

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 21, 2025



A Note from Fr. Joe....

Among the most common figures for Christmas ornaments and decorations are – you guessed it – angels! Often, they have the honor of top spot on our trees. And think of all the Christmas carols involving angels – *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Angels We Have Heard on High, The First Noël* – the list goes on. Their very name means messenger – messengers of God, heralds, guardians, guides. While commanding reverence and awe, angels also project compassion and understanding. Perhaps that’s why we call a person who does something nice, kind, or uplifting ‘an angel.’ And, as we reflect on the Christmas story anew, let’s not overlook the significant role that angels play.

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary God’s plan for her and our world. It’s the angels who tell the shepherds of the Good News of Jesus’ birth. And, in this 4th Sunday of Advent’s Gospel passage, it’s an angel who helps guide Joseph through a very confusing situation. Just imagine for a moment how he must have felt when the teenaged Mary, his betrothed, first told him that she was pregnant – and by the Holy Spirit, nonetheless. Yet, Joseph remained open minded, open hearted; he listened to “the angel of the Lord” confirm Mary’s claim. As a result, Joseph took her “into his home” – and, as we know from the rest of the story, he ‘named their son Jesus,’ not only teaching him to be fully human, but also preparing him to fulfill his mission as Savior, as the Christ. Just think – how would Joseph, or Mary, or the shepherds have known what to do or where to go, if these heavenly beings hadn’t served as their guides?

We may not see angels clothed with halos and wings, but God does send us helpers, guardians, and messengers, just as God sent an angel to Joseph. Are our eyes, our ears, and our hearts open? God’s eager to give us signs of divine love. Are we ready to receive them? The prophet Isaiah tried to do this for King Ahaz, in our 1st Reading, but the proud and stubborn king wouldn’t accept the Lord’s sign of favor. Are we too proud or stubborn to recognize the angels in our lives? Those heralds who reach out via a phone call, a text, or an outstretched hand when we’re down or sick? Friends, family members, perhaps even strangers?

And because we’ve been blessed with such messengers we too must serve as ‘angels’ to others. To whom might we be sent by God to bring good tidings? What message do we give by what we say and do? Is it one of “Bah, humbug” – or “Peace on earth, and mercy mild?” Who knows what Mary or Joseph might be waiting to hear from us. So, let’s be God’s heralds, God’s messengers in these wonderful days ahead – a reminder of Jesus the Christ shining through any darkness, anxiety, confusion. “Let the Lord enter” – may He find room in our hearts and our lives, once again! A Blessed final week of Advent – and a very Merry Christmas to you and yours!

Finally, I suspect many of you are familiar with and enjoy the Christmas classic, *It’s a Wonderful Life*. I had the blessing of traveling to Seneca Falls, NY (believed to be the inspiration for Bedford Falls) for the annual festival honoring the film. At the kickoff dinner, I met the actors who played Zuzu and Tommy Bailey. They happily and graciously posed for a photo, with a greeting they signed for Pope Leo. As you may have seen in the news, he named *It’s a Wonderful Life* as one of his favorite films – with which I couldn’t agree more. When Karolyn Grimes, who played Zuzu, smiled and said, “Every time a bell rings an angel gets their wings,” I discovered that I still can feel like a kid on Christmas morning! Please enjoy the photos included in this bulletin. And a shout out to Steve Curtis, the parishioner who invited me on this special road trip. Thank you!!

Stewardship Thought for the Week

“When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.”

MATTHEW 1:24

Putting our complete trust in the Lord without expecting anything in return. Striving to put God first in all things and follow Him wherever He may lead us. Joseph was a model of these pillars of our faith. As we prepare for the birth of our Lord, pray for the strength and courage to be a model of discipleship, just as Joseph was.

Thank you for your generosity for the weekend of December 13 and 14, 2025:

Number of Envelopes	225
Envelope	\$18,500.00
Loose \$ / NP	\$943.70
Electronic	\$7,424.00
Other	\$150.00
Total	\$27,017.70
10% Title	\$2,701.77
 Last Year	 \$28,268.00



ADVENT SEASON

We have Reconciliation after our 12:05pm Liturgy in the Rosemont Chapel every Tuesday during the Advent Season and every Saturday following the 9:00am Liturgy.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION OPPORTUNITIES AT OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH

COMMUNAL CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Monday, December 22nd at 7:00pm and every Saturday at 11:30am.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES APPEAL Giving Hope 2025 Please Give Generously!

A gentle reminder to all of our wonderful parishioners, let us all be good stewards to work together to keep our churches looking beautiful. Please remember to place the gathering books and supplemental Augustinian binders neatly back into the hymnal racks at the end of Mass.

Thank you.

Readings for the Week:

Monday: 1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56
Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66
Wednesday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Lk 1:67-79
Thursday: Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Friday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
Saturday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23



CHRISTMAS LITURGY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH
Daily Mass - 9:00am - Rosemont Chapel

CHRISTMAS EVE - DECEMBER 24TH

4:00PM (Villanova Church)

4:30PM (Rosemont Chapel)

(Please bring formula and/or diapers for the Presentation of the Gifts to be given to St. Cyprian, our sister parish.)

6:00PM (Villanova Church)

10:30PM (Villanova Church)

(Musical Prelude begins at 10:00PM)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

10:30AM - Villanova Church
(Only one Liturgy on Christmas Day)

Masses for the January 1, 2026 Holyday

Wednesday, December 31st: 5:30PM Vigil

Thursday, January 1st: 9:00AM

Both in the Rosemont Chapel.

OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Wednesday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

5:00PM

9:00PM

Thursday, December 25th

Christmas Day

8:00AM

10:00AM

**New Year's Eve - New Year's Day
(Solemnity of Mary Mother of God)**

Wednesday, December 31st:

5:00PM Vigil Mass

Thursday, January 1st: 10:00AM



Mon., Dec. 22nd 12:05PM-RMCH **Late Advent Weekday**
Angelo Moretto - Richard Moretto

Tues., Dec. 23rd 12:05PM-RMCH **Late Advent Weekday; Saint John Of Kanty**
Rae Moretto - Richard Moretto

Wed., Dec. 24th 9:00AM-RMCH **Late Advent Weekday**
In Thanksgiving to Saints Michael and Raphael

Wed., Dec. 24th **CHRISTMAS EVE**
4:00PM (Villanova Church)
4:30PM (Rosemont Chapel)
6:00PM (Villanova Church)
10:30PM (Villanova Church)
Musical Prelude begins at 10:00PM.

Thurs., Dec. 25th **THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**
10:30AM (Villanova Church)

Fri., Dec. 26th 12:05PM RMCH **SAINT STEPHEN**
S.E.W. Friel, Jr & Margery H Friel - Friel Family

Sat., Dec. 27th 9:00AM-RMCH **SAINT JOHN**
Ceclia Dubay (L) - Donna Shovlin
4:30PM-RMCH In thanksgiving to the Holy Family

Sun., Dec. 28th 7:30AM-VNCH **THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**
All Living and Deceased Members of the Parish

9:00AM-RMCH Peter Shovlin - Wife, Donna Shovlin
10:30AM-VNCH Mary & Joseph Cassizzi - Cprek Family



Schedule of Events for the week of: December 21, 2025
Recitation of the Rosary after the daily Liturgy.

Monday, December 22, 2025
Centering Prayer - RMCH 8:00AM

Tuesday, December 23, 2025
Scripture Study - PC1 10:00AM
Reconciliation after 12:05 Mass
Rosemont Care Center Mass 2:30PM
No Walking with Purpose

Wednesday, December 24, 2025 - Christmas Eve
Parish Office Closed
Daily Mass - RMCH 9:00AM
Exercise Class - Harten Hall 10:00AM
Family Support Group - Harten Hall 7:00PM

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES
4:00PM (Villanova Church)
4:30PM (Rosemont Chapel)
6:00PM (Villanova Church)
10:30PM (Villanova Church)
(Musical Prelude begins at 10:00PM.)

Thursday, December 25, 2025 - CHRISTMAS DAY
10:30AM - Villanova Church
(Only one Liturgy on Christmas Day.)

Friday, December 26, 2025
Parish Office Closed

Saturday, December 27, 2025

Sunday, December 28, 2025

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

In Haiti, Jean Clack-Andral is baking a better future! His bakery provides jobs for other young people and a community staple. Thanks to entrepreneurial training from Catholic Relief Services, he's creating opportunities and discouraging migration. Jean didn't have the opportunity to attend university and wasn't sure how to start. That changed when he was selected to participate in a youth entrepreneurial training through Ayiti pi Djanm — "A Stronger Haiti" — a U.S. government-funded foreign assistance project implemented by Catholic Relief Services. Visit www.crs.org for more information and to see how you can help.

If you would like to get involved with CRS at the parish level, please email service@stvparish.org to find out more about our parish CRS chapter, a joint effort with our sister parish, St. Cyprian.

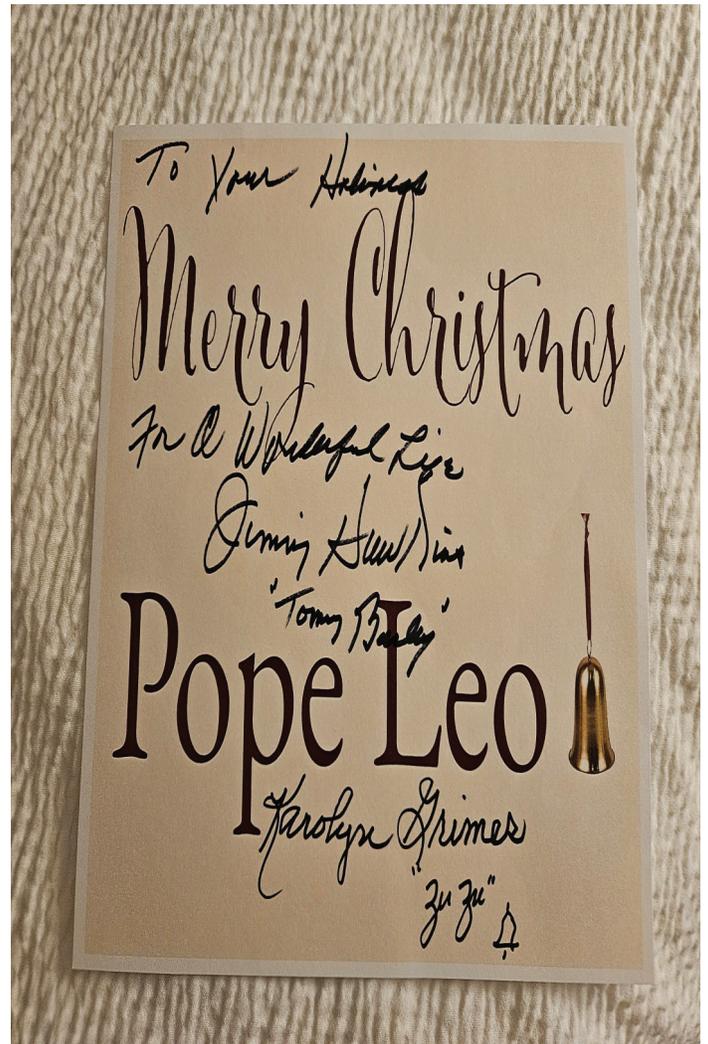


Thanks to the handiwork of many parish volunteers, the Breck family delivered 280 beautiful handmade blankets, hats and booties to children who will be spending the holidays at DuPont Children's Hospital. We are so grateful to all of the Butterfly Blessings volunteers who work hard to create adorable items for such special children that give them comfort and boost their spirits!

Sarah, Jeanette and Katherine Breck



Left to Right: Fr. Joe, Karolyn Grimes (Zuzu Bailey), Jimmy Hawkins (Tommy Bailey)



Greeting being sent to Pope Leo for Christmas!

A gentle reminder about seating in church, particularly during holidays/Holy days when Mass tends to be more crowded.

Please remember to make space for others to sit, especially during very crowded Masses. Try to fill in spaces where single spots are vacant in the middle of a row, so that other families can more easily sit together. Please move towards the middle of the pew, leaving the aisle seats for those coming later. And for those who can't sit in the middle of the pew for medical and other specific reasons, take the outside aisle spot and graciously allow those coming after you to go past (by moving out for them so they can get by). Thank you and God Bless!

Tanya Braithwaite,
Director of Liturgy

Volunteers Needed for Hurricane Relief Mission

Calling all parishioners interested in a spring mission trip with Food for the Poor to Kingston, Jamaica! Spend time rebuilding homes after the hurricane and providing other relief services, as well as beginning and ending each day in spiritual reflection and fellowship. Age 16 and older.

Please email parishioner Bill Yoh (bill.yoh@yoh.com) ASAP as date planning will happen shortly.



We wish a warm welcome to the newest members of our parish:

Ryan & Jordan Crossman & Family of Bryn Mawr

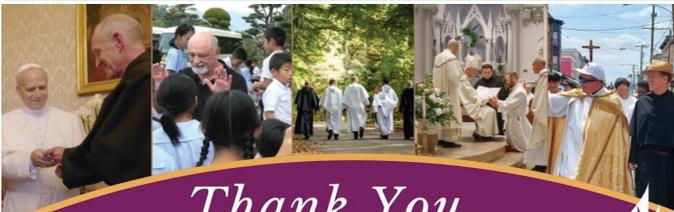
Resting in Peace:

Rita Higgins
Samual Horsey

Remember those in need of our prayers, especially:

Angelina Arcamone PHD, Nicola Bonelli, Linnea Bramble, Katherine Breck, Brynn Busby, Peter Cellucci, Kelly Clarke, Jackie Colligan, Austin DePetris, Dorothy Dolan, Ella, John Joseph Flood, Jim Foley, Lina Fulton, Ian Gallagher, James Gibbons, Jr., Mary Jane Gironi, Patricia Ann Harley, Bridget Kelly, Sara Keohane, Tom Kosinski, Ashley Lythgoe, Pamela LaMonaca, Jubilee Elizabeth Meadows, Mary Moran, Bob O'Driscoll; Denise Paviglianiti, Bruno Petrillo, Bill Riley, Shirley Sagan, Michael Salucci, Millie Seeds, Theresa Sherwin, Terry Sousa, Lou Villa, Greta Wagner, Ron Weber and Robert J. Wahl

Please pray for our soldiers stationed throughout the world. Please also pray for the soldiers who are returning from their assignments, especially the wounded.



Thank You
THE Augustinian Fund
Annual Appeal

The Augustinian Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova extends heartfelt thanks to the parishioners of St. Thomas of Villanova Parish for your generous support of the Augustinian Fund Annual Appeal during this season of giving.

We are filled with gratitude and hope for the future, knowing that your continued partnership helps sustain the friars and their ministries. Please be assured of the friars' daily prayers for you and for all whom you hold dear.

Blessings for a joyful Christmas and a New Year filled with peace.

VISIT AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/APEALS

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

PRAYER LINE

The parish prayer line is waiting for your prayer requests. Please contact stvprayerline1@gmail.com or Marie DellaGreca at 856-981-7761 to activate the parish prayer line. We have parish teams available for your special intentions.

DINNERS TO THE DOORSTEP

This ministry is for parish families who are in crisis or for parish couples welcoming a new baby. Home-made dinners are delivered. Two parish coordinators keep a list of volunteers who are called as needed. If you are in need of this delicious community support, please contact Maria Gunn at 610-291-7205 or maria.jim@comcast.net.

ST. FRANCIS INN

Volunteers are needed to serve the midday meal at the St. Francis Inn in Kensington. The Inn tries to meet the immediate daily needs of the poor and homeless people they serve with food, clothing and hospitality. This ministry is open to anyone 16 years or older. For more information and to sign up, contact our parish coordinator, Sheila Holst at 610-659-5828 or hagan1126@verizon.net.

MOTHER AND NEW FAMILY SUPPORT MINISTRY

Parishioner and nurse practitioner volunteer offers support to new moms and their families who are navigating the complexities of motherhood and the addition of a new baby to the family. Contact Suzanne Foley at 610-952-0147 or suzannefoley@yahoo.com or Renee Massaua at service@stvparish.org.

DECEMBER, 2025

JANUARY, 2026

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

As of Monday, December 1, 2025 and through the end of January, 2026, the Parish Office Hours will be changing from
9:00AM - 4:30PM
to
8:30AM - 3:30PM
Monday through Thursday

The Friday hours will remain
9:00AM to 1:00PM.

Please note that additional security measures have been added at the Parish Office door. You must ring the bell before we can unlock the door for your entry. Thanks for your cooperation.

PLAN AHEAD

Please consider the various options available for attending Mass this Christmas. In a spirit of hospitality, we want to be welcoming of everyone, but we also want everyone to be safe. So, once again, at the 4:00pm Mass at the Villanova Church on Christmas Eve, there will be no standing allowed in the aisles or doorways – and chairs will be added in the back. Once Villanova University Public Safety determines that we are at capacity (when all the pews, marble benches, and chairs are filled,) people will be directed to the 4:30pm Mass at the Rosemont Chapel. Harten Hall, underneath the Chapel, also will be set up for any overflow, with upgraded livestreaming available. There will be a 5:00pm Mass at Our Mother of Good Counsel (OMGC) Parish, as well.

Please plan accordingly and check out the full schedule of Christmas Masses at St. Thomas and OMGC in this bulletin and on our parish website. Finally, I'd ask that we all observe these simple acts of hospitality:

Unless you have a physical reason that you need to be at the end of a pew, please move in to accommodate others.

Limit seat saving, with as many of your loved ones coming together as possible, so as to be fair to all those who would like to attend.

Ultimately, let's keep in mind the reason we're coming together, remaining courteous to one another, Public Safety, and our Innkeeper volunteer hospitality ministers (if you're interested in helping, please contact Tanya Braithwaite at liturgy@stvparish.org).

THANK YOU!

FR. JOE



HELP US SPREAD THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS— JOIN THE INNKEEPER MINISTRY

As we prepare for our upcoming Christmas liturgies, we are in need of volunteers to welcome parishioners and guests as they join us for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. **What is required?** Volunteers should arrive 30 minutes prior to the Mass they are planning to attend, to stand at the doors to greet people and assist as needed.

We will also need assistance with parking at the Rosemont Chapel 4:30pm Mass and directing parishioners at the 4:00pm Mass. We will need you to arrive 30 minutes before and approximately 15 minutes after the conclusion of Mass. This is an excellent opportunity for families to volunteer together.

To join the team of “Innkeepers”, please contact Tanya Braithwaite, at liturgy@stvparish.org or 610-525-4801 ext. 203.

Thank you..

Building a Better World

A Presentation on Pope Leo XIV and Catholic Social Teaching
by Fr. Art Purcaro, O.S.A.

6 Tuesday, January 6th

 12:45 PM

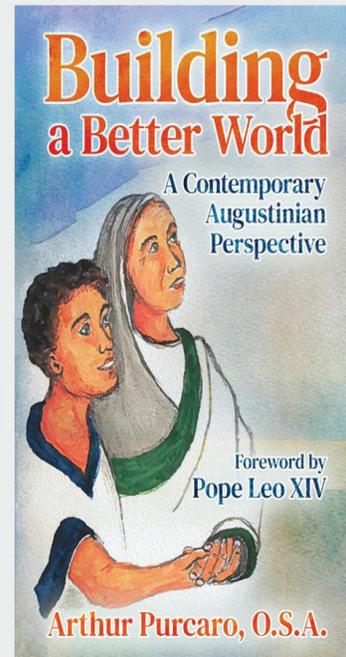
 Harten Hall

How can we, as Catholics today, work for a better world?
Join us for an inspiring evening to explore spiritual formation, social justice,
and environmental stewardship as we live out our Christian faith.

Fr. Art Purcaro, O.S.A., will guide us on a personal journey of transformation
toward a more just and sustainable world. He will also share insights from
his recently published book, *Building a Better World*, with a foreword by
Pope Leo XIV.

We hope you can join us for this informative and engaging discussion!

 RSVP: Kathy Roethlein – office@stuparish.org |  610-525-4801



STV Food Pantry NEEDS your HELP!

The Parish food closet accepts donations of non-perishable foods on a weekly basis. The items collected are then delivered to our sister parish, St. Cyprian's in West Philadelphia, where approximately 300 families are assisted on a monthly basis.

Items most in need are:

powdered milk, canned fruit and 100% fruit juice, peanut butter and jelly, tuna, canned chicken, cold cereal, oatmeal, pasta and pasta sauce, rice, stew, chili and soup, toilet paper and diapers.

Food may be dropped off Monday-Thursday, 8:30am to 3:30pm and on Fridays from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Please drop off at the Parish Center and on weekends at the back of the Rosemont Chapel (around Mass times when the Church is open.) Please be mindful of expiration dates. We cannot deliver food items which are past their expiration dates. Thank you.

If you would rather not shop, please know that financial contributions are welcome and will allow parish volunteers to buy items for the parish food closet that directly benefit the food pantry at our sister parish, St. Cyprian. You may either send a check made out to St. Thomas of Villanova (with "Parish Food Closet" on the memo line) to the parish office or drop a check in the collection basket. Electronic contributions are also an option via the parish website.



**GRANDPARENT
MINISTRY**
Grandparent Seminar 2026

“The most important thing God wants you to do is right in front of you: Passing on your faith to your Grandchildren.”

How Can we do that?

Join us for a four – week Grandparent Seminar

Mondays: January 26, February 2,
February 9 and February 16

10:30am-11:45am in Harten Hall

This engaging series includes excellent videos and small group discussions centered on the following themes:

- Renewing Hope
- You Can Do This, Grandparents
- Youth Work
- The Strategic Grandparent's Faith to Move Grandchildren

Registration: Email office@stvparish.org or call Kathy at 610-525-4801, ext 200.

Questions: Contact Facilitator Anne Murphy at anne.g.murphy@gmail.com.

Take a peek at Session 1: A Bold Vision for Grandparenting on www.grandly.org.



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026
2:00pm to 7:00pm
at St. Thomas of Villanova Parish
Harten Hall (Rosemont Auditorium)

Please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and Enter: StThomasRosemont to schedule an appointment.

Maximize your blood donation. Help more patients. If you are an eligible type O, B- or A-donor, consider making a Power Red donation. Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

Give blood. Help save lives.

For questions about eligibility: call 1 800-RED-CROSS

WHAT DOES GOD WANT YOU TO DO WITH THE LIFE GOD'S GIVEN YOU?

“We need to lift our eyes, to look upwards, to the things that are above (Col 3:2), to realize that everything in the world has meaning only insofar as it serves to unite us to God and to our brothers and sisters in charity.”
Pope Leo XIV

If you are interested in learning more about the Order of St. Augustine and what it means to be an Augustinian, please visit our website:

www.beafriar.org



The Joy of Sox

wishes to thank Fr. Joe Narog, OSA, Parish Staff, and St. Thomas of Villanova Parishioners for your generous support of our recent Socktober Fest.

We were able to exceed our goal!

Due to the generosity of so many, **thus far in 2025**, we have been able to distribute **76, 269** pairs of new socks to men, women and children experiencing homelessness. This makes a grand total of **1, 269, 051** pairs of new socks distributed in our local community as well as in 35 states and 15 countries since our inception in 2010.

Thanks to you, so many will enjoy the comfort of a warm, cozy pair of socks this Christmas season.

The Joy of Sox Team

To learn more about our mission: www.tjos.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL

When the temperature feels like freezing, Lower Merion calls it a Code Blue night and asks us to open our shelter for homeless men. If you would like to volunteer to help us with this ministry, please go to the Our Mother of Good Counsel website, OMGC and scroll down to Code blue and click on the link. This will bring you to the schedule with dates and times when we need help.

Thank you for your assistance.



Bereavement Support Group at OMGC

Hosted by Fr. John Deary, O.S.A.

**Thursday: 6:30pm
January 8, 2026**

**Location: Our Mother of Good Counsel
Social Center**

All are welcome who are suffering the effects of bereavement and may benefit from some support from others in the same situation. The bi-monthly meetings are safe, friendly, welcoming and confidential.

RETROUVAILLE: REDISCOVER THE LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE

Tens of thousands of couples have healed their marriages through Retrouvaille (pronounced Retro-vy). If you know anyone who could benefit from this program, please pass this on. Couples learn to build communication skills and to increase intimacy. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties or crises. The next program begins the weekend of February 6-8, 2026 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, or to register, call 215-766-3944 or visit www.MarriageHelpDelVal.org. All inquiries are strictly confidential.



"Building A Better World: On the Road to Sainthood" Leaders of African Descent

Servant of God Friar Martin de Porres Maria Ward (1928-1999)

Friar Martin de Porres passed away on June 22, 1999, at the age of 81. He had dedicated 51 years of his life to the Conventual Franciscan Friars, much of which was spent in Andrelândia, Brazil. Friar Martin became the first African American Conventual Franciscan in North America. Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood on June 4, 1955, he volunteered for missions in Brazil. He was well-known in his religious community and among the people he served for his cheerful, charitable, and humble demeanor. He dedicated himself to the people of Andrelândia, particularly the poor, and was often called upon to celebrate funerals, conduct marriages, and hear confessions.

Source: USCCB

Butterfly Blessings



Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish is looking for volunteers who can knit, crochet, sew or do needlework to make handmade baby items for babies facing challenges in our local hospitals.



Ideas include baby caps, blankets, sweaters, booties, bibs, anything you can create!



Each item will be tagged with this blessing:

*"May you be blessed with the ability of a butterfly to grow gracefully.
May your beauty radiate like the colors of a butterfly lighting up the world.
May your love spread like the wings of a butterfly, gently touching souls."*



For more information contact
the parish office at 610.525.4801