

# Old St. Joseph's Church

Est. 1733 | Philadelphia's Jesuit Parish

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Philadelphia, PA 19106  
Phone: (215) 923-1733  
www.oldstjoseph.org

November 26, 2017 | Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

## Thanksgiving Celebration



Here in America, our consumerist culture starts its eager anticipation of Thanksgiving as soon as Halloween is over. But perhaps that's a blessing in disguise because it can serve as a subtle reminder that the true meaning of Thanksgiving really deserves to be celebrated.

When our European ancestors first arrived in this new land, – so the traditional story goes – their thanksgiving was in celebration of a good harvest after a severe winter. Mother Earth had graced them with abundant food for their families, not without the crucial guidance provided by the Native People they met in this new land of America. Like the Native Peoples themselves, the new settlers were a simple, unsophisticated people whose lives were very close to the earth that provided their needs. Their gratitude to nature inspired them first of all to give thanks to God who had enabled them to survive a bitter winter. The next step for them was only natural – to share the abundant harvest among themselves, but also with their new-found Native brothers and sisters. The sign of this was to eat a meal together in harmony, joy and peace.

This uniquely American tale may rely more on myth than hard historical fact, and yet it preserves noble sentiments that the nation does well to emulate. Though nowadays we may celebrate Thanksgiving in a more elaborate way,

yet the main idea is still the same – sharing life with our loved ones while being mindful of those who may have less of the earth's bounty than we enjoy.

Coming from another culture and another country, I personally have grown to love and appreciate the American way of celebrating Thanksgiving, even though I must confess that turkey may not be my favorite food. I would like to share with you my first experience of Thanksgiving in America.

Many years ago, I arrived in the USA after many years in England. Of course, I had heard a great deal about Thanksgiving from my American friends. But I never could have imagined the impact the celebration would have on my life.

After a couple of months living in a suburb of Philadelphia, I was asked by a new friend if I had family in America. When I answered affirmatively, my friend inquired further if I was planning to visit them during the Thanksgiving weekend. The thought to do so had not really occurred to me, but my face must have conveyed surprise, as if to say, "Why are you asking me that question?" My friend noticed my reaction and advised me that in the USA Thanksgiving Day is a sacred day. No matter where you live -- near or far -- you always go home to celebrate with family and friends. It was then that I learned that celebrating Thanksgiving at a family gathering is the center of the feast. But I also knew from experience that this mentality and tradition have no borders. They are the fabric of human life.

Thanksgiving Day is certainly a lovely part of life in America, but the sentiments behind Thanksgiving are hardly uniquely American. As a child growing up in the war-torn country of Vietnam, I learned from a young age to understand and appreciate the full meaning of thankfulness.c

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In every family, Thanksgiving was celebrated whenever our dads or uncles or male cousins or neighbors came home safe and sound, even though sometimes badly wounded, after fighting in the front-line battles, which happened day in and day out. These events became our routine celebrations. But they never lost their special significance. Each time, we celebrated life and family – again and again. Our celebrations always began with our prayer thanking “The God” who had saved our loved ones from the dangers and harm inflicted so randomly by war. Then we shared a generous meal together as family, and sometimes as an extended family.

But in Vietnam, much as in America, we also in a way celebrate Thanksgiving on a special day, or more precisely, over the course of a three day observance called Tet, our National Holiday or New Year Celebration. It is an elaborate annual event at the beginning of the lunar calendar year and rolls into one the celebration of Birthdays, Christmas (we did not celebrate Christmas as such since 95% of the people were not Christian!) and Thanksgiving. Tet begins by thanking the God of Heaven and of Earth who has given us a blessed year. Then we say “Thank you” to our ancestors, our parents and family and we wish them God’s blessings throughout the year that has just begun.

As I grew older I learned an even deeper meaning of Thanksgiving. It is the Eucharist, a daily celebration, but with special celebrations on Sundays and special feast days. In the prayer of the Eucharist, we share our lives together and we are nourished by the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. As we offer ourselves to the Father in union with Jesus, we are transformed. We become for one another Jesus’ feet, his hands, his body and heart in charity and love. This Eucharistic prayer spills over into all aspects of our lives. Here at OSJ, we are blessed in the actual sharing of our meals with our homeless brothers three days each week through the Faith, Food and Friends Program.

So this Thanksgiving Day in America, please join me in taking to heart this deeper meaning of Thanksgiving-Eucharist, as we strive to live our lives following in the footsteps of Jesus.

Sister Asunta Thanh, acj  
Liturgy Coordinator

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**It is time for the Old St. Joseph’s Giving Tree!** Take a tag and buy a present: books, pajamas, bathrobes, blankets and gift cards. Beneficiaries include: children at the Gesu School or Rowan Homes, our senior neighbors at Old City Presbyterian Apartments, and immigrant families in the Aquinas Center community.

Remember to bring your gift, ***wrapped and with the tag attached***, to church by the Deadline stated on the gift tag:

**For Presbyterian Homes: December 10**

**For Gesu, Rowan Homes and Aquinas Center: December 17**

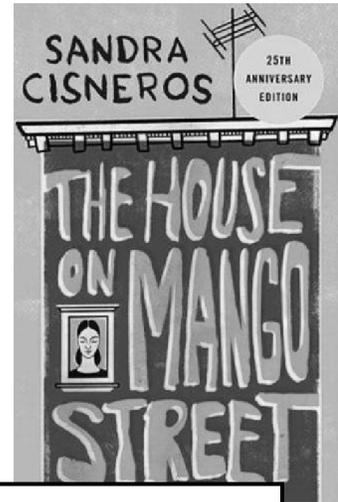
If you wish to volunteer or have any questions, contact Charles Capaldi at [ccapaldib5@gmail.com](mailto:ccapaldib5@gmail.com). Many thanks.

Please come and join with other OSJ parishioners and help spread holiday cheer at the party on **December 17 from 2 to 4 PM** at the Presbyterian Apartments.





Our Advent-Christmas event of Lessons and Carols will be celebrated on **Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 PM**. A reception will follow. All are cordially invited to this festive liturgy presented to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming this Christmastide. A free will offering will be gratefully accepted.



## IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY



The Ignatian Spirituality Committee invites all to participate in the annual Advent At-Home Retreat. This year's selection is: **Daily Devotions for Advent 2017**. *Devotions* offers guidance from the first Sunday of Advent to Christmas Day through a daily reflection on the Gospel reading, a focused spiritual exercise and a brief prayer that sums up the day's theme and asks for God's blessing. Author Charles Paolino will challenge you to celebrate Advent with patience and help you to be ready for a happy and holy Christmas. **Members of the Ignatian Spirituality Committee will distribute the guide the weekend of December 2 and 3.**

The OSJ Book Group will meet on **Tuesday, December 5, at 7:30 PM in the Loyola Room**. Our book is *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros. Beloved and taught throughout the U.S., this is a story of immigrant life in America. New members are welcome. For information, contact, [shlosscarol@gmail.com](mailto:shlosscarol@gmail.com).

## YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY

*The OSJ Young Adult Community (YAC) is an inclusive community of people in their 20s and 30s, single and married. To learn more about our upcoming events sign up for our weekly e-newsletter by emailing us at [osjyac@gmail.com](mailto:osjyac@gmail.com)*

**YAC Heads to Solidarity on Tap:** For the **Tuesday, November 28** Spirituality Night, YAC heads to 2nd Story Brewing Co. (117 Chestnut St) from **7-9 PM** along with other Jesuit-affiliated groups and organizations. Enjoy a reflection on the theme "Racial Mercy: From the Upper Room to Pentecost" by Maureen O'Connell, Ph.D., Chair, Religion and Theology Department at La Salle University. See you there!



**Young Adult Pre-Mass Reflection Group, Sundays, Meet in Willings Alley:** All young adults are invited to prepare and reflect as a group for the Sunday readings that will be proclaimed at the 6:30 Mass. Prayer will begin at **5:30 PM** in Drexel Parlor, end between 6:15/6:20, and materials will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact us at [osjyac@gmail.com](mailto:osjyac@gmail.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



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**Altar Servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Lectors, and Ushers:** assignments for December and January are now posted online. We're also looking for new volunteers; scheduling is flexible and training will be provided! Sign up through the Ministry Scheduling Program at [www.oldstjoseph.org](http://www.oldstjoseph.org). Thank you!



**November is the month of the Holy Souls.** The 2017 Book of Remembrance has been placed on the Blessed Mother's altar. In it you may inscribe the names of those deceased whom you would like to be remembered during the month.

## AROUND THE CORNER

The Christmas Creche Committee and the Friends of the Nativity invite you to attend the **21<sup>h</sup> Annual Blessing of the City of Philadelphia Nativity Scene** on Wednesday, December 13 at 3:00 pm at 18<sup>th</sup> and Race, adjacent to the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul.



**Gesu School presents their annual Christmas Concert** in the Church of the Gesu (corner of N 18<sup>th</sup> St and Wiles St) at **7:00 pm on Thursday, December 14**. Come to hear the angelic voices of the choir and share Christmas joy! All are welcome.

**Please remember our sick and homebound sisters and brothers:**

Catherine Keddie	Deborah Brooks	Colleen Raymond	Sara Orkline
Rick Bravo	Allen May	Sean Pearson	Adeline Acerno
Bernardo Goldrosson	Anna Krachman	Lynda Blum-Kahn,	James McBride
MaryLou Jennings	Richard Polosky	Michael Sheston	Jerry McBride
April DeMatto	Ed Tomezsko	Garry Moros	Joanna Pearl
Lydia Staley	Ava Iezzi	Patricia Yusko	Lucy Pearl
Jennifer Moore	Sharon Sylvester	Brice Verdier	Marjorie Heald
D. Minter	Jack Lees	Mary Jacobs	Marie Jacobs
Joseph Burke	Roberto Pupo	Jerry McAndrews SJ	Louis Balestrucci

Pray also for our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital.

*Names will be removed after 4 weeks unless a request is renewed.*



### Parish Home Ministry

Eldership Community volunteers who are Eucharistic Ministers are available to visit homebound parishioners. These volunteers bring communion to the homebound. To request a home visit, please call the rectory office.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Please see next week's bulletin for the Offertory Collection of the weeks ending November 12 and November 19.



## WEEKLY READINGS

### Readings from...

**Monday:** Daniel 1 and 3; Luke 21

**Tuesday:** Daniel 2 and 3; Luke 21

**Wednesday:** Daniel 5 and 3; Luke 21

**Thursday:** Romans 10; Psalm 19; Matthew 4

**Friday:** Daniel 7 and 3; Luke 21

**Saturday:** Daniel 7 and 3; Luke 21

**Sunday:** Isaiah 63; Psalm 80; 1 Corinthians 1; Mark 13

Complete text of the daily readings can be found at  
[www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings).

## ONLINE GIVING

Old St. Joseph's provides Online Giving – a convenient, flexible and safe way to make a one-time or recurring donation to the fund of your choice (e.g., Sunday Offertory, FF&F, HPC).

To sign up for Online Giving go to our website: [www.oldstjoseph.org](http://www.oldstjoseph.org) and click on the **Online Giving** tab underneath the Important Links column.

### Second Collection

Next week (December 2 and 3) we will take up a second collection for the Retirement Fund of Religious (RFR). Catholic bishops of the United States launched the RFR to address the significant lack of retirement funding for Catholic sisters, brothers, and priests in religious orders. Your donation helps religious communities provide for aging members and plan for long-term need. Thank you for your generosity.

Date	Mass Intention and Presider	Calendar Events
Mon 27	12:05 PM <i>Richard Blicharz (D) – 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Passing</i> Presider: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J.	6:00 PM: PREP (St. Mary's)
Tues 28	12:05 PM <i>Edward &amp; Mary Britt Family (D)</i> Presider: Fr. Ed O'Donnell, S.J.	12 Noon: Food, Faith and Friends (Barbelin) Al-Anon (Drexel)
Wed 29	12:05 PM <i>Phaolo Tran Ngoc Tuan (D)</i> Presider: Fr. Ed Dougherty, S.J.	6:30 PM: Women's Group (Loyola)
Thurs 30	12:05 PM <i>Old St. Joseph's Memorial Society</i> Presider: Fr. Ed O'Donnell, S.J.	12 Noon: Food, Faith and Friends (Barbelin) 1:00 PM: Scripture Study (Drexel) 6:30 PM: Schola Rehearsal (Barbelin)
Fri 01	12:05 PM <i>Beth Notre Dame (D)</i> Presider: Fr. Ed Dougherty, S.J.	
Sat 02	12:05 PM <i>James &amp; Katherine Henderson (D)</i> Presider: Fr. Ed O'Donnell, S.J. 5:30 PM Presider: Fr. Ed O'Donnell, S.J.	12 Noon: Food, Faith and Friends (Barbelin)
Sun 03	7:30 AM Presider: Fr. Ed Dougherty, S.J. 9:30 AM Presider: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J. 11:30 AM Presider: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J. 6:30 PM Presider: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J.	9:30 AM: CLOW (Barbelin) 11:00 AM: Ignatian Spirituality Mtg. (Drexel) 4:00 PM: Contemplative Leads in Action (Drexel) 5:30 PM: Loyola Choir Rehearsal (Church) YAC Pre-Mass Reflection (Gretton)

# INFORMATION

## Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

## Mass Times

Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM  
Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM  
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM  
Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:30 PM

## Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

## Hearing Enhancements

Old St. Joseph's is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are in the rear of the church.

## Registration

Persons who want to register as parishioners should complete a parish registration form and return it to the rectory office by mail or in person. Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at [www.oldstjoseph.org](http://www.oldstjoseph.org).

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday through Saturday: 11:30 AM to noon and by appointment

## Sacrament of Baptism

Persons wanting to arrange for a baptism should call Fr. Dougherty at the parish office at least two months before the desired date to arrange catechesis and the baptism celebration.

## Sacrament of Anointing

The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is administered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

## Sacrament of Matrimony

Persons wanting to be married in the parish should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office at least nine months before the desired date.

## Rite of Christian Initiation

Unbaptized adults who are considering baptism into the Catholic Church, baptized Catholics who have received no other sacraments and who want to be confirmed and to receive First Eucharist, and baptized non-Catholics who are considering full communion in the Catholic Church should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office.

To arrange Mass of Christian Burial, the funeral director should call the parish office.

## OSJ Staff

**Pastor: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J.**

([pastor@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:pastor@oldstjoseph.org))

**Parochial Vicar: Fr. Edward O'Donnell, S.J.**

([eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org))

**Fr. Edward Dougherty S.J.**

([dougherty@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:dougherty@oldstjoseph.org))

**In Residence: Br Robert Carson, S.J.**

**Business Manager: Eric German**

([germane@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:germane@oldstjoseph.org))

**Interim Director of Music: Mark Bani**

([music@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:music@oldstjoseph.org))

**Liturgy Coordinator: Sr. Asunta Thanh, acj**

([liturgy@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:liturgy@oldstjoseph.org))

**Administrative Assistant: Eleanor Margaret**

([office@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:office@oldstjoseph.org))

**Faith, Food & Friends Director: Deborah**

**Hluchan** ([faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org))

**PREP Coordinator: Christine Szczepanowski**

([prep@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:prep@oldstjoseph.org))

## OSJ Councils and Boards

**Parish Pastoral Council:** ([osjpc@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:osjpc@oldstjoseph.org))

Rana McNamara (co-chair), Richard Le (co-chair)

**Parish Finance Council:** Paul Shay (chair)

**Historic Preservation Corporation Board:** Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J. (President)

## Parish Committees and Chairpersons

**Adult Education:** Rita O'Brien and Jeanmarie

Zippo ([adulted@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:adulted@oldstjoseph.org))

**Parish Life:** Joe Casey ([joetcasey@aol.com](mailto:joetcasey@aol.com))

**Ignatian Spirituality and Formation:** John

Bitterman ([osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org))

**Social Justice:** Bethany Welch

([socialjustice@oldstjoseph.org](mailto:socialjustice@oldstjoseph.org))

## Ministry Leaders

**Altar Servers:** Maria Ramirez,

([mathra71@yahoo.com](mailto:mathra71@yahoo.com))

**Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:**

Bill Stewart ([wstewart@kaplaw.com](mailto:wstewart@kaplaw.com))

**Hospital Ministry:** Luanne Balestrucci

([lbalestrucci@yahoo.com](mailto:lbalestrucci@yahoo.com))

**Homebound Ministry:** Neal Hébert

([neal9536@gmail.com](mailto:neal9536@gmail.com))

**Lectors:** Lou Anne Bulik, ([labulik@yahoo.com](mailto:labulik@yahoo.com))

**Ushers:** Nikola Sizgorich, ([niksiz@icloud.com](mailto:niksiz@icloud.com))

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** Peggy Connolly

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