



Mass  
Intentions  
Of The Week

**Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 A.M. Living and Deceased Members of the O'Brien and Thornton Families

**Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 A.M. Intentions of Frances M. Dampf

**Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 A.M. Intentions of Ed and Helen Wyrwas  
8:15 A.M. Laura and Ed Wyrwas

**Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 A.M. Steven and Virginia Leibinski

**Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 A.M. Bill and Frances Kleschick

**Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 A.M. Bob Sulte  
5:30 P.M. Lena Quinn

**Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**

7:30 A.M. Ernest Metcalf  
9:30 A.M. Intentions of St. Paul Parishioners  
11:30 A.M. Living and Deceased Members of the Women's Guild  
6:00 P.M. Barry Panco



*In all circumstances give thanks,  
for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.  
(1Thessalonians 5:18)*

It's easy to make a list of things for which we're not thankful. Job predicament. Bad grade in school. Finances in the tank. Mortgage payment overdue. Dire health problem. Crummy weather. Kids always fighting. Leaky roof. Uncommunicative spouse. Broken washing machine. Most of us have a long list of such items.

Yet Paul writes, *in all circumstances give thanks*. Not sometimes, he says, or in most situations, but *in all circumstances*.

Paul must have realized that God is able to draw good out of the worst of all possible circumstances. Paul expresses this in different ways. *When sin abounds, grace abounds all the more.* (Romans 5:20) *All things work for good for those who love God.* (Romans 8:28) What seems to be a disaster often reveals itself, in hindsight, to have been a blessing.

Paul also sees the big picture. *For God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with him.* (1 Thess. 5:9f) The circumstances about which we fret and worry pale into insignificance in light of our salvation in Christ. *I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.* (Philippians 3:8)

So *in all circumstances*, even in the toughest times, we can *give thanks*, for we know that, in the end, God's grace will triumph. The situation might seem overwhelming and hopeless, until we remember that we don't face it alone. God is with us. He is Emmanuel.

Msgr. Robert C. Gibbons, Pastor

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Is what I do after I say "I believe"...

**Offertory for Sunday, December 7, 2008:**

307 Envelopes.....	\$ 10,402.00
Loose.....	\$ 2,407.00
AOP (debit).....	\$ 8,470.33
AOP (credit).....	\$ 6,242.50
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$ 27,521.83</b>

*I rejoice heartily in the Lord,  
in my God is the joy of my soul.  
(Isaiah 61:10)*

In joyful recognition of the Lord's goodness,  
the good steward seeks ways to give back.

Please remember St. Paul's in your Christmas giving.

Website .....	stpaulstpete.com
Parish Offices.....	727-822-3481
Pastoral Associate.....	Annamaria Dickhaus
Admin. Assistants.....	Charie Wassmer & Mary Carney
Outreach Ministry.....	Sr. Kathleen Stagnaro, OSF
Youth Ministry.....	Gail Marinari
Organist & Choir Director.....	Paul Dixon
St. Vincent de Paul Society .....	ext. 50
Children's Center.....	Valerie Gervais, ext. 18
Prayer Team.....	727-894-8846 or jhdmay@aol.com
School.....	Mrs. Elizabeth Fulham, Principal 727-823-6144
Counseling Ministry.....	Mary Ann Holtz, LMHC 727-327-5045

**Advent Penance Services**

**Monday, Dec. 15,** at St. Paul Catholic Church  
**Tuesday, Dec. 16,** at Holy Family Church, 200 - 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE  
**Wednesday, Dec. 17,** at Transfiguration, 4000 - 43<sup>rd</sup> St. No.  
**(All Penance Services are at 7 p.m.**  
and include opportunity for individual confessions)  
*Confessions are heard regularly on Saturdays, 4:30-5:15 p.m.*

**Pancake Breakfast with Santa.** The Knights of Columbus will host a Pancake Breakfast in the cafeteria next Sunday, Dec. 21, after the 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Masses. Rumor is that Santa will pay a visit to the children after the 9:30 a.m. Mass.



## St. Paul Says

**“May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

1 Thessalonians 5:23

**E-mail message about St. Paul's.** The parish received the following e-mail recently from a former parishioner: *“We were members of your wonderful parish four years ago, and both of our young sons were baptized by Fr. Gibbons. We moved to Colorado . . . Please let Fr. Gibbons know how much we still miss St. Paul's---not just the beautiful structure, but the community of people that we found there. We were blessed to have been a part of your church if even for a short time.”* St. Paul's friendliness and hospitality had a big impact on this family. Thanks to everyone for all that you do to make St. Paul's a welcoming community.

### O.B.I.C. YOUTH NEWS

**High School:** Tonight join us for our High School Teen Christmas Party. Wear wacky Christmas attire and bring a wrapped gift exchange for a gift exchange of \$5 or under or a re-gift (white elephant gift). We will be inside and outside so wear appropriate shoes and clothes! There will be no youth nights Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>!

Sign up for the High School retreat NOW! You do not want to miss out on this great weekend! It is a time to build on community and on your relationship with God! Parents, give a gift of Jesus this Christmas. The retreat is Jan 16-18<sup>th</sup> and the cost is \$75.00!

Adore night at St. Stephens with Matt Maher a night of fellowship, worship, prayer and Adoration! Tickets are on sale now. Let Gail know ASAP. E-mail [ymgailcow@yahoo.com](mailto:ymgailcow@yahoo.com).

**Middle School:** Christmas Party will be Wednesday night, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. We will hold it at ST. PAUL'S in the youth room! Wear wacky Christmas attire and bring a wrapped gift for a gift exchange of \$5.00 or less or a re-gift (white elephant)! No middle school nights on Wednesday Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>!

**It is time to sign up for Confirmation classes.** Class begins Sunday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, from 4 -5:30 p.m. Sign up forms will be in the back of the church on the tables and in the parish office. Donation \$35.00. Any questions call Gail at the parish office or e-mail [ymgailcow@yahoo.com](mailto:ymgailcow@yahoo.com).

**Thanks to everyone** who is participating in the **2008 Giving Tree**. Please return your gifts wrapped, with the tag attached to the bins located in the church. Please return the gifts as soon as possible. The absolute last day to return gifts is Dec. 21. Gifts will be distributed to families in need on Dec. 22.

**ST. PAUL SENIOR CLUB** will meet on Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, at noon in the Parish Center Blue Room for a Christmas luncheon and party.

**Advent is a time for giving...** we will be collecting items for **ALPHA HOUSE**, such as toiletries, baby items and other personal items for young women. Items may be placed near the altar during Advent.

**E-mail addresses.** We are currently updating our Parish database and would like to include parishioners' e-mail addresses. Please fill out your e-mail address on the appropriate line in the Change of Address & E-mail cards located in the pews and in the back of the church. You can also do this by registering your e-mail on the homepage of our website. Your e-mail address will not be shared and will only be used by St. Paul Catholic Church.

**Thanks** to everyone for the generous support of the **Walk for Health in Haiti**. The proceeds, over \$5,000, will benefit the medical and educational needs of our twin parish in Haiti. **Haitian coffee, vanilla and handmade crafts** are available this Sunday after 9:30 Mass in the cafeteria.

**Advent Day of Recollection** for St. Paul's women on Wed., December 17, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., at The Franciscan Center in Tampa. At this time of great noise around and within us, Sister Kathleen has planned a quiet space for you to prepare for Christmas. The day begins with a continental breakfast followed by Father Sam Vaccarella's presentation and then some time for reflection on the peaceful grounds of the Center. Lunch and Liturgy included. All this for \$35. Call the parish office ASAP to register.

**Wedding Anniversary Jubilee Mass** will take place at the Cathedral of St. Jude on Sunday, January 11, at 3:00 p.m. Bishop Robert Lynch will be the principal celebrant at a Mass honoring all couples in the diocese who will celebrate their silver anniversary, or 50 or more years of marriage, during 2009. You must pre-register by contacting the parish office no later than **December 18**.

**Jubilee Year of St. Paul Open House.** It is the 2000<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of the great apostle, preacher and teacher. In keeping with the spirit of this great year, a one week "Open House" will be held here at St. Paul's Church. All are welcome to join in this week of "Prayer for Christian Unity." The church will be open for prayer Monday, January 19, through Friday, January 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and again from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. A prayer service will be held at 7:00 p.m. each evening.

**St. Petersburg Catholic Singles** will be meeting in the vestibule of St. Raphael's Catholic Church on Snell Isle December 21 at 5:15 p.m. for the 5:30 p.m. Mass. We will go to Brophy's Bistro after Mass to enjoy a holiday dinner and a card/gift exchange. Singles from all parishes are welcome to join our group. For more information or to RSVP, please e-mail [catholicsingles365@yahoo.com](mailto:catholicsingles365@yahoo.com).

**Study program of an enlightening encyclical.** Interested in learning about what the Catholic Church REALLY teaches about the dignity and vocation of women? – In this, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JP II's encyclical, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, come join the women of St. Paul's and St. Raphael's for some scholarship and fellowship. This 8-wk study will meet on Mondays, from 6:30 -8pm, starting 1/5/09. Cost \$10! Contact Maura Buete at 688.6952 for information and registration.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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**PARISH NURSE NEWS**  
**DECEMBER 2008**  
Pam Suetholz RN MA CRRN



Blessings, Good Health, and Merry Christmas to all parishioners of St. Paul's! May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of St. Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the Magi, and the peace of the Christ Child.

This can be a very busy and stressful time of the year, so we thought we would share a few tips for handling stress and hope that you will keep them in mind as this Christmas season approaches.

Stress is a part of our everyday lives. Not managing it in a healthy way can be very costly. Here are some facts:

- 75-90% of all visits to primary care physicians are for stress-related complaints.
- 60% of employee absenteeism is due to stress and cost employers over \$57 billion annually.
- 40% of job turnover is due to stress.
- Health care expenditures are nearly 50% greater for workers who report high levels of stress.
- Stress accounts for \$26 billion in medical and disability payments and \$95 billion in lost productivity per year.

Now here are some tips for coping in a healthy way when you feel stressed:

- **Breathe Deeply.** Slowly breathe in through your nostrils, imagining a peaceful scene, and then slowly exhale through pursed lips. This can relieve headaches, backaches, stomach aches, and insomnia. It releases the body's own painkillers, called endorphins, into the system. It lowers blood pressure, which is good for the heart.
- **Work it Off.** Take a walk, a run, or go to the gym for a physically intense workout. This also stimulates the release of endorphins.
- **Talk It Out.** Sometimes confiding in another person can help you see your concerns from another perspective.
- **Avoid Self-Medication.** Alcohol and other chemicals can numb the feelings caused by stress, but they don't really help us cope. True coping is an internal process.
- **Get Enough Sleep and Rest.** Lack of sleep makes us irritable and less able to deal with stress.
- **Balance Work and Play.** Think of activities you enjoy and schedule them into your day.
- **Do Something for Others.** It can help to get your mind off your own worries!
- **Take One Thing at a Time.** Take time to prioritize your tasks and focus on one at a time.
- **Eliminate Perfectionism.** As hard as we try, nothing in life will ever be perfect. Having such unattainable goals sets us up for stress, frustration, and feelings of failure.
- **Laugh.** Life seems a little brighter and less serious when you learn to laugh at things.
- **Prayer and Meditation.** When we nurture our faith we live our lives the way God intended. He did not intend for us to go through our days in an anxious, worried, and fretful manner. A strong faith is the best antidote for stress! "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace" (Col. 3:15).

Your Parish Nurses pray that you and your loved ones experience God's gifts of peace and wholeness as we celebrate the birth of Christ. May we make the time to experience the Holy Christ Child, relax, and spend quality time with those we love.



**Annual Pastoral Appeal 2008  
Diocese of St Petersburg**

Our parish's assessment.....\$177,584.00  
Total pledged as of 11/30/08.....\$56,517.14  
Number of pledges.....302  
Average pledge .....\$187.14

*Please prayerfully consider making a gift to the diocese's Annual Pastoral Appeal. Envelopes for this purpose are in your monthly envelope packet, or you may pledge on-line at [www.diostpete.com/apa](http://www.diostpete.com/apa).*

**Parish Capital Campaign Update  
as of November 30, 2008**

Amount Pledged .....\$2,318,187.86  
Amount Paid ..... \$1,718,934.27  
Balance ..... \$ 599,253.59  
Number of families pledging ..... 673  
Average gift .....\$3,444.56

*The campaign has been financing the renovations of our church & school buildings.*

*With the funds now being paid, we are paying off the cash advance loan that financed this summer's renovation of the south wing of the school.*

*It's not too late to make a pledge!*

*Call the parish office or e-mail [parishoffice@stpaulstpete.com](mailto:parishoffice@stpaulstpete.com)*

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend.** Register now for a WWME and be counted among those who have chosen to grow closer and more in love with one another each and every day. The next weekend is Jan. 16-18. Call (813) 270-7832 or go on-line [www.wwme-tampabay.org](http://www.wwme-tampabay.org).

**Girl Scout "Christmas Stockings for the Homeless".** The Girl Scout Troops of St. Paul's extend our appreciation to all of our parishioners who donated items for the collection. Your generosity has provided 270 gift bags that will be distributed at the Loaves and Fishes Dinner on December 17th. Thanks to all who worked to make this project a success!

**Financial Peace University** is returning to St Paul's. The class will begin on January 25. Orientations will be scheduled for January 4th and the 11<sup>th</sup>. More detail will follow. This 13 week video based small study group teaches families and individuals how to beat debt, build wealth and give like never before. Contact Tom at [tbaggett@pscufs.com](mailto:tbaggett@pscufs.com) with questions.

**SMILE!** Lifetouch Photography will be here during the month of February capturing parishioner portraits for our next St. Paul Parish 2009 Photo Directory. While portraits will be available for purchase, no purchase is necessary for the session to have your portrait included in the photo directory. To schedule your session date and time, it's easier than you think. Just go to [www.stpaulstpete.com](http://www.stpaulstpete.com) where you'll find "St. Paul Parish 2009 Photo Directory" info. Click on "LifeTouch Appointment Link" where you can view the session calendar and chose the time slot that is most convenient for you. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Rachel Dudley @ 433.1887. Also, if you have any church event or ministry photos you would like to see included in our next directory, please e-mail them to [marykins777@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:marykins777@tampabay.rr.com). We would like to have every ministry represented.

**Stewardship reflection.** Each of us has his or her own role to play in the coming of the kingdom of God. John the Baptist was called to be the herald of the Messiah, preparing the way of the Lord. To what is the Lord calling me?