

# St. John the Evangelist Church

December 14, 2025

1300 Charles Street  
Wellsburg, WV 26070  
(304) 737-0429

## Gaudete Sunday



### Advent Reflection: Stepping Out of the Night

What is Advent? Many answers can be given. We can grumble and say that it is nothing but a pretext for hectic activity and commercialism, prettified with sentimental clichés in which people stopped believing ages ago. In many cases this may be true, but it is not the whole picture.

We can also say that Advent is a time when a kindness that is otherwise almost entirely forgotten is mobilized; namely, the willingness to think of others and give them a token of kindness. Finally we can say that Advent is a time when old customs live again, for instance, in the singing of carols which takes place all over the country. In the melodies and the words of these carols, something of the simplicity, imagination and glad strength of the faith of our forefathers makes itself heard in our age, bringing consolation and encouraging us perhaps to have another go at that faith which could make people so glad in such hard times.

This latter kind of experience of Advent brings us quite close to what the Christian tradition has in mind with this season. It has expressed its view of Advent in the Bible texts which it took as the season's signposts. I will mention just one of them, a few verses from Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. There he says, "... it is full time now for you to wake from sleep...the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Rom 13:11-14). There are many people, of course, who urge us to get up and awake; "Germany, awake!" was the cry of those who, years ago, were bent on deluding the nation; and today too there are awakenings and uprisings that lead further into darkness instead of out of it. What does Paul mean? He puts very clearly what he means by "night" by speaking of "revelling and drunkenness, debauchery, licentiousness, quarrelling and jealousy."

For Paul, nocturnal revelling with all that goes with it stands for the dark side of human nature, man's being "asleep". For him it becomes a symbol of the pagan world as such, submerged in material things, held fast in the darkness that prevails where there is no truth and which, despite all its decibels and hectic activity, is asleep, because it lives unaware of genuine reality, of the real human vocation.

Nocturnal orgies as the image of a world in ruin—are we not appalled to see how aptly Paul characterizes our present times, which are returning to paganism? For us, "rising from sleep" means arising from conformity with the world and with the times and having the courage to believe and to shake off the dream that causes us to bypass our true vocation and our best possibilities. Perhaps the Advent hymns we hear every year may be lights to us, indicating our path, making us look up and recognize that there are greater promises than those of money, power and pleasure. Being awake for God and for other people—that is the kind of "waking" that Advent has in mind, the wakefulness which discovers the light and brightens the world.

—Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Seek That Which is Above*

# CHURCH INFORMATION

**WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH. WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!**

## St. John the Evangelist Parish

1300 Charles Street

Wellsburg, WV 26070

Email: [office@stjohnwellsburgwv.com](mailto:office@stjohnwellsburgwv.com)

Parish Office: (304) 737-0429

### Pastoral Team:

Pastor.....Very Rev. Justin Golna, J.C.L., J.V.

Office Manager.....Trisha Vaders

Director of Music/Organist.....Zac Gordon

Director of Religious Education.....Monica Biery

Parish Council Chair.....John Alvarez

Finance Council Chair.....Bill Garvey

### Sacraments:

**Baptism:** For infants: Parents make arrangements with the pastor/office. For Adults: Baptism will be given at the Easter Vigil after completing the OCIA program. For details, please contact the parish office.

**Marriage:** Please make arrangements with the pastor. Six months minimum notice is required for the celebration of marriage.

**Sacrament of the Sick:** Please contact the office for arrangements.

### Parish Office Hours:

Monday-Friday: 9-4pm



## Mass Schedule

Monday - 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday - 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday - 5:30 p.m.

Thursday - 8:30 a.m.

Friday - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:00 am & 10:30 a.m.

*(See the Weekly Schedule for changes to Mass times)*

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday - 8-8:25 a.m.

Tuesday - 8-8:25 a.m.

Wednesday - 6-6:30 p.m.

Thursday - 8-8:25 a.m.

Friday - 6-6:30 p.m.

Saturday Vigil - 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Sunday - 9:15 - 10 a.m.

## Adoration

Wednesday : 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

For Sacramental Preparation or Religious Education for children (CCD) or adults (OCIA), please contact the parish office for times of classes or check the bulletin and bulletin board in the vestibule.

## Protecting God's Children

St. John the Evangelist takes seriously this 'VIRTUS' pursuit of excellence in our community. With the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, we are committed to making every environment – a safe environment. All employees and volunteers are required to complete VIRTUS Training. Participants of this training complete short video modules to learn how to best protect the vulnerable in our community. These short sessions empower participants to accurately identify and correctly report all instances of suspected child abuse. To create or update your account, please go to [virtusonline.org](http://virtusonline.org).

Thank you for your continued support in making the environment at St. John the Evangelist safe for everyone.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800.352.6513. In addition to civil authorities, to report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. Or you may call Rev. Don Higgs, 304.685.2367, the Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504, or Victims Assistance Coordinator Erin McFarland at 304.559.6742. Please visit [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org) under "Accountability" for additional information and reporting methods.

*The confessional is available for use by new and nursing moms during Mass. Feel free to use that space for your feeding needs.*

# Pastor's Perusings

## The Third Beatitude: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

The world prizes strength, ambition, and self-assertion. It celebrates those who seize power, dominate others, and control outcomes. In such a world, meekness seems like weakness. Yet Jesus says the meek are the ones who will inherit the earth. What kind of strength, then, is this meekness? And how can it possibly lead to blessing?

This third Beatitude is among the most misunderstood. To be meek is not to be passive, timid, or spineless. Meekness is not a lack of courage or conviction. Rather, meekness is the inner strength that flows from humility, patience, and trust in God. It is a virtue that reflects the heart of Christ Himself, who said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29).

The Greek word translated as "meek" (*praus*) refers to a controlled power, like a wild horse that has been tamed but not broken. The meek are those who have mastered themselves, whose passions are subject to reason, and whose hearts are ruled by God. They are not easily provoked. They do not retaliate when wronged. They have the strength to endure injustice without falling into hatred.

Meekness is strength under discipline. It is not the coward's escape, but the saint's response. It does not deny anger, but orders it rightly. It does not seek vengeance, but leaves judgment to the Lord. It is the fruit of a soul that knows its own weakness and lives in the strength of grace.

Jesus is the living embodiment of this Beatitude. He is the Lord of the universe, yet He entered the world in poverty and obscurity. He healed the sick, calmed the sea, cast out demons, yet He allowed Himself to be arrested, mocked, beaten, and crucified without resistance. He who had the power to summon twelve legions of angels chose instead to remain silent before His accusers.

This is not weakness. This is the supreme strength of meekness: the strength to surrender to the Father's will, to conquer evil not by force but by love. The Passion of Christ is the triumph of meekness over violence, of mercy over pride.

What does it mean that the meek shall inherit the earth? In one sense, this is a reference to Psalm 37, where the psalmist says, "The meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace" (Ps 37:11). In the Old Testament, "the land" represented the fulfillment of God's promise to His people. To inherit the land meant to dwell in security under God's blessing.

Jesus reinterprets this promise in light of the Kingdom. The meek will inherit not just a plot of ground, but the new heavens and the new earth. They will reign with Christ in glory, not by conquest, but by conformity to His heart. The world may overlook them, but heaven crowns them.

In a more immediate sense, the meek already possess a deeper kind of inheritance. Because they are not enslaved by greed, resentment, or ambition, they are already free. They are not obsessed with gaining the world, and so they are not consumed by anxiety. They are content with what they have, and grateful for what they receive. In this way, they inherit the earth in the present moment.

The saints show us what meekness looks like in action. Think of St. Francis of Assisi, who lived with such gentleness that even animals responded to his peace. Think of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who bore misunderstanding and rejection with serene confidence in God. Think of St. Joseph, who never speaks in Scripture, but whose quiet strength protected the Holy Family. St. John Vianney, though mocked and despised by his brother priests, responded with prayer and humility. St. Maximilian Kolbe, imprisoned in Auschwitz, gave his life for another man with meekness and peace.

These saints were not weak. They were unconquerable. They show us that meekness is the virtue of those who live for heaven and not for themselves.

Meekness is essential for Christian life. It is related to humility, patience, and charity. It governs our emotions, especially anger. It enables us to respond to offense without bitterness, to correct others without arrogance, and to bear suffering without complaint.

In marriage, meekness fosters mutual respect and peaceful communication. In parenting, it disciplines with gentleness. In ministry, it teaches with compassion. In conflict, it seeks truth without aggression. In leadership, it serves without pride.

St. Thomas Aquinas says that meekness moderates anger according to right reason. Anger, rightly ordered, can be a force for justice. But when ungoverned, it becomes destructive. Meekness does not eliminate anger, but purifies it. It directs our passions toward love.

Pride is the great enemy of meekness. Pride demands recognition, defends self-image, and reacts violently to insult. Pride cannot endure contradiction. It lashes out at the slightest wound. It fuels divisions, fosters resentment, and destroys peace.

The meek are not proud. They do not need to prove themselves. They rest in their identity as beloved children of God. They are secure enough to be gentle, confident enough to be quiet, free enough to be kind.

The proud storm the world and lose their souls. The meek conquer it by surrendering to God.

This Beatitude is especially urgent in our time. We live in a culture that prizes outrage, rewards cruelty, and thrives on division. Social media has made mockery a virtue and revenge a sport. Public discourse is saturated with rage. Patience is mocked, forgiveness is rare, and gentleness is viewed with suspicion.

Into this storm, Christ speaks: "Blessed are the meek." He calls us to resist the spirit of the age, not with louder shouts or sharper insults, but with a different spirit. He calls us to imitate Him: to speak the truth in love, to bless those who curse us, to pray for those who wrong us.

Meekness is not silence in the face of evil. It is the power to oppose evil without becoming evil. It is the courage to suffer injustice without hatred. It is the grace to bear witness with peace.

How can we grow in meekness?

- Begin with prayer. Ask Jesus, meek and humble of heart, to make your heart like His.
- Practice humility. Meekness flows from knowing who you are before God. The humble are not surprised when they are wronged, and they do not need to retaliate.
- Discipline your emotions. Especially anger. Learn to pause, breathe, and respond rather than react.
- Forgive quickly. Do not let grudges fester. The meek are quick to forgive because they know how much they have been forgiven.
- Accept correction. Even when it hurts. Meekness is something that we can learn.
- Serve others. Meekness is not about asserting yourself, but giving yourself.

The meek may seem to lose in the short term. They may be ignored, insulted, or overlooked. But the promise of Christ stands: they shall inherit the earth. Their reward is not taken by force, but given by grace.

In eternity, the meek will shine. In heaven, the last will be first. And even now, their quiet strength builds the Kingdom.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like Yours.

**-Father Golna**

# WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 13	4:00 P.M.	Pro Populo
Sunday, December 14	8:00 A.M.	For the repose of the soul of David Cooney † Requested by: Judith Aracich
Sunday, December 14	10:30 A.M.	For the repose of the souls of Mario, Helen & Greg Lamone † Requested by: Pamela Ferguson
Monday, December 15	8:30 A.M.	For the repose of the soul of Matthew Casale † Requested by: Fred Casale
Tuesday, December 16	8:30 A.M.	For the TOR Sisters Requested by: Gordon Smith & Mary Ann
Wednesday, December 17	5:30 P.M.	For the repose of the soul of Josie Newton† Requested by: Angela Cipriani
Thursday, December 18	8:30 A.M.	For the repose of the soul of Josie Newton† Requested by: Theresa Kowcheck
Friday, December 19	5:30 P.M.	For the repose of the soul of Mark Kowcheck † Requested by: Theresa Kowcheck
Saturday, December 20	4:00 P.M.	For the repose of the soul Lena Serevicz † Requested by: Bob & Kathy Boris
Sunday, December 21	8:00 A.M.	Pro Populo
Sunday, December 21	10:30 A.M.	For the Barsi Family

*The sanctuary lamp is  
burning in memory of  
Jerry Cassandra by  
Eleanor Sacripanti  
Dec. 5-Dec.18*



*Contact the parish office to sponsor  
the sanctuary lamp for a two week  
period!*

Please write separate checks for each collection.  
Collections are split between various accounts  
and it is not possible to split one check into  
more than one account. Thank you!

### Attendance & Collections

Saturday 4:00	51
Sunday 8:00	38
Sunday 10:30	55
<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Immaculate Conception</b>	
12:00PM	50
6:00 PM	28
<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Regular Collection</b>	<b>\$3366</b>
<b>Immaculate Conception</b>	<b>\$228</b>
<b>Online Giving</b>	<b>\$260</b>
<b>Weekly Needs</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Votive Candles</b>	<b>\$44</b>
<b>Christmas Flowers</b>	<b>\$644</b>
<b>Thanksgiving for the Poor</b>	<b>\$5</b>
<b>Building and Maintenance</b>	<b>\$70</b>
<b>Elevator Annex Loan Balance</b>	<b>\$58,781.95</b>

### Adorer Enrollment Status

9-10	
10-11	
11-12	
12-1	
1-2	
2-3	
3-4	
4-5	
<b>Need 2 Adorers</b>	
<b>Need 1 Adorer</b>	
<b>Need 0 Adorers</b>	

### Prayer List

**Those who are sick:** Dr. Scott Benefield and Family, Gary Antigo, Mary Antigo, Joe Bibbo and the Summers Family, Mary A. Rose, Christine Rose, Matthew Dillard, Lloyd VanHorn, and James Baker., Marissa Bandibas Jewer, Mary Fluharty, Marie Reck , Karen & Son, Tonette Alward and Colleen Rushing, Madeline Brozstek and Ashley Shaffer.

**Those who have died:** May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

**All Veterans, and Military Personnel**

**Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life**

**All seminarians:** Especially Joe Derico

**The Priests of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston:** Especially Fr. Justin Golna

**Former priests and religious of and from our parish**

**Those who are homebound, in assisted living or nursing homes.**

**All married couples struggling with infertility.**

To add or remove names to the prayer list, please call or email the parish office! You can also request prayers on our website.

# Saint John the Evangelist Christmas Mass Schedule



## CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24  
4:00 PM



## CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25  
12am (Midnight)  
10:30 AM

## GOLNA HAPPEN

*Sunday, December 14*

*CCD 9AM*

*Tuesday December 16*

*Coffee & Catechesis 9am*

*Wednesday December 17*

*Adoration & Benediction 9-5*

*Sat. & Sun. December 13 & 14*

*Collection for Retired Religious*

*Monday, December 15*

*Advent Penance Service 6 p.m.*

*Saturday December 20*

*Cathedral of St. Joseph 10am*

*Ordination to the Diaconate*

*of Clifton Mastran*

*Sunday December 21*

*CCD 9am*

*New Sunday confession time from  
9:15 to 10am.*

Mass Intentions can now be booked through  
June 30, 2026! Please call the office or put one of  
the pink envelopes in the collection.

**We are 9% past our goal. Goal \$18,200 Raised \$19,900 109% 35 gifts**

Thank you to EVERYONE who has given to the 2025 Catholic Sharing Appeal. Since we have reached 50% of our \$18,200 goal, EVERY PENNY donated is returned to our parish free from Cathedralicum and PHRA assessment. Donations for the Catholic Sharing Appeal can be made through the parish for those who don't like to give online. Please write CSA in large letters on the envelope or the memo line of the check!

<https://csa.dwcministries.org/donate/>



# Happy Birthday

Jentzen Kowcheck 12/14

Wilma Stewart 12/16

Wendi Mitchell 12/19

Thomas Kyanko 12/20

# Profiles in Holiness



His Feast is celebrated on December 14. Saint John of the Cross was born in Avila, Spain in 1542. After being ordained a priest in 1568, he became the first friar of the Carmelite reform initiated by Saint Teresa of Avila. He gained a reputation for profound holiness, including knowing how to lead people in mystical experiences of prayer. While being renowned for these mystical experiences, he also lived in the spirit of solitude, humility, and mortification. His spirituality is summarized by a love of suffering and the complete abandonment of the soul to God. Three of his most famous works are *Spiritual Canticle*, *Dark Night of the Soul*, and *Ascent of Mount Carmel*. These 3 and many of his other works can be read today and are considered masterpieces of Spanish literature. For his superb writings and mystical works he was named a Doctor of the Church in 1926. "My soul has been employed, and all my flow in his service; I no longer keep cattle, I do not have another job, that only in love is my exercise." -Saint John of the Cross.

## Life of the Uncommon Saints



Dec. 15 St. Christiana the Slave (d. c. 9th century) An Anglo-Saxon girl sold into slavery in Ireland, she was freed by St. Wulfhad and became a hermit near Wolverhampton. Known for her extreme asceticism, living on bread and water. Obscure angle: Her vita describes visions of angels weaving her a heavenly garment from her tears of penance.



Dec. 17 St. John of Matha (1160–1213) A French hermit who founded the Trinitarian Order to ransom Christian captives from Muslim slavery during the Crusades. He personally traveled to North Africa for negotiations. Obscure angle: In a vision, an angel bound his arms in a red-and-blue cross, inspiring the order's habit.

## Liturgical Ministries Schedule

	Saturday, December 20, 4:00 p.m.	Sunday, December 21, 8:00 a.m.	Sunday, December 21, 10:30a.m.
Greeters	Rob Morris	Toot & Joanie	Annabel Holmes
Servers	Avery & Liam	Theresa Kowcheck	Will & Stothard
Reader	Marcie Morris	Maryanne Capp	Monica Biery

## Daily Readings and Feasts

**December 13, 2025 (Saturday) Memorial of Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr;** Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Psalm 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

**December 14, 2025 (Sunday) Third Sunday of Advent;** Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10; Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

**December 15, 2025 (Monday);** Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Psalm 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9; Matthew 21:23-27

**December 16, 2025 (Tuesday);** Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13; Psalm 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23; Matthew 21:28-32

**December 17, 2025 (Wednesday);** Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17; Matthew 1:1-17

**December 18, 2025 (Thursday);** Jeremiah 23:5-8; Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Matthew 1:18-24

**December 19, 2025 (Friday);** Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Psalm 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Luke 1:5-25

**December 20, 2025 (Saturday);** Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6; Luke 1:26-38

**December 21, 2025 (Sunday) Fourth Sunday of Advent;** Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

*The readings for this weekend can be found on page 864 of the green hymnal in your pew*

**A huge thank you to everyone who donated cookies for the Cookie Tray Sale sale! Your generosity and delicious treats made it a sweet success!**  
-A & R Society



### Sacred Heart of Mary Christmas Kielbasa & Sausage Sale

This Christmas Sacred Heart of Mary will be taking orders for Jacob & Sons Kielbasa & Sausage. Price is \$6/pound. Weights will vary. Orders are due by **Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>** and will be available for pick up on **Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>** from 12:00p to 4:00p in the cafeteria at SHM. **Payment due at time of pick up.** To order, call the church office at 304-723-7175 during office hours or by dropping order form in the weekly collection basket or dropping it off at St. Joe's church office.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Smoked Kielbasa \_\_\_\_\_ # Lbs. Fresh (unsmoked) Kielbasa \_\_\_\_\_ #Lbs.

Mild Garlic Sausage \_\_\_\_\_ # Lbs. Mild Hot Sausage \_\_\_\_\_ # Lbs. Old World Italian Sausage \_\_\_\_\_ # Lbs.

Orders Due by Monday, December 15; Pick Up Friday, December 19 12:00p-4:00p

Pay by cash or check day of pick up (check made out to Sacred Heart of Mary).

## Will or Estate Planning?

Have you ever considered remembering St. John the Evangelist in your will or estate plans? A bequest through a Last Will and Testament is the simplest way of creating a lasting legacy of support for St. John the Evangelist. Bequests should be made out to: "The Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, or his successors in office," with a specification of the purpose for which the bequest is to be used (i.e. "for the use of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg).

# Mullenbach Funeral Home

*Celebrating Life...*

**Joseph M. Mullenbach**

Licensee in Charge

[www.mullenbachfh.com](http://www.mullenbachfh.com)

Cody R. Rice  
Funeral Director

(304) 527-4090

Fax (304) 527-3793

[mullenbachfh@comcast.net](mailto:mullenbachfh@comcast.net)

Kayla A. Schoonmaker  
Funeral Director

P.O. Box 272

669 Main Street

Follansbee, WV 26037



*Reasner Funeral Home*  
Robert Morris L.D.C.  
Owner and Director  
[ReasnerOfWellsburg.com](http://ReasnerOfWellsburg.com)  
304-737-3231



Please consider advertising and directly supporting the parish! All advertising dollars are used to offset the printing costs of this beautiful bulletin.

\$50 per month	\$500 per year	\$975 per year
\$15 per week	\$750 per year	
\$20 per month	\$750 per year	

**\$1400 per year**