Thanksgiving is a feast not found on the Catholic Church’s calendar. Yet the Church provides readings for it and many churches, including Old St. Joseph’s, mark it with a liturgical observance. Why is that? Is it a nod to the Pilgrims whose faith brought them to the shores of what would become the United States? Is it to give thanks to God for our country in a way that stresses our unity rather than our divisions? Is it because it brings families together and offers us an experience of bonding and belonging? The reasons people choose to participate in this observance undoubtedly vary, but they have in common the desire to honor the day with a church ritual.

Religious rituals are one way of evoking a connection with the divine, but not all rituals are religious. There are secular rituals as well and they also evoke connection. Some are elaborate, like a presidential inauguration, and some are so simple you might not think of them as a ritual at all. For example, when parents teach their children to say “please” and “thank you,” they are initiating them into a social ritual, an agreed-upon way of interacting respectfully with other people.

Families have their rituals. Growing up, dinner in my house was always at 6:00 PM sharp. It was informal—unless we had company or it was a special occasion, we ate in the kitchen while watching the evening news—but it definitely had the feel of a ritual, of participating in an occasion that existed apart from our participation in it. It gave me the feeling of a connection with something that transcended what we were concretely doing.

Reflecting on it now, I can say that “something” was the institution of the family dinner. And at that time, it was an institution. In my family and friends’ social circle, including my friends, 6:00 PM was the standard dinner hour (although most families were not as punctual as mine) and it was inconsiderate to call anyone around that time. To this day I find myself hesitating if I pull out my phone to make a call and it tells me it’s six o’clock.

For many families, Thanksgiving is a ritual with a shared meal as the centerpiece. Other elements may be a consistent menu, prayers or toasts, or, in an extended family, the same location every year. Maybe the same family dynamics always play out. The ritual may then seem to be in the sameness, but that is a surface understanding. Even though it may initially feel like it’s not the same when grandma can no longer host or the menu changes, families discover that the deeper meaning of the ritual finds new expressions. When I was a stay-at-home mom, I cooked elaborate holiday meals. When I went back to work, the first thing to go was the...

—continued inside
**12:05 Daily Mass Intentions and Presider**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Mass Intentions</th>
<th>Presider</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society</td>
<td>Fr. O’Donnell SJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Roland S. Kellen (D)</td>
<td>Fr. Modrys SJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Geraldine Marren and Family (D)</td>
<td>Fr. Gillspie SJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Edward and Mary Britt and Family (D)</td>
<td>Fr. Gillspie SJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society</td>
<td>Fr. O’Donnell SJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society</td>
<td>Fr. Gillespie SJ</td>
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**Saturday–Sunday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Presider</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Fr. O’Donnell SJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>7:30 AM</td>
<td>Fr. Gillespie SJ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Fr. Gillespie SJ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Fr. Modrys SJ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Fr. Modrys SJ</td>
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**Why Register?**

Registering as a parishioner at Old St. Joseph’s helps the parish serve you better. It allows you to sign up for periodic emails about parish life and gives the staff a way to reach you. Registering as a parishioner helps put you in touch with the Young Adult Community, the Eldership Community, and other parish ministries. It’s also the first step in setting up online giving. Not yet registered? You can find registration forms in the back of the church and at oldstjoseph.org under the heading *Get Involved!*

**Pre-Mass Reflection Group**

All young adults are invited to reflect as a group on the Sunday readings that will be heard at the Sunday 6:30 PM Mass, **each week at 5:30 PM** (ending by 6:20 PM). We will meet in the Greaton Parlor and begin by reading the scripture of the day, followed by a short time of quiet prayer with an emphasis on imaginative prayer, and end with an opportunity for sharing and discussion. Please meet outside 321 Willings Alley and you will be let in. Materials will be provided; all are welcome. If you have any questions or if you would like to sign up to facilitate, please contact Danielle at osjyac@gmail.com.

**In your prayers,**

please remember our sick and homebound brothers and sisters
and our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital.

Douglas Adler, George Bernato, Deborah Brooks, Ann Crowther, Jane Crowther, Mary Kay Crowther, Simeon Crowther, Elizabeth Davies, Fr. Ed Dougherty SJ, Barbara Epting, Tessie Griffin, Carol Herman, Fr. Mike Hricko SJ, Imani Ivie, Sharon Krinsky, Allen May, Fr. Jerry McAndrews SJ, D. Minter, Donovan Schmidt, Dennis Scott, Sarah Smith, Mary Turner and Patricia Yusko.
Thanksgiving chestnut stuffing—and my kids were not happy about it. They didn’t particularly like to eat it, but my making it was a part (a long, labor-intensive part) of the Thanksgiving routine and without it, in their eyes, the holiday was incomplete. Eventually, though, they got used to the change and even acknowledged that bread stuffing tastes better.

What then makes a ritual a ritual? Is any repeated action a ritual? Well, no. Though it has recurring elements in it, a ritual is not just a routine. Ritual connects us to something beyond ourselves. It bears the lived history of its community over time and so is a participation in a greater sphere of being than our individual selves—yet one of which we are members. Therein lies its power. We experience ourselves as part of that community, be it our family, our church, our country, or even humanity itself. This happens because we enter into the shared understanding that shaped the ritual. When we have this deeper understanding, we can modify the particulars of the ritual and retain its meaning.

Sometimes a ritual is so powerful it can draw out a unified consciousness among people who were previously unaware of it. I was part of such a moment in 1979. Not long after John Paul II was elected Pope, he returned to Poland and celebrated packed Masses around the country. Poles were at the time demoralized by over 30 years of Communist rule. One way many people coped was by going into “internal exile,” withdrawing as much as possible from public life and resistance movements and turning inward to their own circle of family and friends. Pope John Paul’s Masses electrified people. I was at the one in Warsaw and was caught up into the spirit of unity. Held outside in a huge central square, this was the Mass in which John Paul re-ignited the flame of a common struggle against oppression with the words “Let the Spirit descend and renew the face of the earth. This earth.” The renewal of a sense of national community among those present was immediate. It gave a whole new meaning to the Our Father. I felt a kinship with the hundreds of thousands of strangers there with me.

Ritual both arises from and creates a shared sensibility. It is formative, establishing relationships among the participants that connect to a sense of belonging to a greater whole, of a meaning that transcends the action itself. Liturgical ritual builds a relationship of the worshiping community with God that impacts how the community understands itself. We eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ within a ritual that makes use of creation—words, body movements, objects—so as to bring us created human beings into the mystical Body of the risen Christ.

These days ritual is held in rather low esteem. Spontaneity and personal expression are more highly regarded. But without the counterbalance of shared ritual, we are in danger of truncating our connections and losing touch with the spirit that is in each of us which transcends our limited individual perspectives. A saying I often heard growing up was “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” Effective ritual enables us to bring the parts into the greater whole, and that expands us as individuals as well. May you and your loved ones be touched by the grace of wholeness this Thanksgiving.

—Christine Szcepanowski
Coordinator
Parish Religious Education Program (PREP)

*Front page image by Pedro Merchan Montes via Unsplash.*
Announcements

Magis Lay Formation Opportunity
The Office of Ignatian Spirituality of the Maryland and USA Northeast provinces of the Society of Jesus is now accepting applications to its lay formation program, Magis. The program will explore Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit mission and way of proceeding. The next cohort will gather for four two-day seminars over the course of eighteen months beginning in March 2020. Meetings will alternate between Jogues Retreat in Cornwall, NY and Campion Center in Weston, MA. Additional information is available at jesuitseast.org/programs or by emailing kobrien1@jesuits.org. The application deadline is December 1.

Waldron Mercy is Hiring
Waldron Mercy Academy is seeking a full-time Child Care Teacher in their daycare center to start immediately. The Child Care Teacher plans, prepares and implements daily lessons and activities including playground activities. Interested applicants should submit their resume and cover letter to employment@waldronmercy.org.

Waldron Mercy Academy is also hiring part-time custodians. If interested, please email employment@waldronmercy.org.

Save the Date: Spirit@Work, an Ignatian Young Adult Retreat
All young adults are encouraged to save the date for the third annual Philadelphia Charis Ministries retreat! The retreat will be over the weekend of Friday, March 6–Sunday, March 8 at St. Raphaela Retreat Center in Haverford, PA. Carpooling and train options will be available from the city. Charis Ministries is a retreat ministry in the Jesuit tradition for those in their 20s and 30s. Registration opens at straphaelacenter.org on December 1. Questions? Email ignatianyaretreats@straphaelacenter.org.

Community Action Poverty Simulation
As part of Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, Bethesda Project and Keystone First invite you to walk a mile in the shoes of those experiencing poverty by participating in a Community Action Poverty Simulation. The simulation will be Thursday, November 21 from 8:30 AM-12:00 PM at Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church, 2212 Spruce Street, Philadelphia. It is designed to help participants understand what it might be like to live as a typical low-income family, trying to survive from month to month. Participation offers an opportunity to break down stereotypes and misconceptions and cultivates community connection and responsibility. Participation is free but pre-registration is required. Search for Keystone First and Bethesda Project Community Action Poverty Simulation on Eventbrite.com.

Parents Invited to Children’s Liturgy of the Word December 1
On Sunday, December 1, parents are invited to join their children in Barbelin Hall for the Children’s Liturgy of the Word at 9:30 AM Mass. We will hear God’s word proclaimed and pray together in a special way to observe the First Sunday of Advent.

Old St. Joseph’s Advent Giving Tree
OSU’s Advent Giving Tree will return on the weekend of November 30-December 1. It will be adorned with tags requesting gifts to students at Gesu School and families at the Aquinas Center. Additional details will be in next week’s bulletin.
Centering Prayer to Meet
The centering prayer group will meet on **Wednesday, November 20, 6:30–8:30 PM** in the Drexel Parlor of the parish offices. There will be a presentation with discussion on centering prayer, followed by evening prayer with a period of centering. Anyone interested in contemplative prayer is welcome. For further information, contact Christine Szczepanowski at 267-250-3049 or prep@oldstjoseph.org.

Mass on Thanksgiving Day
On Thanksgiving Day, **November 28**, Mass will be celebrated at **10:00 AM**—there will be no confessions or 12:05 PM Mass that day.

Advent by Candlelight
Advent by Candlelight, an evening of prayer for women, will be **Wednesday, December 4, at 7:00 PM** in Barbelin Hall. Jaclyn Newns, director of campus ministry at Chestnut Hill College, will lead us in *Dreaming and Beholding: an evening of prayer, art, song and fellowship that draws us deeper into God’s invitation of love this Advent.*

Accompanying Immigrants
The next meeting of those who wish to build on their experience of court accompaniment or exploring a personal or parish response to migrants and refugees will be on **Monday, December 9, 7:00-8:00 PM** in Barbelin Hall.

Save the Date(s)
Old St. Joseph’s Advent Reconciliation Service will be on **Tuesday, December 10 at 7:00 PM**.
OSJ’s annual celebration of Lessons and Carols will be on **Sunday, December 15 at 3:00 PM** in the church. A reception will follow in Barbelin Hall.

Reading and Praying with Scripture
Fr. Walter Modrys will offer his third and final talk on *How to Read and Pray with the Bible* on **Monday, November 18, 7:00 PM in Barbelin Hall.** His subject that evening will be *The Role of Scripture in St. Ignatius’s Spiritual Exercises.*

YAC Fall Planning Meeting
The OSJ Young Adult Community (YAC) will meet at OSJ on **Saturday, November 23, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM** for its Semi-Annual Planning meeting. *We actively seek new individuals to help coordinate, lead and grow the community.* YAC thrives on shared leadership and wide participation to support its fundamental sense of community and future goals. All members and ideas are welcome and appreciated; please join us for as much of the day as your schedule permits. If you are unable to attend that day, please email any thoughts for conversation to Megan at osjyac@gmail.com. We hope to see you there; please RSVP.

Book Group
The Old Saint Joseph’s Reading Group will meet on **Tuesday, December 3 at 7:30 PM** in the Loyola Room of the parish offices. Our December book is *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett. New members are welcome; for more information, contact Carol at shlosscarol@gmail.com.

Lector Workbook 2020
Lectors: if you haven’t gotten your copy of the 2020 *Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word*, please pick up your copy in the sacristy before **December 1.**
INFORMATION

Pastor
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Fran Gillespie SJ (fgillespie@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
Fr. Edward Dougherty SJ (dougherty@oldstjoseph.org)
Fr. Ed O’Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

Pastoral Associate
BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)

Business Manager
Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music
Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Offices
(ojoffice@oldstjoseph.org)

Religious Education (PREP) Coordinator
Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director
Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)

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 7:00 PM

Medical Emergency
In 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 available in the rear of the church.

Registration
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. They can be returned to the parish office by mail or in person.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
A priest is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday from 11:30 AM–12:00 PM or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism
If you want to arrange a baptism, please contact Fr. Gillespie (fgillespie@oldstjoseph.org) at least two months before the desired date.

Eucharist for the Homebound
To arrange to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish offices.

The Sacrament of Anointing
The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is offered 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
If you want to be married at Old St. Joseph’s, please visit our website, oldstjoseph.org and read the material under the heading Weddings. Please call the parish office at 215-923-1766 at least nine months before your desired wedding date.

Rite of Christian Initiation
If you are an adult wishing to be baptized, or to receive First Eucharist and Confirmation, or are a baptized non-Catholic seeking full communion with Catholic Church, please call the parish office or email rcia@oldstjoseph.org.

Mass of Christian Burial
To schedule a funeral or memorial Mass, ask your funeral director to call the parish office

Parish Pastoral Council
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Finance Council
Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president

Adult Education
Rita O’Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo
(adulted@oldstjoseph.org)

Eldership
Pat Nelson (eldership@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Life
Joe Casey (parishlife@oldstjoseph.org)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation
Len Mancini (osjsspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship
Rana McNamara (wff@oldstjoseph.org)

Young Adult Community
(osjyac@gmail.com)

Altar Servers
Maria Ramirez (altarserver@oldstjoseph.org)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Bill Stewart (EM@oldstjoseph.org)

Hospital Ministry
Luanne Balestrucci (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Homebound Ministry
Neal Hébert (homeEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Lectors
Lou Anne Bulik (lectors@oldstjoseph.org)

Ushers
Nikola Szgorich (ushers@oldstjoseph.org)

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Peggy Connolly (clow@oldstjoseph.org)