the good will to want to serve God through Mother Mary. Meetings are at St. Monica every Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. The Legion is always looking to recruit new members. If you discern a divine connection to the Blessed Mother, and feel she is calling you to join, please contact the Parish Office.

Women of St Monica

A Ministry of Catholic women of the parish striving to fulfill their spiritual needs, sharing their faith, promoting community, and conducting fundraisers throughout the year and enhance parish life in a variety of ways. Please contact the parish office for more info.



If you have been sexually abused as a minor by a member of the clergy or anyone representing the Catholic Church, or if you know someone who was, you can report that abuse through the diocesan ABUSE HOTLINE: 1-888-296-2965 or via email at: abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org

Reflections on the Readings for the 2nd Sunday of Advent - December 8, 2024

MAKING STRAIGHT THE PATH OF THE LORD

Have you ever driven on a zigzag road? If you have, then you know how long it takes to get somewhere. It would be so much faster if you could just take a straight path to your destination. In today's reading, we are told, "The winding roads shall be made straight." But the real question is why roads, especially the road to God, get crooked in the first place.

The answer is simple: First, we follow our will, and then we veer back to God. But that doesn't last and we go our own selfish way again. Then we decide to do it God's way, but before long, we are wandering off down our own road of bad intentions again. We do this over and over, and pretty soon we have created a very zigzag path indeed.

How do we make our path straight? By following God's will wholeheartedly. Our Father gently calls us to repent from our crooked paths and return home to him. He reaches out and offers to help us find our way directly back to him. But it's up to us if we are going to accept his offer to return from our self-imposed exile and "come back rejoicing, carrying [our] sheaves."

PRAYER

Let us reflect on these words from the Gospel reading about how the Lord is coming to make the winding roads straight. Ask Jesus what they mean in your own life. What roads in your life are winding—are not the right path? What rough areas need to be made smooth?

Take the word that comes to mind and reflect for a moment on what it means to you personally. For example, you might have been attracted to the words "winding road." Ask yourself what they mean in your own life. What roads are winding? How can you make them straight?

RESOLUTION

St. Augustine said, "God *created us* without us, but he did not will to *save us* without us." Ask God today what he wants you to do to prepare the way of the Lord in your heart. What practical thing can you do this week to straighten the paths of your life?

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**Knights of
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Daniel McGeehan
732-597-3832
daniel.mcgeehan@kofc.org



Contact me today to learn more.

*Knights of Columbus and its partners, Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors and Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund, are entities that each provide separate and distinct products and services. Financial retirement planning, life and disability income insurance, and personal philanthropy entail certain risks. Learn more at kofc.org/liveyourfaith
1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510

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