

January 21, 2018 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, January 20

5:00 p.m. +**Francis Blevins**
By Family

Sunday, January 21

8:00 a.m. **Altar Rosary Society**
10:30 a.m. +**Donald J. Cook**
By Rose and Lance Smith

Monday, January 22

8:45 a.m. **In Honor of the Madonna of Health**
By Angela Gross

Tuesday, January 23

8:45 a.m. +**Francis Kane**
By Susan Ryenolds

Wednesday, January 24

8:45 a.m. +**Edward and Anna Durnin**
By Mary Rupell

Thursday, January 25 NO MASS

Friday, January 26

8:45 a.m. +**Bobby E. Johnson, Jr.**
By Eileen and Jim Mattison

Saturday, January 27

5:00 p.m. +**Charles Kelton**
By Carol and Dennis McKeveitt

Sunday, January 28

8:00 a.m. +**George and Louise Wyker &
Cathering Gacek**
By The Wyker Family
10:30 a.m. **Parishioners of St. Theodore Church**

What Sacred Scripture says about Life in the Womb

Several passages in the Bible tell us that life in the womb is sacred and comes from God. My favorite passage in the Bible about life in the womb is Psalm 139. For it was you who created my being, knit me, together in my mother's womb., I thank you for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all your creation.

That passage expresses so beautifully that it is God who is the Creator of life in the womb; For it was you who created my being, knit me together in my mother's womb. What a unique way to express God forming us in the womb, you knit me together in my mother's womb.

The natural response to this is to praise God as does the Psalm. I thank you for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all your creation. Then Ps 139 goes on to describe how God knew all about us during gestation in the womb, Already you knew my soul, my body held no secret from you when I was being

fashioned in secret and molded in the depths of the earth.

There are several more passages in the Bible describing God forming the baby in the womb. This is Job talking to God in chapter 10 of the Book of Job. Job says "Did you not pour me out like milk and then thicken me like curds, clothe me with skin and flesh, and weave me of bone and sinew?" (Job 10:10-11)

In 2 Macc a mother says "I do not know how you appeared in my womb; it was not I who endowed you with breath and life, I had not the shaping of your every part. It was the Creator of the world who made everyone and ordained the origin of all things." (2 Macc 7:22)

Two of the prophets were conscious of their special vocations even from their mother's womb. In Isaiah 49:1 we read, "God called me when I was in the womb, Before my birth he had pronounced my name." (Isa 49:1) and in Jeremiah 1:5 we read, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you came to birth I consecrated you." (Jer 1:5)

Jesus and John the Baptist met while they were both still in their mothers' wombs. As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting John leapt in her womb (Luke 1:41). John was filled with the Holy Spirit at that moment and cleansed of original sin.

The passages above are directly concerned with life in the womb but you may be interested in the following passages also. In the Book of Genesis (1:27) we read that we are created by God. "God created man in the image of himself, In the image of God he created them, Male and female he created them." (Gen 1:27)

So it is no wonder that the development of the baby in the womb touches our hearts because it is a reflection of the very mystery of God. God makes us beautiful, a reflection of God's own beauty.

Jesus welcomed children many times and blessed them and said the kingdom of God belongs to them (Mark 10:14). In John 16:21 Jesus said "A woman in childbirth suffers because her time has come But when she has given birth she forgets the suffering in her joy that a human being has been born into the world." (John 16:21) I conclude this exploration of Scripture passages with Psalm 127:3 "Children are a gift from the Lord, A blessing, the fruit of the womb." (Ps 127:3)

Also in many places in the Bible we read that because life is from God, we do not have the right to decide to take another person's life. Since life comes from God,

we would be playing God to take someone else's life whether fully grown or still in the womb. Human life is sacred, we do not have the authority from God to meddle with the sacredness of human life, to destroy it in any way.

On Monday, January 22, a day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children will be observed.



Stephen, Bridget M., Savannah Paine, Bobby Gross, Keira Hedges, Peter, Zachary, Logan Peter Saksa, Anna Saksa, Lauren Lane, Jay Mildrum, Philip Kinney,

Kerry Kraft, Peter S., Mary Supple, Mary Rupell, Susan Reynolds, Robert Dicheck, Christian, Tara, Zoe, Teagan, Eric Harding, Kathy & Bob Y., Irma Marquart, Dolores Staiano, Gerard Schnaars

Sincere wishes have been extended to our parishioners from Bishop Checchio for surpassing our goal of \$7,000 for the **Bishop's Annual Appeal. The diocese received gifts from us totaling \$7,539.**

Bishop Checchio commented he was "particularly grateful" to Father Damian and those "who worked so hard to ensure our success; what an outstanding effort", he wrote He continued, "The outstanding results of the 2017 Appeal are a reflection of our commitment to our Catholic faith and will allow us to continue the vital ministries that serve thousands of people each day throughout Middlesex, Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren counties. Together, we are Ambassadors for Christ helping to make our world and our diocese a better place. God bless you and be assured you have my heartfelt gratitude and prayers."

There are Mass Intention openings and Sanctuary Candle Intention openings for 2018. Masses and candles may be offered for the living or deceased. Stop by the Parish Office, phone, or email to reserve dates. Stipend is \$10 each.

908-689-8318, ext 1; sttheodorenj@gmail.com

Our Weekly Offering

Sunday collection needed to meet weekly expenses: \$3,637.

Sunday 1/7/18: \$2,562 Fuel: \$914

Sunday 1/14/17: \$2,211. (-\$1,426)

January Calendar

Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm: Bible Study

1/24 and every Wednesday @ 6:30 pm:

Confirmation prep for adults

1/27 @ 10 am: 8th Grade Retreat at St. Mary's Hackettstown

1/29 @ 6:15pm: 7th Grade at church for confessions

February Calendar

2/2 & 2/3: 8:45 a.m. First Friday & First

Saturday: Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

2/5, 6:15 p.m.: 6th Grade in Church for confessions

2/7, 7pm: Altar Rosary Society Meeting

2/11: Hospitality Sunday 9 & 11:30 a.m.

2/12, 6:15 pm: 5th Grade in Church for confessions

2/14: Ash Wednesday: Masses: 8:45 am; 12 noon, 6:30 pm

2/14, 6:15 pm: Children and parents in church for Ash Wednesday

2/16: 7 pm: Stations of the Cross

2/19: No Religious Education & Parish and Religious Education Offices closed

2/23: 7 pm: Grades 1 thru 4: Stations of the Cross

Feb. 25, 26, 27, 28: Lenten Retreat

HOLY HOUR FOR LIFE: If you are unable to join the March for Life in Washington, DC or the Rally for Life in Trenton, NJ and are interested in praying for the protection of unborn children, then please join our parish family, Ss. Peter & Paul, Great Meadows, for a *Holy Hour for Life* on Monday, January 22nd starting at 7pm.

If you wish a statement for your 2017 contributions, please provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Mary Rupell.