



2025 CHRISTMAS COOKIE BAKE AND DELIVERY
TO OUR HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS.



WHO
SIGNED ME UP
FOR THIS?



THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – JANUARY 11, 2026

Week of January 12, 2026, Calendar of Events

Rosary 1st Sunday of every month 20 min. before 9am Mass

Monday, January 12th

Tuesday, January 13th

Wednesday, January 14th

Thursday, January 15th

Friday, January 16th

Saturday, January 17th

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR OUR HOMEBOUND,
THOSE ON OUR PRAYER CHAIN, AND THE HOSPITALIZED.

COLLECTION	Jan. 4, 2026
# of Registered Families	600
# of Envelopes Used	191
Attendance at Mass	612
Attendance Online 1/4	475
Offertory Collection	\$8,496.00
Loose Offertory	\$1,565.00
Solemnity of Mary/ Communica.	\$1,637.00/\$30.00
Christmas offering/Gift	\$50.00/\$80.00

Church of the Good Shepherd

Office Phone: (724)528-3539

Office Address: 3613 Sharon Road

(PO Box 226)

West Middlesex, PA 16159

PASTOR – Fr. Glenn Whitman

Email: pastor@goodshepherdwm.org

RELIGIOUS ED DIR. – Lauren DeFelice

Email: religioused@goodshepherdwm.org

PARISH SECRETARY – Rhonda Dolin

Email: parishoffice@goodshepherdwm.org

MUSIC DIRECTOR – Greg Hansley

PLANT MAINTENANCE – Gary Wojtalik

KITCHEN MANAGER – Michelle Whalen

PRAYER REQUEST

Email: prayerrequestsgswm@gmail.com

Phone: (724)977-3369

Mass Intention Date & Time	Intentions	Requested By
Monday, January 12 th at 8:30am	For Our Parishioners	
Tuesday, January 13 th at 8:30am	Louise Stefanak	Joe & Carol Baker
Wednesday, January 14 th	NO MASS	
Thursday, January 15 th at 8:30am	Frank Petrucci, Jr.	Mary Moroco
Friday, January 16 th at 8:30am	Chuck Baker	Tom Cimoric
Saturday, January 17 th at 6:00pm	Marcie Mondoc	Don & Kathy Schmidt
Sunday, January 18 th at 9:00am	Kathleen Williams	Grizelle Dean
Sunday, January 18 th at 11:30am	Stephen & Mary Robich	Son, Ed Robich

LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE	LECTOR	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS	USHERS (HU –Head Usher)	GREETERS	ALTAR SERVERS
Saturday, Jan. 17 th at 6:00pm	Lyndon & Michael Cain	Charlene Cain Michael Drda Monica Hanrahan Brian Rogers	Mary Ellen Doult - HU Jody Drda Colleen Pickens	Connie Titus	Rianne Cain
Sunday, Jan. 18 th at 9:00am	Diane Flamino	Tom Sokolak Howard Fagan Diane O'Rourke Mary Ann Palanti	Patrick Miller – HU Darlene & Don Kotuby	VOLUNTEER	Andrew David
Sunday, Jan. 18 th at 11:30am	Mary Killingsworth	Arlene Repko Mary Lu Walters Erin Borowicz Beth Garrett	Pam Esposito – HU Mary Killingsworth Raymond Repko	VOLUNTEER	James Maynard

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, WEST MIDDLESEX, PA



FROM OUR PASTOR

"This is my son, my beloved, in whom I am well pleased."

These days there are some young Catholic parents who wonder whether baptism is the proper thing to do for their children. One argument they offer is that it would be better to defer baptism until their child reaches adulthood in order for it to be a personal, mature choice. As appealing as that argument might seem on the surface, the problem is that the reasoning behind it is so inconsistently applied.

Young Catholic parents do not give their children any choice about eating vegetables, learning to read or write, and living out a moral code. They enforce these things because they know nutrition, literacy and ethics are *essential* for adulthood. If we recognize that from birth, a child has spiritual as well as educational, moral and physical needs, it seems inconsistent to relegate this otherworldly element of a child's character to a "must be decided on later" category.

Baptism isn't brainwashing. Adults can come and go from the practice of their faith as they feel drawn. Sadly for us, they can even choose against belief. To grow up, however, with no religious foundation or no basis on which to make spiritual choices seems to limit freedom rather than promote it. In our culture baptism of infants by their parents is an entirely proper thing to do.

In the gospels, it is written Jesus' baptism by John was "*the proper thing to do.*"

This can seem all quaintly odd to us today because we seem to accept that our only custom is to flout custom or convention. The done thing today is to undo what we've done before. We hold very strongly, however, to the idea that God always does the "proper thing." We believe, for example, that God decided it was proper for the Word to become incarnate when it was done, how it was accomplished, and where it took place.

Over the centuries there's been endless debate about what would've happened if the Word had come to us as a woman, in another era, on another continent. While these are interesting

matters on which to speculate, they are not what God thought proper – what, in fact, happened.

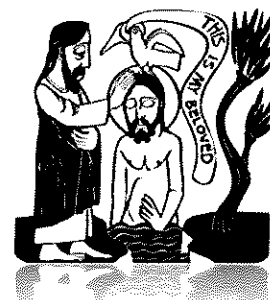
In line with the "right" action of God, Jesus does the proper thing by being baptized by John's Baptism of repentance, even though he had nothing of which to repent. Jesus isn't simply baptized because it was expected of him. Jesus' experience of baptism starts with John's baptism as an admission of guilt and THEN reveals that baptism is primarily about the Father's love ("*in whom I am well pleased.*") To this day our baptismal ritual holds these two realities in a healthy tension. When we are baptized in Christ, we acknowledge both original sin and original grace. God's love comes alive in us even though we are aware of how far from that love we occasionally stray.

The baptism of Jesus, and every baptism done in his name ever since, is the moment we hold together the greatness of God's love, which calls each of us by name as "daughter" or "son" along with the reality of our human frailty. What more appropriate way of welcoming anyone into the world than having a community of frail, human believers initiate its members by reminding them that original sin doesn't have the last word? For we who are baptized in Christ, the Father's love always and everywhere has the final, proper say on every matter.

May the effect of that sacramental experience give us the strength and courage to keep doing the appropriate things for the coming generations.

In prayer, have you ever heard God call you "My daughter" or "My son"? Be advised that God does so every day we wake up, until we enter into glory.

Father Glenn & Father Frank



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Religious Education Calendar

CLASS TIME IS FROM 10:00AM -11:15AM

- **SCHEDULE CHANGE**
JANUARY 18 NO CLASS ANY GRADE
Catechist in-service
- January 25 Class all grades

Becoming Catholic

Our catechumens, (unbaptized), and our candidates have been meeting on Tuesday evenings to have questions answered and learn more about the faith. Please continue to pray for our catechumens: Gavin, Mackensie, Luke, Ava, and Luke, and our candidates: Ashley, Ainsley, Joshua, Noah, and Bill.

COLLECTION	Dec. 21, 2025
# of Registered Families	595
# of Envelopes Used	205
Attendance at Mass	634
Attendance Online 12/21	357
Offertory Collection	\$8,192.80
Loose Offertory	\$1,838.00
Christmas Gift/Christmas Collect	\$310.00/\$442.00
Retire/Communication/Solemn.	\$236.00/\$25/\$25

COLLECTION	Dec. 25, 2025
# of Registered Families	587
# of Envelopes Used	258
Attendance at Mass	1021
Attendance Online 12/25	454
Offertory/loose Collection	\$4,799.00
Christmas Offering	\$5,884.00
Christmas Gift	\$12,689.00
Jan. 1/ Flowers/Ret.Fund	\$2.00/\$50.00/\$102.00

COLLECTION	Dec. 28, 2025
# of Registered Families	587
# of Envelopes Used	141
Attendance at Mass	561
Offertory Collection	\$5,228.00
Loose Offertory	\$1,428.00
Jan. 1/Flowers/Ret. Fund	\$55.00/\$5.00/\$30.00
Christmas Offering/Gift	\$279.00/\$400.00

HERE'S WHAT'S COMING UP?

Coffee and Donuts will be served in the social hall **after the 9:00AM Mass on Sunday, January 11th.**



Please stop over and enjoy!

Parish Spaghetti Dinner is **Sunday, February 15** from **11 AM- 3 PM.**

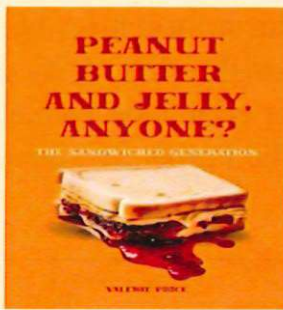


Planning Meeting for the Spaghetti Dinner is Wednesday, 1/14 at 6:30 in the Meeting Room. Many hands are needed. Please attend if you are able. Sign up sheets are in the back of the church.

Thank you everyone for who purchased or help make the Cabbage Rolls! 170 packages of delicious rolls were sold and this very successful fundraiser donated \$1400 to our Food Pantry and our local neighbors in need.

Thank you!
Leah Ann

**GOOD SHEPHERD FOOD PANTRY
"JANUARY FOOD DRIVE"**



**PEANUT BUTTER
AND
JELLY**

There will be grocery carts in the
Gathering Space for drop-off.

God Bless and
thank you

Good Shepherd Family!

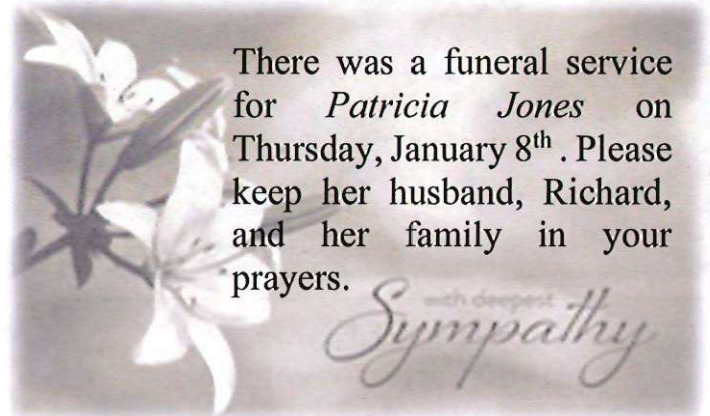
*"A generous person will prosper;
whoever refreshes others will be
refreshed."*

Proverbs 11:25

Food Pantry Committee

MEN'S CLUB MEETING

There will be a Men's Club Meeting, on
Monday, January 19th at 6PM. All men of the
parish are welcome.



Parenting Pointers 1-11-2026

Apologizing isn't a sign of weakness, it shows you are big enough to admit your mistakes and models an important skill for your child. Is there anything you've done (or not done) during the past year that an apology would help heal? Be a big enough to do it.



**FOOD PANTRY NEWS!
2 BIG THANK YOU'S.**

**To volunteers who helped
with the distribution
of groceries on Jan. 7th.**

**And a special *Thank you* to the
Religious Ed. Kids who helped with
bagging this month's groceries.**

**ATTENTION MINISTERS
OF THE CHURCH**

**Please email or call the church
with your dates to avoid in February,
March, & April. Thanks!**


RECENT/NEW REGISTRATIONS

If you have filled out the Parishioner's
Registration Form on the back of the bulletin, we
will send you a more complete form for you to
complete.

This form can either be mailed back to us
or dropped off in the collection basket or in person,
in the Rectory office.

I will add your name and address for the
envelope company to send you offertory
envelopes. However, it may take them a while to
send. In the meantime, please use a blank envelope
or one in the pews. Your contribution will be
credited once you registered with us.

Without a completed form that we send
you, the small form from the bulletin is not
enough to register you.



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echoing the life of the Saint we celebrate - an
evening of faith, community, and fresh
perspective for adults 18+.

Babysitting also available
so parents can relax and enjoy.

Time: **7:00-8:30PM**
Doors Open at 6:30PM for Live Music

JANUARY 29
Fr. Michael Scanga
Priest in Diocese of Erie


We'll be sipping with
Bl. Franz Jägerstätter



ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH HALL, SHARON

Or Email Gabby @ youthforChrist@dioceseoferie.org

RSVP Here:



Scan Here!

Contribution Statements for Tax Purposes

If you wish to receive a statement of giving for your 2025 income tax records, please fill out the information below. Please return it to the parish office or by placing it in the mail or in the collection basket marked to the attention of the Parish Secretary.

Full Name _____

Envelope # _____

HELP NEEDED

Housekeeper Wanted:

Fr. John Hindman and Fr. Frank DiCristina are in need of a housekeeper one day every two weeks. Work would entail dusting and cleaning.

If you are interested, please contact Fr. John at 951-236-8024.

OUR LADY OF FATIMA CAVATELLI FOR SALE

Our Lady of Fatima's Cavatelli can be purchased in the Good Shepherd Social Hall on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9am – 11am. The cost is \$15 for a 5 lb. bag of cavatelli.

Saint of the Day St. Sebastian January 20

Nothing is known about St. Sebastian's youth other than the fact he may have come from southern France, and he was educated in Milan. He joined the Roman Army in 283 AD, ostensibly to be of service to other Christians who were being persecuted by the Romans. St. Sebastian distinguished himself and for his excellent service, he was promoted to serve in the Praetorian Guard to protect Emperor Diocletian.

While serving as a Praetorian Guard, Marcus and Marcellian, twin brothers, were imprisoned for refusing to make public sacrifices to the Roman gods. The brothers were deacons of the Christian Church. During their imprisonment, their parents visited them to implore them to renounce Christianity. However, St. Sebastian convinced both parents to convert to Christianity. St. Sebastian also converted several other prominent individuals, including the local prefect. He is the patron of soldiers, athletes, and those who desire a saintly death.

Child Protection and Creating Safe Environments – January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month. In 2024, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children received over 27,800 reports of possible child sex trafficking. The average age of child sex trafficking victims is 15 years old. Child sex trafficking is child abuse. It occurs when a minor is advertised, solicited, or exploited through a commercial sex act-where sex is exchanged for money, food, shelter, drugs, or anything of value. Traffickers can be family members (even parents), friends, gangs, foster parents, trusted adults or boyfriends. Talk openly with your child about this reality and build resiliency. Address myths that glamorize the commercial sex industry. Warn about online risks: social media and gaming platforms are used by traffickers to target, groom, and recruit victims. Prepare your child: at some point they will likely encounter inappropriate messages or harmful content online. Teach them how to respond safely. Report suspected child sex trafficking by calling 1-800-843-5678 or visit CyberTipline.org. For additional resources visit www.eriecd.org/childprotection/



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PARISHIONERS REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____

STREET _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

CHECK: ☐ New Registration ☐ Change of Address ☐ Moving out of Parish ☐ Want envelopes

Please drop this information into the Offertory basket or mail to the Rectory.

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

January 2026

Church of the Good Shepherd
West Middlesex, PA

One Minute Meditations

St. Genevieve of Paris

Born in 422, in Nanterre, France, St. Genevieve consecrated herself to God when she was fifteen. She became known for her charity and gift of prophecy. She predicted Paris would be spared from attack by the Huns and led the people in fasting and prayer. Paris was spared. When King Childeric and his son Clovis I conquered Paris, Genevieve convinced Childeric to release his captives. She became a trusted advisor to Clovis, who converted to Christianity.

The Jesus Prayer

January is dedicated to the Most Holy Name of Jesus, reminding the faithful of the power and reverence due to His Name: *"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth"* (Phil 2:10). A fitting prayer for this month is the Jesus Prayer, long cherished in Eastern Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions: *"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner."* Simple yet profound, this prayer can be repeated throughout the day. Prayed attentively, it deepens love and reverence for Christ, invokes His saving grace, and helps cultivate a steady spirit of prayer, humility, and interior peace.

"The things that we love tell us what we are." St. Thomas Aquinas

Turning our hearts back to God

Converting our hearts back to God begins with an honest pause – not a dramatic moment, but a decision to look at our lives as they really are. What shapes our days? What gets our best energy, our first thoughts, our deepest trust? Whatever holds that place is, in practice, what we put first.

Putting God first starts with intention. We make room for Him by removing what crowds Him out. A few minutes of prayer before reaching for a phone. A short passage of Scripture read slowly instead of rushed. These small choices retrain the heart. They remind us to whom we belong.

Repentance is part of the return, but it is not about shame. It is about direction. To repent means to turn. We admit where we've drifted and choose a better path. God does not demand perfection before welcoming us back. He asks for honesty and willingness.

Trust follows close behind. Many of us profess trust in God but still rely

on our own control. Putting Him first means surrendering outcomes we cannot manage anyway. It means praying not only for help, but for guidance, even when the answer may change our plans.

Faith moves us to action. When we

"Do not let the past disturb you. Just leave everything in the Sacred Heart and begin again with joy." St. Teresa of Calcutta

align our choices with God's teachings, our hearts follow. Faith leads to action. Forgiving when necessary. Serving when it is inconvenient. Giving when it feels risky. These actions reshape our priorities.

Community matters. Worship, shared prayer, and accountability keep our hearts oriented toward God when we are tempted to drift.

Turning back to God is rarely instantaneous. It is daily, deliberate, and deeply personal. Each step taken toward Him strengthens the heart's true center.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Blessing ourselves with holy water when entering a Catholic church recalls the ritual washings of the Old Testament, through which the Jews purified themselves before approaching God in the Temple. St. John the Baptist built on this tradition by using water as a sign of repentance and conversion.

Why do Catholics bless themselves with holy water?

Today, this gesture reminds us of our Baptism and renews our commitment to live the Faith. As a sacramental, holy water disposes us to receive God's grace, strengthens us against temptation, and, with proper repentance, helps remit venial sins.

New Year, new habits build change that lasts

Starting and maintaining New Year's resolutions can be difficult for the same reason cultivating virtue is difficult: both require forming new habits. Perseverance rarely comes from sheer willpower alone. Practical strategies, supported by grace, make growth more sustainable.

Begin with achievable goals. Set yourself up for early success by practicing self-denial in small, manageable ways. Learning to say no in minor matters builds the discipline needed to resist greater temptations later.

Replace, rather than simply remove. It is often easier to abandon an unhealthy habit when it is substituted with a better one. Just as swapping potato chips for pretzels can make dietary

changes more attainable, uprooting vice is aided by cultivating the opposing virtue. Greed is weakened by generosity.

Seek accountability. A trusted friend, exercise partner, or prayer companion can provide encouragement and consistency for change. Knowing someone is watching makes it more difficult to give up when motivation fades.

Above all, rely on grace. God invites us to call upon Him, especially in moments of weakness, often marked by anger or anxiety, fatigue, hunger, or sadness. In those moments, turn to the Holy Spirit for strength and consolation, trusting the Lord's promise: *"The Lord will fight for you; you have only to keep still"* (Exodus 14:14).

from Scripture

Matthew 4:12-23, Discipleship is the greatest adventure

This Gospel passage recounts the call of the first disciples. They may not have known Jesus personally at first, but they knew about Him through John the Baptist (John 1:35-42). Hearing the invitation to know Jesus better and follow Him closely, the men dropped what they were doing "at once" and left everything behind.

Under Christ's leadership, the disciples went on to do amazing deeds. They worked miracles, brought the Gospel to distant lands, won countless souls for Heaven, and suffered many

hardships, even martyrdom. The secret of their success was their relationship with Christ as their God, Savior, Teacher, and Friend who promised to be with them always (Matthew 28:20).

All of us are called to be saints – friends of God. Jesus Christ invites each of us, in particular, to know and follow Him. While few of us are called to leave everything behind, we can still offer everything we have to God's service. We can still give our "Yes." Pursuing authentic holiness isn't boring but a great adventure!

Q & A

Why is the feast of the Epiphany important?

The Feast of the Epiphany, celebrated this year on January 4, is important because it celebrates the public revelation of Jesus Christ as Savior of the whole world. The word epiphany means "manifestation" or "revealing."

Originally, the feast commemorated the visit of the Magi, wise men from the East, who followed the star to Bethlehem. In honoring the Magi, the Church proclaims that salvation is universal and that Gentiles are fully included in God's plan.

Traditionally, Epiphany also encompasses two other key moments of revelation: Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan and His first miracle at the wedding at Cana. At His Baptism, the Father's voice and the descent of the Holy Spirit reveal Jesus as God's Son. At Cana, Jesus manifests His divine power publicly for the first time. Together, these events reveal who Jesus truly is.

Epiphany calls us to respond as the Magi did: to seek Christ, to worship Him, and to offer Him our lives. It reminds us that faith is not meant to be hidden, but proclaimed.

Feasts & Celebrations

January 1 – Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. When we celebrate this feast, we honor Mary, but also acknowledge Jesus as true God and true Man. Mary's title highlights God's humility, in that God chose to come to us through Mary, as a vulnerable newborn. This year, it is a holy day of obligation.

January 5 – St. John Neumann (1860). The first American bishop to be canonized was born in the present-day Czech Republic in 1811. St. John traveled to New York as a missionary before becoming bishop of Philadelphia. He built up the Catholic school system and established diocesan

schools. He also built more than 89 churches, several hospitals and orphanages.

January 11 – The Baptism of the Lord (1st Century). Jesus began His public ministry by getting baptized by St. John the Baptist. Jesus was to be baptized to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). This was also when God reveals Jesus as His "beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

January 13 – St. Hilary of Poitiers (367). St. Hilary converted to Christianity as a young man and was elected bishop around 350. St. Hilary spent most of his office battling the Arian heresy, which denied the Divinity of Christ. He was exiled to Phrygia. He spent his four-year exile writing and teaching against Arianism until the emperor begged him to return home.

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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible - Revised)