



St. Joseph & Nativity of the BVM Parish

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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Nativity of the BVM Parish
333 South Lake Street
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NOVEMBER 2026

Funeral Luncheon Ministry

Offering Comfort and Support to Those Who Have Lost a Loved One

For families grieving the loss of a loved one, gathering with relatives and friends following a funeral offers an opportunity to share memories, find comfort, and support one another. For the past eight years, the Funeral Luncheon Ministry at St. Joseph has helped provide that opportunity, offering a welcoming place for families to come together during a difficult time.

Helen Coughlin and her fellow ministry volunteers have found great joy and fulfillment in serving hundreds of people through this ministry.

Although safety repairs to the social hall have limited the number of receptions recently, the ministry remains ready to serve families, whether a funeral luncheon takes place offsite or at Nativity.

"Having a funeral luncheon is a special time for families and their guests to not only share a meal, but to share in the memories of the loved one who has passed away," Helen says.

Helen recently experienced the ministry's compassion firsthand while arranging her sister's funeral. Although the funeral was held elsewhere, the family gathered for a reception at St. Joseph. Being on the receiving end of the care she has helped provide to so many others gave Helen an even deeper appreciation for her fellow volunteers.

"This ministry gives families a place where

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"Truly, this ministry has been a gift to all of us who have participated in it, and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to serve so many members in our parish community." — Helen Coughlin



Sharing Our Blessings With Others

Generosity as a Response to God's Gifts

One of the most visible expressions of stewardship is generosity. Yet Christian generosity is about far more than financial giving. It begins with recognizing that everything we have comes from God and responding to His blessings with grateful and open hearts.

Every person has received gifts from God. Some gifts are material, while others include time, talents, relationships, experiences, and opportunities. Stewardship invites us to view these blessings not as possessions to be guarded but as gifts entrusted to us for a purpose. God calls us to use what He has given us to serve others and help build His kingdom.

Generosity flows naturally from gratitude. When we recognize how much we have received, sharing becomes less about sacrifice and more about thanksgiving. We begin to see opportunities to help others not as interruptions but as invitations to participate in God's work.

The Gospels repeatedly demonstrate the importance of generosity. Jesus praised those who gave from the heart and encouraged His followers to care for those in need. He taught that love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable. Generosity allows us to put that love into action.

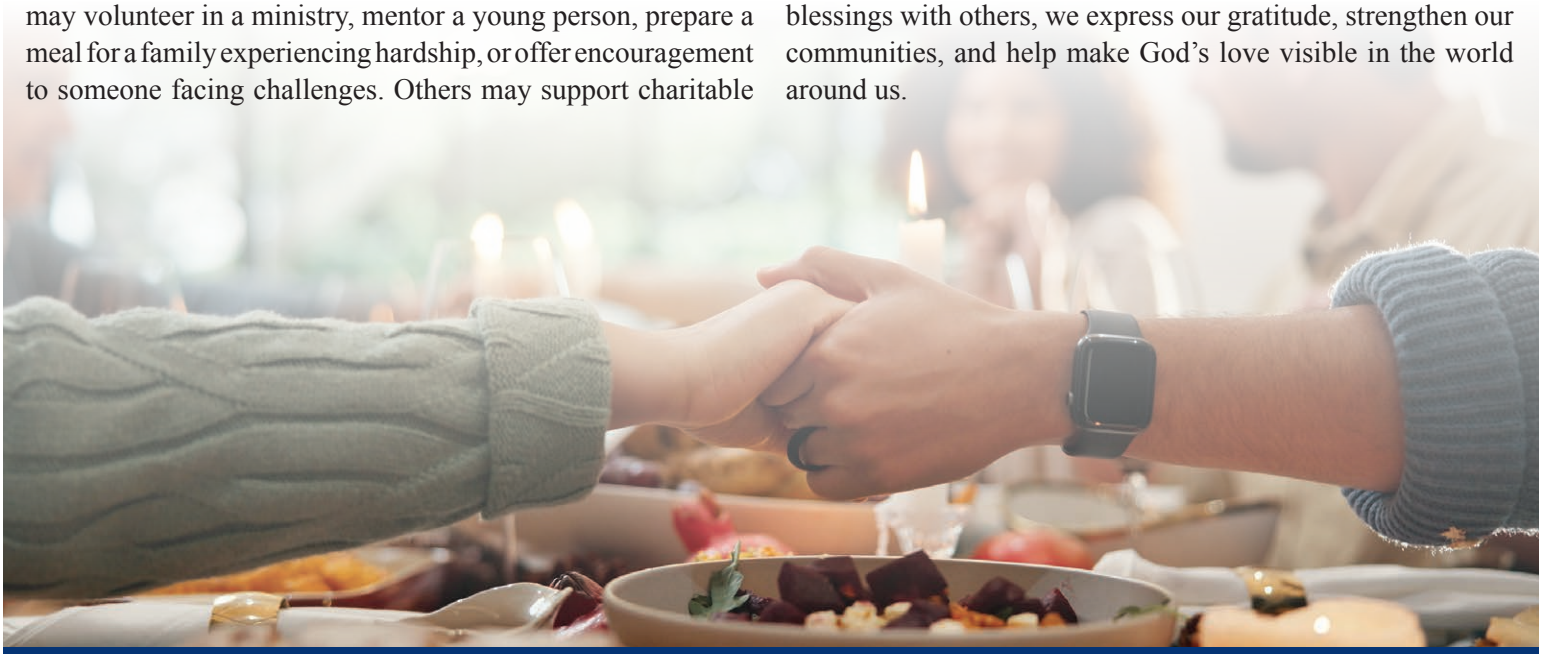
Sharing our blessings can take many forms. A parishioner may volunteer in a ministry, mentor a young person, prepare a meal for a family experiencing hardship, or offer encouragement to someone facing challenges. Others may support charitable efforts, contribute to the mission of the Church, or simply make themselves available to help when needed. Every act of generosity reflects God's love and strengthens the community around us.

Generosity also has a way of transforming the giver. As we share our gifts, we become less focused on ourselves and more attentive to the needs of others. We grow in gratitude, compassion, and trust. Stewardship becomes less about managing resources and more about participating in God's generosity.

Parishes thrive when generosity becomes part of their culture. People feel supported, ministries flourish, and the mission of the Church moves forward. The gifts of many individuals combine to create something far greater than any one person could accomplish alone.

The Thanksgiving season provides an opportunity to reflect on the many blessings God has placed in our lives. It also invites us to consider how we are sharing those blessings with others. Gratitude and generosity are closely connected. One naturally leads to the other.

As Christian stewards, we are called to recognize God's gifts and respond with generous hearts. By sharing our blessings with others, we express our gratitude, strengthen our communities, and help make God's love visible in the world around us.



A Letter from Our Pastor



TAKING AN ESSENTIAL LOOK at Our Parish's Finances

Dear Members of our Saint Joseph and Nativity Parish Families,

Our annual parish financial reports for St. Joseph and for Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parishes are included in this newsletter. Each year we are required to submit a report of the finances of our parishes to the Diocese of Cleveland as well as a report to you, the members of our parishes. And so, I ask you to take a good look at these reports of money that has come in and money that has been spent over the last fiscal year, which ran from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Also included are our budgets for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, 2027.

As stewardship parishes, we concentrate on sharing the God-given gifts of our time and our talent and our treasure. I want to thank all of you who are so faithful to Sunday offertory each week and month through the use of your envelopes or online giving through direct debit or by credit card. You enable us to do what we do as parishes.

Sometimes people will say, "The Church should take care of that," which, translated, means, "Other people should take care of that." They also say, "The Church has tons of money." A careful look at our financial reports quickly dispels that myth. We need to remember that we are the Church. Each of us is a member of the Body of Christ. And each of us is called to be a fully participating member of the Church.

As you look over these financial reports, I ask you to consider whether or not the amount of your weekly or monthly offering might call for some adjusting. Sometimes we get used to a particular amount, and it is good to review our personal circumstances and see if this gift of our treasure accurately reflects our life right now.

Household and personal expenses are going up each year, and so are those of our parishes. Whether talking about our parishes or our households, we cannot afford to pay our bills by steadily diminishing our savings. As participating members of our parish families, what is the Lord asking of you right now in terms of sharing a portion of the treasure which He has entrusted to you?



A number of people are making their Sunday offerings by online giving through myEoffering. I have been using online giving for my own regular contributions to the Sunday offertory to St. Joseph Parish and to Nativity Parish for a lot of years now. Online giving ensures that the Lord gets our first fruits each month, that the parish receives this contribution when people are out of town, and that it is also more convenient for those who use this method regularly to pay their bills.

For St. Joseph parishioners and for Nativity parishioners, signing up is as simple as going to the parish website [stjosephamherst.com] and clicking on "Give" at the top of the page. This will take you to myEoffering, where you may sign up, indicate your parish, and then begin giving online.

I stand in gratitude for the goodness of the people of our St. Joseph and Nativity Parish Families. Thank you so much for sharing so generously your time, your talent, and your treasure so that the Lord's work may be done. And may the Lord continue to bless you and those you love, richly and warmly.

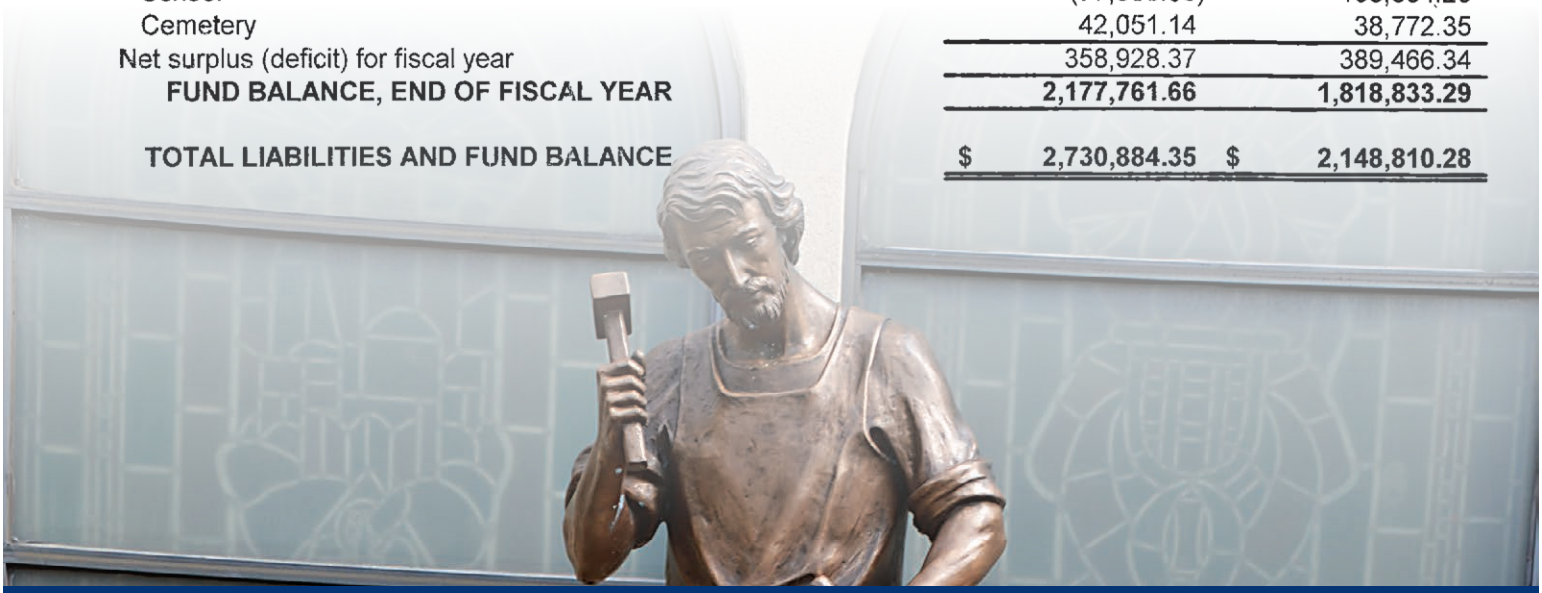
Gratefully in Christ,

Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor

Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor,
Pastor

St. Joseph Parish
Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Fund Balance
Church, School, and Cemetery

	Balance at June 30, 2026	Balance at June 30, 2025
ASSETS		
CHECKING, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS		
Checking Account Balances	$ 836,577.96	$ 695,075.98
Savings and Investment Account Balances	1,895,306.39	1,453,734.30
TOTAL CHECKING SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS	2,731,884.35	2,148,810.28
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	(1,000.00)	-
OTHER ASSETS	-	-
TOTAL ASSETS	**$ 2,730,884.35**	**$ 2,148,810.28**
LIABILITIES		
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED EXPENSES		
Payable to Diocese of Cleveland	$ 9,000.63	$ -
Other accounts payable and accrued expenses	-	14,871.49
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED EXPENSES	9,000.63	14,871.49
INCOME RECEIVED IN ADVANCE	378,409.21	151,593.35
EMPLOYEE WITHHOLDING	(2,291.42)	(2,570.12)
DEFERRED RESTRICTED SUPPORT	168,004.27	166,082.27
LOANS, NOTES AND MORTGAGES PAYABLE	-	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**553,122.69**	**329,976.99**
FUND BALANCE		
FUND BALANCE BEGINNING OF FISCAL YEAR	1,818,833.29	1,429,366.95
Net Surplus (Deficit) for Fiscal Year		
Parish	394,446.23	242,159.79
School	(77,569.00)	108,534.20
Cemetery	42,051.14	38,772.35
Net surplus (deficit) for fiscal year	358,928.37	389,466.34
FUND BALANCE, END OF FISCAL YEAR	**2,177,761.66**	**1,818,833.29**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	**$ 2,730,884.35**	**$ 2,148,810.28**



St. Joseph Parish
Statement of Church Revenue and Expenses

	Actual Year Ended June 30, 2026	2025	Budget Year Ending June 30, 2027
CHURCH REVENUE			
Offertory Collections	$ 942,467.08	$ 908,708.40	$ 973,500.00
Other Collections	17,820.32	18,237.70	18,000.00
Donations & Bequests	159,963.68	51,296.67	100,000.00
Net Bingo Proceeds	-	-	-
Net Fund Raising Income	-	-	-
Income from Parish Programs	17,345.13	11,017.03	18,000.00
Investment & Endowment Income (Loss)	110,064.36	91,920.65	128,000.00
Rental Receipts	-	-	-
Contributions from Parish Organizations	12,493.65	(2,258.45)	7,500.00
Miscellaneous Receipts	12,477.00	13,090.70	12,500.00
Designated Collections	19,068.73	44,421.50	17,500.00
Extraordinary Receipts	1,246.88	-	309,570.00
TOTAL CHURCH REVENUE	**1,292,946.83**	**1,136,434.20**	**1,584,570.00**
CHURCH EXPENSES			
Salaries, Benefits, & Taxes	449,611.53	447,478.39	431,240.00
Rectory & Household	3,420.72	4,212.46	3,750.00
Parish Office & Administration	72,503.21	65,370.28	70,775.00
Altar, Sanctuary, & Liturgical	28,678.84	24,169.75	24,600.00
Community Outreach	1,781.49	1,756.43	1,500.00
Religious Education	6,990.11	4,390.63	6,300.00
Stewardship & Evangelization	48,559.56	49,492.22	49,000.00
Utilities	48,586.20	40,597.73	48,000.00
Insurance & Property Taxes	37,149.63	34,827.97	37,149.00
Maintenance, Repairs, & Plant Operating	29,581.85	49,212.92	28,030.00
Diocesan Assessments	100,763.00	100,500.00	121,200.00
Payments to Other Schools	-	-	-
Designated Collections	19,068.73	44,421.50	17,500.00
Capital Expenditures	51,805.73	27,844.13	113,330.00
Intra Parish Transfers & School Support	-	-	15,114.00
Extraordinary Expenses	-	-	-
TOTAL CHURCH EXPENSES	**898,500.60**	**894,274.41**	**967,488.00**
NET CHURCH SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	**$ 394,446.23**	**$ 242,159.79**	**$ 617,082.00**

St. Joseph Parish
Statement of School Revenue and Expenses

	Actual Year Ended June 30, 2026	2025	Budget Year Ending June 30, 2027
SCHOOL REVENUE			
Tuition & Fees (Includes Tuition Assistance)	$ 1,164,458.11	$ 1,089,564.34	$ 1,268,225.00
Government Assistance	79,783.61	79,673.44	84,800.00
Donations & Bequests	31,528.56	32,633.00	100,000.00
Net Fund Raising	23,205.56	29,919.29	25,000.00
Net Pre-School & Latchkey	(13,488.76)	38,198.59	(15,820.00)
Other Student Receipts	74,981.83	112,461.28	88,000.00
School Support from Parish	-	-	15,114.00
Interest & Endowment Income	-	-	-
Rent Revenue	-	-	-
Other Misc Income	3,021.68	-	-
School Extraordinary Income	4,315.86	-	-
TOTAL SCHOOL REVENUE	**1,367,806.45**	**1,382,449.94**	**1,565,319.00**
SCHOOL EXPENSES			
Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	954,404.99	902,958.76	896,741.00
Instructional	15,499.51	12,688.87	14,700.00
Library & Technology	176.57	2,400.00	2,000.00
Utilities	50,043.51	44,254.96	47,000.00
Maintenance, Repairs & Plant Operating	45,610.61	42,757.59	45,330.00
Insurance & Property Taxes	35,919.92	18,246.86	35,920.00
Student Services	69,544.52	104,287.00	95,000.00
Administration	58,400.37	36,821.17	52,215.00
Faculty Residence/Convent Costs	1,194.81	584.99	-
Capital Expenditures	210,283.44	28,504.44	104,000.00
Extraordinary Expenses	4,297.20	80,411.10	-
TOTAL SCHOOL EXPENSES	**1,445,375.45**	**1,273,915.74**	**1,292,906.00**
NET SCHOOL SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	**$ (77,569.00)**	**$ 108,534.20**	**$ 272,413.00**

St. Joseph Parish
Statement of Cemetery Revenue and Expenses

	Actual Year Ended June 30, 2026	2025	Budget Year Ending June 30, 2027
CEMETERY REVENUE	$ 68,782.58	$ 56,063.54	$ 68,000.00
CEMETERY EXPENSE	26,731.44	17,291.19	27,000.00
NET CEMETERY SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	$ 42,051.14	$ 38,772.35	$ 41,000.00



Funeral Luncheon Ministry

continued from front cover

they can gather after the Mass and burial, share a meal, and spend time remembering their loved one," she says.

Families typically arrange for a catered meal or prepare the food themselves, while ministry volunteers handle the many details that help make the gathering welcoming and comfortable. From decorating and setting out plates and silverware to assisting with setup and cleanup, each task is an opportunity to extend hospitality and compassion.

A dedicated group of volunteers, coordinated by Josie Powell, also provides homemade baked goods for funeral receptions. Helen can call upon approximately 60 volunteers to assist with the various responsibilities, while parish and custodial staff also provide valuable support.

For Helen, the ministry has been a meaningful part of her life, both as a volunteer and as someone who has experienced the loss of family members. She hopes more parishioners will become aware of this ministry and the comfort it can provide following a funeral or burial.

"Truly, this ministry has been a gift to all of us who have participated in it, and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to serve so many members in our parish community," Helen says.

To begin the funeral planning process, call the parish office at St. Joseph's at 440-988-2848. To begin serving with this ministry, contact Helen Coughlin at 440-984-8758.

Preparing Our Hearts *for Advent*

Making Room for Christ Through Stewardship



As November draws to a close, the Church stands on the threshold of a new liturgical year. Advent is approaching, and Catholics are invited to begin preparing for the celebration of Christ's birth. While much of the world focuses on decorations, shopping, and holiday activities, the Church encourages a different kind of preparation — one that takes place within the heart.

Advent is a season of anticipation. It invites believers to reflect on Christ's coming at Bethlehem, welcome His presence in their lives today, and look forward to His return in glory. This preparation involves more than marking days on a calendar. It calls for prayer, reflection, and a renewed focus on what truly matters.

Stewardship provides a helpful framework for entering into this season. Stewardship begins with gratitude for God's gifts and encourages Christians to respond with faith and generosity. As Advent approaches, stewardship invites us to examine whether our priorities reflect our desire to make room for Christ.

The weeks leading up to Christmas can easily become filled with activity. School events, family gatherings, shopping trips, travel plans, and holiday obligations often compete for attention. While these activities may be enjoyable and meaningful, they can also crowd out opportunities for prayer and spiritual preparation.

Advent encourages a different approach. It calls Christians to slow down, create space for God, and prepare their hearts to receive the greatest gift ever given — Jesus Christ. Stewardship helps us do this by encouraging intentional use of our time, attention, and energy.

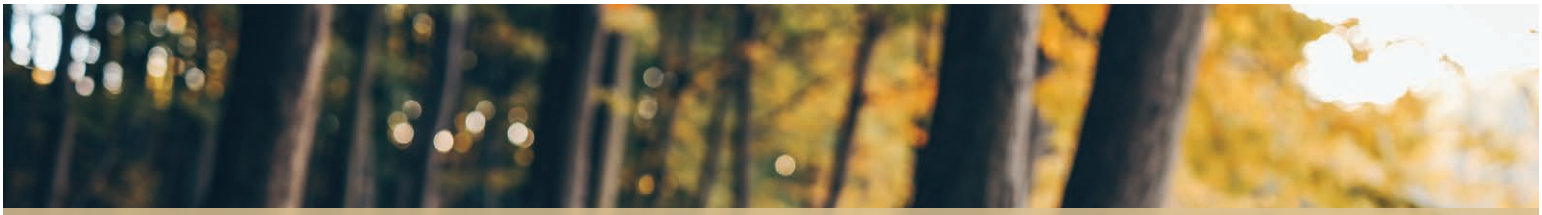


Simple practices can help foster this spirit of preparation. Spending time in prayer, participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, attending Mass faithfully, reading Scripture, and engaging in acts of charity can all help prepare our hearts for Christmas. These practices remind us that Advent is not simply about preparing for a holiday but preparing to encounter Christ.

The season also provides an opportunity to evaluate priorities. Are we making room for God in our schedules? Are we focusing on what is most important? Are we using our gifts in ways that reflect gratitude for His blessings?

The answer to these questions can shape not only the Advent season but the entire year ahead. Stewardship calls us to place Christ at the center of our lives and respond generously to His presence.

As Advent approaches, we are invited to prepare our hearts with purpose and intention. By making room for Christ through stewardship, we can enter the season with greater faith, deeper gratitude, and a renewed awareness of God's love for His people.



Remembering Our Faithful Departed

Hope, Prayer, and the Communion of Saints



The month of November begins with a special focus on remembrance. Following the celebration of All Saints Day, the Church observes All Souls Day on Nov. 2 and invites Catholics throughout the month to pray for the faithful departed. This tradition reflects the Church's belief that our bonds in Christ extend beyond death and unite us as one family of faith.

For many people, November becomes a time to remember loved ones who have gone before us. We recall their lives, cherish their memories, and give thanks for the ways they touched our hearts. While grief and loss are natural parts of these reflections, the Church also invites us to look forward with hope.

Christian hope is rooted in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Christ conquered sin and death, we trust that those who die in Him are called to eternal life. This belief does not remove the pain of separation, but it offers comfort and confidence in God's promises.

The Church teaches that we remain connected through the Communion of Saints. This spiritual bond unites the faithful on earth, the souls being purified, and the saints in heaven. Through prayer, we continue to support one another and participate in the life of the Church across generations.

Stewardship provides a meaningful perspective on remembrance. Everything we have, including our relationships, is a gift from God. The people who have influenced our lives, strengthened our faith, and shared their love with us are among His greatest blessings. Remembering them with gratitude is an important expression of stewardship.

Many of those we remember leave behind a legacy of faith, generosity, and service. Their example often continues to shape our lives long after they are gone. As we reflect on their witness, we are invited to consider how we are using the gifts God has entrusted to us and what kind of legacy we hope to leave for others.

Praying for the faithful departed is also an act of love. Through our prayers, we express our continued care for those who have gone before us and place our trust in God's mercy. These prayers remind us that our relationships do not end with death but continue through Christ.

November encourages us to remember, to pray, and to hope. It reminds us that life is a gift and that God's promises extend beyond our earthly journey.

As Christian stewards, we are called to receive God's gifts with gratitude and hold them with trust. By remembering our faithful departed and praying for them, we honor the blessings they brought into our lives and place our hope in the eternal life promised through Jesus Christ.

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This newsletter brought to you by the Catholic Communities of:

St. Joseph parish & Nativity of the BVM parish

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200 Saint Joseph Drive, Amherst, OH 44001

Address Service Requested

Fr. Tim O'Connor Serving Both Parishes

Mass:
Monday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*
Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*
Thursday, 7:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*
Friday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*
Saturday, 4:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*
5:30 p.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*
Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*

Confession at St. Joseph:
Thursday - Individual Reconciliation 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Saturday - Individual Reconciliation 11:00 a.m. - noon

Eucharistic Adoration (Chapel) at Nativity of the BVM:
Monday-Friday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Upcoming Activities and Events

Hospitality Tuesday
Tuesday, Nov. 3 — 8:30 a.m. at Nativity Church (following the 8 a.m. Mass)

Rosary Making
Tuesday, Nov. 3 — 9 a.m. in St. Joseph Social Hall Lobby

Men's Group Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 3 — 6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Church Gathering Area

Altar and Rosary Society Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 3 — Rosary at 6:30 p.m., followed by meeting in Nativity Parish Hall

First Friday Rosary
Friday, Nov. 6 — 11 a.m. at Nativity Church, luncheon to follow in Nativity's Parish Hall

First Saturday Rosary
Saturday, Nov. 7 — 9 a.m. at St. Joseph Church

Mercy Health Screenings
Sunday, Nov. 8 — after the 8:30 a.m. Mass, also before and after the 11 a.m. Mass. Blood pressure checks, cholesterol, glucose, and BMI screening in St. Joseph School MPR.

Hospitality Sunday
Sunday, Nov. 8 — Coffee and Donuts following the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Mass in St. Joseph School Gym

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting
Sunday, Nov. 8 — following the 11 a.m. Mass in St. Joseph Church

Confirmation Parent Meeting
Sunday, Nov. 8 — following the 5 p.m. Mass in St. Joseph Church

Parent Club
Tuesday, Nov. 10 — 7 p.m. at School MPR

Vincentians Meeting
Thursday, Nov. 12 — 9 a.m. in St. Joseph Conference Room

Parent-Teacher Fall Conferences
Thursday, Nov. 12 — 2 to 8 p.m., one-hour early dismissal for Grades K-8.

No School
Friday, Nov. 13

St. Joseph Parish Grounds Cleanup
Saturday, Nov. 14 — 10 a.m., meet in front of St. Joseph Church

Wonderful Women
Tuesday, Nov. 17 — 7 p.m. in Nativity Parish Hall

No School — Thanksgiving Break
Monday, Nov. 23 through Friday, Nov. 27

Parish Offices Closed
Wednesday, Nov. 25 through Friday, Nov. 27

Happy Thanksgiving
Thursday, Nov. 26 — Mass will be at 9 a.m. at Nativity Parish

Holy Ground Youth Group
Sunday, Nov. 1, 8, 15, and 22 — 6 p.m. in St. Joseph School Gym. (Please note: Holy Ground XLT and Adoration will be on Nov. 22 for all Junior High students and High School students only). There will be no Holy Ground Youth Group on Nov. 29.

OCIA (formerly RCIA)
Monday, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 — 7 p.m. at Nativity Parish Hall

P.S.R.
Wednesday, Nov. 4 and 18 — 5:30 p.m. at St. Joseph School (Note: There will be no P.S.R. on Nov. 11 and 25.)

Sacred Sisters Prayer and Study Group
Wednesday, Nov. 4, 11, and 18 — 6:30 p.m. at O.S.E. Community Center

"Dinners on the Go" pick-up
Tuesday, Nov. 10 and 24 — 5 p.m. at Nativity Parish Hall (drive-thru service only)

Faithfully Fit Yoga Classes
Tuesdays and Thursdays in November — 9:30 a.m.at Nativity Parish Hall
Note: There will be no classes on Thanksgiving Day.