

PARENT PAGE

DECEMBER 2011

ASCENSION RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE
2001 Woodman Drive, Kettering, OH 45420 254-0622

DECEMBER 4-Sunday Second Sunday of Advent

Coffee & Donuts
8:30am RCIA/Family
9:45am Gr. 6-8
10:30am Early Childhood

5-Monday

4:15pm Gr. 1-5
6:30pm Gr. 6-8

8-Thursday

Immaculate Conception
Masses at 9:00am, Noon,
7:00pm

11-Sunday

Third Sunday of Advent
9:45am Gr. 6-8/Advent
Prayer Service
10:30am RCIA
10:30am Early Childhood

12- Monday

Our Lady of Guadalupe
4:15pm Gr. 1-5/Advent
Prayer Service
6:30pm Gr. 6-8/Advent
Prayer Service

18-Sunday

Fourth Sunday of Advent
9:45am Gr. 6-8
10:30am RCIA
10:30am Early Childhood/
Advent Celebration

19-Monday

4:15pm Gr. 1-5
6:30pm Gr. 6-8

25-Sunday

Christmas
NO CLASSES

26-Monday

NO CLASSES

30-Friday

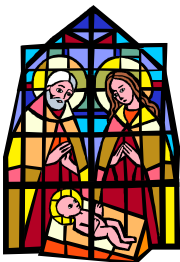
Feast of the Holy Family

JANUARY 1-Sunday

Mary, Mother of God
NO CLASSES

2-Monday

NO
CLASSES



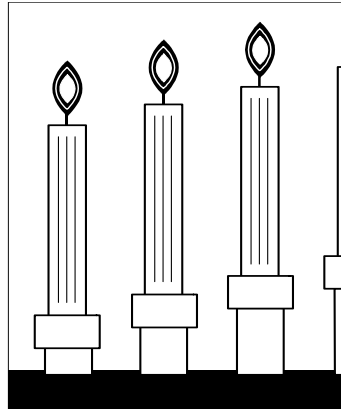
We Wait in Joyful Hope!

The students are observing Advent in the classroom with a variety of activities.

On the pamphlet rack in the upstairs connector, we have available a number of handouts containing family ideas for celebrating Advent and the Christmas season in the home. Please take one!

Advent is a time of expectation and waiting for the coming of Christ - in the past, as an infant born in a Bethlehem stable; in the present, as he comes into our lives as Savior, Healer, and Friend; and in the future, as he comes as the Messiah who will reign forever.

The First Sunday of Advent is also the beginning of the church year. We are entering Cycle B of the three year cycle; the Gospel according to Mark will be read during Cycle B.



We encourage you to make use of the blue Advent booklet that the parish has made available at the entrances to the church. What a great way to prepare for the coming Christmas season as well as Mark's Gospel we will be hearing at Mass!



We also encourage you to pray around the Advent wreath each day with your children!

Growing Peace at Ascension



Thanks to those families who took the Family Pledge of Nonviolence and returned their doves. The doves are displayed around our Peace Bulletin Board outside the RE Office.

Classes have signed the **Classroom Pledge** as well as the **School Pledge**. The catechists talk about each of the components of the Pledge with the students in the classroom. We encourage you to talk to your children as well.

Students who are observed living out one of the components of the Peace Pledge are given a certificate of recognition by the catechist, and the student's name is entered in a monthly drawing to receive a "peace bear." Congratulations to the Peacemakers of the month for November: John Patrick Griffith, Grade 2 and Brennan Shaneshy, Grade 5. They have received "peace bears".

Special Offer!

We have copies of *Family Prayer for Family Times: Traditions, Celebrations, and Rituals* available in the RE Office for \$10. This book, by Kathleen Chesto, shows Catholic families how to begin prayer habits that can enrich their lives. The book includes prayers for celebrating the great feasts of the church year, familiar prayers (rosary, Stations, novenas), as well as prayers for celebrating family events, such as birthdays, meals, births, deaths, getting a driver's license, learning to ride a bike, first day of school.

This would make a great Christmas gift to your family!

WOMEN'S GUILD SCRIP SALE

Besides using scrip (gift cards or certificates) for your everyday purchases, please think of it for Christmas gifts. You pay NOTHING MORE than face value, but Ascension Women's Guild earns between 4-10%. Cards always kept on hand include Kroger (can be reloaded), Kohl's (can also be used to pay your account), Elder-Beerman, Speedway (can be used with Speedy Rewards), Panera and Bob Evans. Other retailer, restaurant and gas cards are available in less than a week from Great Lakes Scrip. A partial list and order form are on the table in the narthex, with a more complete list at "glscrip.com". All profits are donated back to the parish for various worthwhile projects. Call Judy McManus (299-0997) or Phyllis Hildebrand (435-7114) to order or receive more information.



Early Childhood

On December 18, the children will make an Advent craft, hear the story of Jesus' birth and have refreshments during class. After Mass, parents are asked to pick up the children in the PAC.

Middle School

Service opportunities for December: Christmas Caroling (Dec. 10). Food Pantry Christmas Baskets Dec. 16, 3-4:30 and 6-8 set up and fill baskets and Dec. 17 from 8:30 - Noon move baskets from PAC to receiver's cars. See the Youth Ministry web page (www.ascensionkettering.org/youth-ministry) for further details. Each 6th grade student should choose at least one service opportunity during the year; 7th graders - at least two; 8th graders - one long term and two short term.

First Reconciliation

Parents will meet on January 9 in the Witzman Center to discuss ideas for final preparations for First Reconciliation on February 4. There will be two sessions: 4:30-5:30 p.m. and 7:00-8:00 p.m. Please choose the session that best fits your schedule. Parents are reminded that they should complete the *We Believe & Celebrate* book with their child before January 23.

Confirmation

Sponsor reflection #2 (Grade 8) will be sent home before the Christmas break. They will be due by February 6, 2012. Everything up til now should be completed and in the Confirmation binder. Binders should be turned in to the RE Office by Dec. 19.

Our many thanks to the following parents for volunteering their time and talents with our Gr. 8 November Spirit Retreat: Paul Sommers, Gwen Sobieski, Theresa Pearson, Diane Kinney, Terri Ivan, Sharon Cicatello, Dorothy Speyer, Molly McKenna, Heather Bridgman, Mindy MacLeod, Gina Paulick as well as the following young people who volunteered as group leaders: Anna Schlegel, Marissa Whitford, Abby Saurine, Jacob Hayden and Danielle Joseph.

Liturgy

Grades 1-5 will have their Advent prayer service on Dec. 12. Grade 7 students will lead the Advent **Middle School** prayer service on Dec. 11 and 12.

School & RE Committee

The School and Religious Education Committee (or SCREC - as we more fondly refer to ourselves) meets monthly to evaluate and make recommendations about policies and programs affecting Ascension School and Religious Education Programs. The Committee is part of the larger Education Commission which also includes Technology, Sacramental Preparation, and Family Faith Formation. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month in the Parish Office Building. If you are interested in serving on the SCREC Committee, the Education Commission or any of the other committees, we would be happy to hear from you.

Ascension Sports

Some parents may not be aware that Ascension-sponsored sports are open to both School and RE students. A Sports Handbook is available to any interested family online at www.ascensionkettering.org/athletics. If you encounter any conflicts with RE classes and sports scheduling, please inform the RE Office.

...also

Classes will not meet on December 25/26 and January 1/2. Classes resume on January 8, the Feast of the Epiphany.



On This Day We Celebrate:

Dec. 7-Letter Writing Day. St. Paul didn't write his epistles thinking they were going to be part of Sacred Scripture. He was simply writing letters to the churches he loved. Write a real letter (not e-mail) to someone on your card list today.

Dec. 8-Immaculate Conception. (Holy Day of Obligation) This feast celebrates Mary's birth; we believe that she was born without sin. Say the Hail Mary as your family dinner prayer tonight in honor of the mother of Jesus.

Dec. 12-Our Lady of Guadalupe/National Poinsettia Day. The story goes that a poor young Mexican girl had no present for the Christ Child, so she picked some leaves. When she reached the church, the leaves had turned scarlet. Buy a poinsettia for your house today. Red is traditional, but pink and white are popular too.

Dec. 24-Christmas Eve. In the Polish tradition, Christmas Eve is called "*Wigilia*," which means vigil. This night was also said to be a fresh start for the coming New Year, "as goes Christmas Eve, so goes the year." Practice *Wigilia* in your home this year, by being extra kind and generous with family members on this night (and all through the year)!

Food Pantry Collection

Because of the Christmas holidays, the December Food Pantry collection will be held next weekend, December 10 & 11. Special needs this month include items for the annual holiday baskets to be distributed to families in our area. These include canned cranberry sauce, fruit, tuna, pork & beans, pasta (e.g., Spaghettios), and peas. Boxed foods such as cake mixes and icing, pudding and jell-o mixes, stuffing mixes, and minute rice are also needed. Gloves, knit hats, and scarves are also highly valued. Thank you for your very generous support of November's excellent collection. Your gracious contributions are always greatly appreciated!

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD ...

is celebrated during the 10:30 am Mass each Sunday and alternates between the 5:00 pm Saturday and 8:30 am Sunday every other week for 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders. It is a time for the children to hear the readings proclaimed and discussed on their level, pray the Apostle's Creed, and offer up their own petitions. To eliminate distractions, younger siblings should attend (if for the first time at least) ONLY if accompanied by a parent. As we keep our focus on worshipping the Lord, we are asking parents to reinforce the fact that this is a special time for 1st through 3rd graders to hear and discuss God's Word according to their needs, concerns and spiritual level. The volunteers of CLW feel honored to share this experience with your children.

May the blessings of peace be upon your family as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior.



FOOD PANTRY HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS -

Help is needed with the set up and filling of the Food Pantry gift baskets. Students in Grades 6th thru 8th can volunteer on Friday December 16th from about 3 to 4:30 to move the items that have been collected from the food pantry building to the PAC. From 6-8 PM any age children and their parents can volunteer to fill the baskets in the PAC - a great FAMILY service project! On Saturday December 17th from 8:30 to noon, Gr. 6-8 students are needed to help take the baskets to the vehicles of those receiving baskets. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Sharleen Rafferty at either 718-1764 or 299-8194.

March for Life extended trip to Washington DC -2012

Plan ahead! Join members of Ascension Parish and hundreds of thousands of fellow Americans in Washington D.C. - it is a peaceful and enriching way to add our voice for life, to show our opposition to the ongoing killing of over 4000 pre-born babies daily in our nation. Take a stand and make a difference in the greatest human rights issue of our time! The extended trip will leave Saturday 1-21 at 8AM and return Tuesday 1-24 around 3AM. This makes a great family trip, ideal for 6th graders and older (and a parent or chaperone of course). Cost of trip is \$186 (based on 4 to a room, 4 single beds available limited for additional fee), includes bus transportation, snacks and drinks, 2 nights at the Hotel Harrington (4 blocks from White House), pro-life youth rally and mass with Archbishop Dennis Schnurr, National zoo or Arlington Cemetery, a pizza party, and much more.

Registration forms available in the narthex at Ascension, on youth ministry website, Ascension's Respect Life website, or contact for more information Jeannette Niezgodski 320-1819 or jniezgodski@yahoo.com.

\$75 deposit will hold each spot, full balance due by 12-10-11.

Payment plan option. Do not hesitate to get your forms and deposit in ASAP. Come and be a part of history.

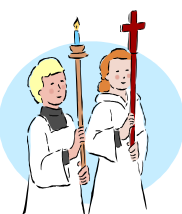
Registration forms are in the narthex.



HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN FROM CHILD ABUSE

Parents are vital when it comes to child protection. Equipping parents to be vigilant and responsive is one of the best ways to ensure the well being of children. To this end, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati has published a new resource for parents: *How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Guide for Parents and Guardians*. The resource describes what parents can do to ensure the well-being of their children, including signs of unhealthy relationships with adults, types of abuse, frequently asked questions, helpful safety rules and contact information for every county in the Archdiocese. You may download your own copy at <http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/>, click on —Protecting our Children at the top of the page. On the left side, click on —Resources and Publications and then —How to Protect Your Child from Abuse.

Altar Servers For Holy Days and Christmas



Servers who would like to volunteer to serve during Christmas and New Years are asked to contact Tim Walker via email at bmctimw@aol.com. The Holy Day Mass schedule is: Immaculate Conception, December 8th at 7 pm - Christmas Eve at 3 pm, 5 pm and 10 pm. - Christmas Day at 9 am and 11 am. - New Year's Eve at 5:30 pm.

Please call or stop by the RE Office if we can be of assistance. You are the most important influence in your child's faith formation; we are here to assist you!

SUE GRAHAM
Coordinator of Religious Education

254-0622
sgraham@ascensionkettering.org