

DIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Letters of Good Standing and Celebrets. Priests and deacons who will need good standing letters or celebrets to celebrate Masses or other sacraments **in another diocese** should **complete and submit a “Request form for Letter of Good Standing” at least 3 weeks in advance (except for funerals).** The form can be found on the diocesan website at: <https://www.buffalodiocese.org/resources-for-clergy/> under “Chancery Forms.” Letters will not be issued unless the priest or deacon has a signed Code of Conduct and Uniform Release Authorization in his file, and is current with *Virtus* training and bulletins. For any questions, call the Chancery secretary at 716-847-5559.

International Exhibition: Miracles of the Eucharist Across the World created by Blessed Carlo Acutis. In light of the National Eucharistic Revival 2022-2024, make plans to share this exhibit with your parish. The mystery of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist can be challenging to fully embrace as human beings. “I believe; help my unbelief!” Mark 9:24. We have 27 panels (24” x 36”) describing Eucharistic miracles spanning the globe available to be exhibited in your parish at no cost. We will set it up and take it down in your parish hall or church. If interested, contact Mary Cygan at mary.jp.cygan@gmail.com. Sponsored by Morning Star Family Holy Hour and Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, Olean.

CHURCH BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bulletin message for weekend of December 17-18: So much has changed since the founding of Catholic Charities in 1923, but one thing has remained a constant: just as we have for 99 years, Catholic Charities is here and ready to help – now. If you have an urgent need or you or your family is facing a crisis situation, please give us a call or visit www.ccwny.org to complete an online assistance form. Help and HOPE are available.

Bulletin message for weekend of December 24-25: “The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.” John 1:9. As we celebrate the wonder and joy of Christ’s birth, we hope your hearts and homes are filled with peace, happiness, love, and the light of Christ our Savior. **Merry Christmas from all of us at Catholic Charities!**

Bulletin message for weekend of December 31-January 1: Happy New Year! Is giving back one of your goals for 2023? If so, become a Catholic Charities volunteer. View all current opportunities at www.ccwny.org/volunteer and start the year by becoming a beacon of HOPE in your community!

Bulletin message for January: Chocolate is a favorite of choice for many however we consume it, in candy or drinks. Do you know that children as young as 9 and 10 work long hours every day on cocoa farms to satisfy the demand for chocolate? **US Catholic Sisters**

Against Human Trafficking, 7575 Grand River Rd., Suite 109, Brighton, MI 48114; sistersagainstrafficking.org.

El chocolate es el favorito de muchos, sin importar cómo lo consumamos, en dulces o bebidas. ¿Sabe que niños de 9 y 10 años trabajan muchas horas todos los días en las granjas de chocolate para satisfacer la demanda de chocolate? **US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking**, 7575 Grand River Rd., Suite 109, Brighton, MI 48114; sistersagainstrafficking.org.

Volunteers are the heart of our community! Catholic Health Services is looking for volunteers for all of our hospital sites – Kenmore Mercy, Sisters of Charity, South Buffalo Mercy and Mt. St. Mary's. Looking for ways to give back? Call Lisa Carey, Supervisor of Volunteer Services at 716-862-1106 or apply online at <https://www.chsbuffalo.org/volunteer>.

Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, Olean – tours available on Friday, December 16 and Friday, December 30 from 1-2 pm (after 12:15 pm Mass), as well as on Monday, December 26 at 1 pm. No reservations necessary. Come and discover the beauty of the southern tier's Basilica. Our 33 Munich-style windows are some of the finest domestically-produced windows in the nation. Pope Francis designated our church as a Minor Basilica on February 14, 2017 for its exquisite art, architecture and history. All the privileges of visiting a minor basilica, including the Plenary Indulgence, are available to pilgrims. For more information, visit: <https://www.smaolean.org/>.

Fr. Roy Herberger's Nativity Sets Exhibit on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 am-4 pm from now until January 8th (except Christmas and New Year's weekends) at Our Lady of Victory Basilica (lower level), 767 Ridge Rd., Lackawanna. This unique collection features Nativity sets from around the world! If you have any questions, call Fr. Roy at 716-852-2076.

Carols by Candlelight. The Women of St. Louis will present an Advent recital entitled "Carols by Candlelight" on Friday, December 9 at 7:30 pm at St. Louis Church, Main & Edward Sts., Buffalo. The Women of St. Louis are six members of the St. Louis Choir's soprano section. Together they will offer a program of solo and ensemble carols for Advent and Christmas – all in the muted candlelight of St. Louis' majestic nave. Admission is free and all are welcome.

Christmas Cantata "Carols" on December 11 at 7 pm at St. Christopher, 2660 Niagara Falls Blvd., Tonawanda. Have you noticed in the last few years that although Christmas music starts in October, they don't play traditional Christmas Carols? Nat King Cole singing "O Little Town of Bethlehem" or Andy Williams singing "O Come All Ye Faithful"? Our cantata this year celebrates traditional carols and invites our congregation to sing along while the choir adds soaring harmonies to bring us a spiritual and moving beginning to your Christmas season.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on December 11 at 7 pm at Our Lady of Victory National Shrine & Basilica, 767 Ridge Rd., Lackawanna. This service of Scripture and song dates back to the late 19th century. In it, nine Scripture lessons are included that recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each is then followed by a carol/song that reflects on the lesson's message and a brief prayer. Join us for this free family-friendly event and consider making it a Christmas tradition!

South Buffalo Family of Parishes upcoming events. December 14: Service of Lessons and Carols at 7 pm at Holy Family Church, 1901 South Park Ave., Buffalo. December 19: Vespers at 7 pm, followed by an Advent Concert by the St. John Paul II Schola Cantorum at St. Thomas

Aquinas Church, 450 Abbott Rd., Buffalo. December 20: Christmas Caroling at 6 pm from St. Martin of Tours Church, 1140 Abbott Rd., Buffalo to Bishop Head Residence, 10 Rosary Ave., Lackawanna.

Celebrate Christmas with a Greccio reenactment of St. Francis of Assisi's Pageant that depicts the Christmas story on December 15 at 6:30 pm in the school courtyard at Cardinal O'Hara High School, 39 O'Hara Rd., Tonawanda. Following the Greccio reenactment, O'Hara's Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Chorus, Song Corps and Dance Ensemble will perform their annual concert of holiday favorites in the Performing Arts Center. The event is free and open to the public. Prior to Greccio, the music department will host a spaghetti dinner fundraiser from 4-6 pm in the student dining room; tickets for the dinner may be purchased by calling O'Hara at 716-695-2600, ext. 312.

Lessons and Carols on December 18 at 7 pm at St. Christopher, 2660 Niagara Falls Blvd., Tonawanda. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus is told in nine short Bible readings or lessons from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns and choir anthems. All are welcome as we cap off our Advent Season with this powerful meditation on what is to come.

Festival Service of Lessons and Carols on December 18 at 5 pm at St. Louis Church, Main & Edward Sts., Buffalo; presented by the Choir of St. Louis Church, under the direction of organist/choirmaster Frank Scinta. The service traces, in scripture and song, the Nativity story as foretold by the Old Testament prophets and narrated by the Gospel writers. Begun in King's College Chapel, Cambridge University more than a century ago, the service is repeated in churches of nearly every denomination worldwide.

Inclusive Christmas Mass on Wednesday, December 28 at 7 pm at St. Bernadette Parish, 5930 S. Abbott Rd., Orchard Park. Fr. Joe Wolf, celebrant, will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation at 6 pm. The Mass will be interpreted in American Sign Language and will be live-streamed on St. Bernadette's Facebook page. After Mass, a reception will be held in the Parish Ministry Center. The Mass offers a shorter, less crowded worship setting, allowing for freedom of movement as needed. The lighting will be dimmer, the music soothing and low gluten hosts will be available. This event is sponsored by Open Doors Ministry which advocates for the inclusion of people with disabilities into the life of the parish. St. Bernadette Church is wheelchair accessible. Questions may be directed to Sharon Urbaniak at 716-648-1720, ext. 3 or sharonu@saintbopny.org.

March for Life 2023, Washington, DC - January 19-20, 2023. Make your reservation today. Bus deadline: Monday, December 26; to guarantee your seat on the bus you must register and send payment by the deadline (money non-refundable if payment received after deadline). Hotel deadline: make your reservation before December 20, 2022; call the Washington Plaza at 202-842-1300 and mention Buffalo Diocese. **Permission & Health Form for Youth:** deadline December 20, 2022. **VERY IMPORTANT:** return original to the office before the deadline; this is required for final registration. For registration form, visit <https://www.buffalodiocese.org/pro-life-services/> or email Pro-lifeoffice@buffalodiocese.org.

Rediscover Your Marriage. Retrouvaille, a program for struggling couples, simply means "rediscovery." The program offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. For more information, call 716-474-9371 or visit

<https://www.helpourmarriage.org/>. Next weekend is January 27-29. All calls are confidential and pre-registration is required.

Word of Life-December 11: “O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery; intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity. Those whom man enslaves, let God set free.”

Palabra de Vida-Diciembre 11: “Oh, santa Josefina Bakhita, ayuda a todos aquellos que están atrapados en la esclavitud; en nombre de ellos, intercede ante Dios para que sean liberados de las cadenas de su cautiverio. Que los que han sido esclavizados por los hombres, que Dios les conceda la libertad.”

Word of Life-December 18: “Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. As someone who has been there, I encourage you to support your friend in her new journey of being a mother.”

Word of Life-Diciembre 18: “Tal vez una de tus amigas haya quedado embarazada inesperadamente. Como alguien que ha pasado por so, te animo a que apoyes a tu amiga en su nueva senda de ser madre.”

ENCLOSURES

(none)