

# The Hands of Christ

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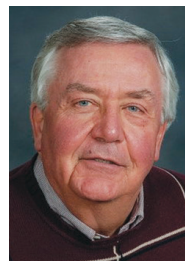
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## Quarterly Thoughts From The Corner Office!

Dear Friends,

Advent is upon us and the Christmas season will soon be here. Advent is a time of joyful expectation, watchfulness and hopefulness! This year I need a good dose of all three taking into consideration the events that have unfolded since mid-August with the Grand Jury report in Pennsylvania and the cover up of sex abuse allegations by some Church leaders. The whole chain of events has been a real drain of my emotional and spiritual energy so it is time for some joy and hopefulness.

Yes, I have been saddened, angry and feel let down by some of our Church leadership. It gives me comfort to know both Bishop Clark and Bishop Matano have dealt with the issue with a great deal of transparency in the Diocese of Rochester. Over the years, I have sat with some of my brother priests (including one while he was serving a prison sentence) who have been accused and charged with sexual abuse of minors. I heard a variety of stories, remembering in some of those conversations individuals clearly talking about their abusive actions as an addiction. I fully realize an addiction does not justify the actions, but it does make it clear an addiction may limit one's ability to have control over their actions. For those of you who have had to deal with a person addicted to alcohol or drugs you realize these diseases are difficult, at best, to understand and thus making it almost impossible to know how to deal with the addicted person. So, again I am not making excuses for the abuser, I am only saying it



helps me knowing the abuse in many cases is the result of an addiction.

The deeper source of my sadness, anger and disappointment is the result of the cover up that has made headlines the last several months. There is no way to justify these actions, I have to realize our understanding of sexual abuse has changed drastically over the years, but that still does not justify the cover up of recent years.

I pray each day that people can see through this scandal and not lose sight of their faith relation with Jesus and our Creator. People ask me how I can stay with the church. It is not easy, but I stay because I believe I can be some kind avenue to helping people maintain their relation with our God through listening and sharing the Sacraments. On a personal level, I stay because my relationships with the Creator and Jesus are more important than any sinful behavior that is a result of human frailty.

What does all of this have to do with Advent and Christmas? I truly believe despite all the news of the last few months, we can remain hopeful and celebrate the newness of life that Jesus brings into the world.

Please do enjoy preparing during this Advent Season so you are ready to welcome our Savior on Christmas Day.

Let us pray for peace and for an end to terrorism in our world!

In peace and courage,

*Fr. Mike Bausch*

Rev. Michael J. Bausch  
Pastor

# Upcoming Events at Transfiguration

We have a wealth of formation, service and social activities this Winter. Please take a quick look at the offerings and see what might be of interest to you and your loved ones. A full schedule of events is in the bulletin and on our website. As dates get closer, please check the bulletin or website events calendar for any last-minute changes.

## DECEMBER

### December 1-2, 8-9

All Masses, Christmas Basket Sponsor Sign Up

### December 2

4 p.m. Social Event, Church - Christmas Concert

### December 3, 10, 17

7 p.m. Advent Candlelight Prayer Service

### December 3

7-8:30 p.m. - Women in the Spirit Event  
Advent Wreath Making

### December 9

10:15 a.m. - Gingerbread House Building  
Advent season celebration

### December 19, 20, 21

Christmas Basket Assembly, Wrapping and Delivery

## JANUARY

### January 6

12:30 - 2:30 p.m. - Family Game Day, Education Building

### January 7

7 p.m. - Women in the Spirit

### January 8, 15, 22, 29

12:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study - The Armor of God

### January 12

6 p.m. - Men in the Spirit

### January 26

Women's Day of Reflection - Parish Life Center

## FEBRUARY

### February 4

7 p.m. - Women in the Spirit

### February 5, 12

12:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study - The Armor of God

### February 18 - 6 p.m.

Men in the Spirit

## MARCH

### March 1-3

Search Weekend (High School teen program)

### March 6

Ash Wednesday

### March 7, 14, 21, 28

Noon - Bible Study with Dr. Jim Lovelock  
The Book of Jeremiah

### March 10, 17, 24, 31

10:15 AM - Dr. Joe Kelly  
The Unique Features of the Gospel of Luke

### March 15

Social Event, PLC Gym - Irish Fish Fry Fest

## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S MASSES

We are fortunate our parish offers many beautiful celebrations of the Christmas Liturgy. Our Christmas traditions include the Children's Living Gospel and a beautiful Midnight Mass. Our liturgical and music staff put much thought and preparation into each Mass, so the joy and beauty of the gospel shines through. We hope to see you, your family and friends at the upcoming Christmas and New Year's Masses.

Here is the schedule and a description of the Mass:

Saturday, December 22, 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 23, 9:00 and 11:30 a.m. - these Masses celebrate the fourth Sunday in Advent.

## CHRISTMAS MASSES

**December 24, 3:30 p.m.** - this Mass is celebrated with our children.

Students in Grades 2,3 and 4 have lovingly rehearsed a living Nativity, complete with shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and of course the baby Jesus. Doors open at 3 p.m.

**December 24, 5:30 p.m.** - this Mass is also designed for families, and those who don't want to stay up late for Midnight Mass or go out early for Christmas Mass.

**December 24, 11:30 p.m.** - this is our Midnight Mass. A prelude of beautiful music starts at 11:30, with Mass beginning at midnight. This Mass is truly special, with the contrast of the light and warmth of Christ against the stark cold and darkness of the night.

**December 25, 10:00 a.m.** - for those of you whose tradition is to celebrate Christmas morning at church, this is the Mass for you!

**December 29 and 30** - we will celebrate the Holy Family during our normal weekend Masses at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, December 29 and 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 30.

## NEW YEARS DAY

**January 1** - New Year's Mass, and a Holy Day of Obligation, will be celebrated at 10 a.m., later than the normal Tuesday Mass, and hopefully more convenient for everyone who stayed up to ring in 2019. This Mass honors Mary, and her loving response to God's call.

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Our Advent theme is 'Waiting in Joyful Hope', and what better way to wait in joyful hope than in Church, listening to beautiful Christmas music. Wouldn't you love to relax for a little while in the peace of the Church, and be reminded of the reason for the season?



Christmas Concert 2017

Our Social Committee is delighted to sponsor a Christmas Concert again this year, featuring the talents of our Transfiguration parishioners. The concert is planned for Sunday, December 2, at 4:00 p.m. in the Church. Light refreshments will be served.

Please plan on joining us to hear performances by talented singers and instrumentalists from Transfiguration's various choirs and ensembles. We hope to see you there!



# Formation Update

## Life Long Christian Formation – what's that?!

You've received our annual booklet in your mailbox listing all the faith formation opportunities for the year ahead. You've seen the banners in church with our parish logo and the words "Worship, Formation, Service" on them. Have you ever wondered just what we mean when we talk about life-long formation?

Formation is more than just getting the knowledge of the contents of the faith into a person's head. Formation is the mobilization of the whole person, growing deeper in relationship to God and the Church. It's the mind learning more about Scripture, the Sacraments, and the Creed, yes. But more importantly, it is a movement of the spirit and the heart, experiencing the nearness of God in prayer. We are participating in Christian formation bodily when we break bread together through sharing food and sharing story and also when we become the hands of Christ to each other in service.

We strive to make Transfiguration a place where people of all ages can explore our deepest questions in community, guided by the Holy Spirit, and where habits of personal prayer can be fostered and deepened. That is why we offer programs like Discovering, Following, and Sharing Christ for adults that create space for faith-sharing conversations and mentoring in how to pray. It's also why our recent incoming Confirmation retreat was centered around giving teens and their parents a place to name their biggest questions about God, life, and the Church and to encounter God through contemplative prayer. It's why we have weekly

youth group gatherings for middle and high schoolers where young people come together to learn, share, and pray. And it's why our Bridges of Faith family program provides parents and kids an opportunity to explore faith together.

As we move toward the new year, it's a great time to recommit to the continued

formation of our faith, body, mind, and spirit. Where is God calling you into deepening relationship in the year ahead?



Sr. High Youth Group



*"Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed."* – Pope Francis

Over the past two years our Children's Faith Formation program has been turning our focus on supporting and providing families in passing and deepening the practices of the faith onto their children in the home. Our Bridges of Faith program does require a significant amount of time, energy, and commitment from parents, but the payoffs are well worth the investments. Families come together to eat, pray, learn and grow.

A greater sense of community has been a huge benefit many have experienced firsthand. On a practical level, the program makes up for increased parental involvement with increased flexibility. Lessons can take place within the fabric of family life; whenever it works best for the family's schedule.

We are a community that aspires to welcome all. We are continually seeking new ways to serve the needs of those who may feel isolated or deprived of a full-faith experience. It is clear that families of children with special needs are especially vulnerable. In January, we will be launching our first pilot program to help serve those that have some type of developmental disability. We all understand how imperative it is that all children have an opportunity to build a lifelong relationship with God.

Children with special needs must have effective faith formation so that they may grow in faith and learn about Christ and His Church. Our Adaptive Formation program has multi-sensory tools to reinforce learning opportunities for meaningful catechesis. These adaptive learning tools will enable us to fully minister to those with special needs, giving all children the opportunity to grow in faith.

If you know of families that might have an interest in this program, please spread the word. We are also still looking for people who would be willing to learn and grow to help serve in this ministry.

*"We pray to the Lord that the Church may always be a true family that brings God's Love to everyone..."*

– Pope Francis

# HELP WANTED

## MASS

**MUSICAL TALENT** | Make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Please consider joining any of our musical groups. We are in desperate need of altos for our 9 am choir! We are always in need of instrumental talent, and we especially need accomplished pianists to accompany our vocal talent. Please contact Sue Wallace at [sue.wallace@dor.org](mailto:sue.wallace@dor.org).

**GREETERS** | A warm smile and kind hello can make a huge impact on someone – making them feel welcomed and reinforcing God's love. Scheduling is flexible according to your availability, and training is provided. Two greeters are scheduled at each Mass. This activity is ideal for families, but one can be paired into a team! Contact Margie Benza at [margie.benza@dor.org](mailto:margie.benza@dor.org).

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS** | Yes, it is an awesome sacred responsibility to hold the Precious Body or Precious Blood of Christ in your hands. It is a wonderful gift to see the pure joy and faith of those receiving Communion. You ARE worthy to serve in this way. Scheduling is flexible, training is provided for adults and confirmed teens. Please contact Margie Benza at [margie.benza@dor.org](mailto:margie.benza@dor.org).

**LECTORS** | Many people fear public speaking but the Holy Spirit will help you conquer that fear as you spread the Good News to our congregation. You don't need a Doug Emblidge or Ginny Ryan voice, and we promise there is training and a workbook provided with a website to help with those difficult to pronounce words. Interested adults and confirmed teens, please contact Margie Benza at [margie.benza@dor.org](mailto:margie.benza@dor.org).

**TECHNICAL TALENT** | We always need help for A/V during Mass... sound board and microphones to set up, slide shows to project. If you have that hidden techie talent, please contact Sue at [sue.wallace@dor.org](mailto:sue.wallace@dor.org). Flexible scheduling!

## SOCIAL MINISTRIES

**CHRISTMAS BASKET PROGRAM** | You will feel the true spirit of Christmas - the love of Jesus - during the Christmas Basket program. We provide food and modest gifts for approximately 190 families (900+ individuals). Sponsor a family during sign-up on the first two weekends in December – or volunteer to help with assembly, wrapping or delivery on December 19, 20 and 21. Sign-up sheets will be available in December. Invite family, friends and neighbors to participate and share in the joyous spirit.



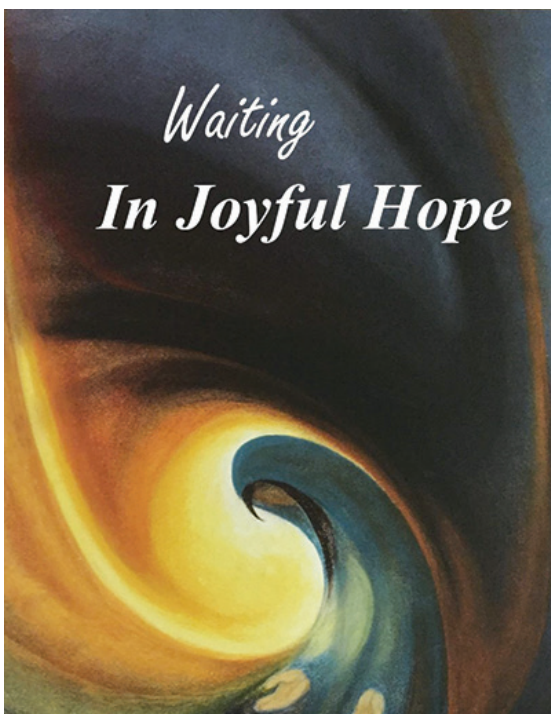
## LONG RANGE PLAN

**COMMUNICATIONS** | The communications sub-team would love to have additional content contributors. Do you like to take event photos? Have great ideas for postings on our social media feeds? Want to write an article for the newsletter? If so, contact Nancy Wahl at [nancy.wahl@dor.org](mailto:nancy.wahl@dor.org). Teens especially welcomed!

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

**SAFETY COORDINATOR** | We are looking for a volunteer to oversee Transfiguration's safety and security procedures and policies, in concert with parish staff, the Diocese, local authorities and other volunteers. If you have a background in security and safety procedures, and are available to assist, please contact Fr. Mike by phone or e-mail.

# ADVENT WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE



The essence of Advent offers us an ancient reminder of our faith in the preparation for the long awaited arrival of the Messiah with a renewed desire for His second coming. Hopeful beginnings for all marked with the sign of faith. It is a time for quiet, reflective prayer in preparation and anticipation of Christ's impending birth.

This Advent Season you will see the return of our original beautiful wooden Advent wreath stand which is a gentle reminder of our beginnings here at Transfiguration. It was beautifully made by the skilled hands of Chris Washington.

The evergreens that are wrapped within the stand symbolize eternal life. The flickering candles of purple and pink lit as we move through the weeks of Advent signify the hope (purple) of Jesus arrival, the deep faith (purple) of Mary and Joseph, joy (pink) experienced at Christ's birth and the peace (purple) for all the world which the angels pronounce

Our Liturgy Committee has chosen the Advent theme of "Waiting in Joyful Hope". Join us in preparation and anticipation of this magnificent birth throughout the season and at Advent Candlelight Prayer on Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. It is a time of stillness, reflection and song calling us to slow down and be at peace for the Lord is near.

Margie Benza, *Pastoral Associate*



# Long Range Plan

## *Building for the Future*

As a bit of background – after conducting a parish survey and multiple input sessions, 5 sub-teams were charged with addressing the suggestions and concerns raised.

Those sub teams are:

- Pastoral Care – led by Kim Fluet
- Finance – led by Diane Carroll-Yacoby
- Culture – led by Ron and Martha Jodoin
- Communications – led by John Hennessy
- Buildings and Grounds – led by Rich Gangemi

Using your input, each of these teams formed goals and action plans to meet those goals over the next year or so. More information on the specific goals is available on our website (<http://www.transfigurationpittsford.org/long-range-plan-presentations>). Here is a brief status update from the teams:

**Building and Grounds** - This team has made the most progress. All the pressing infrastructure items have been taken care of, thanks to your financial support of the building fund.

**Finance** – The Finance team is working to make our parish financially viable for the future. Please see their separate article on ways to give electronically to the parish! We have seen a decrease in donations, especially over the summer months, and we cannot sustain our current operations at the current level of contribution.

**Culture** – Our new parish Mission Statement is complete (We, the Church of the Transfiguration, are a vibrant Roman Catholic faith community committed to welcoming all. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus and guided by the Holy Spirit, we care for each other and provide faith and spiritual formation and development for all ages. We live this out by advocating for peace, nonviolence, social justice, and providing opportunities for social ministry outreach.) and ratified by Parish Council. This sub-team will now start work on our Parish Profile.

**Pastoral Care** – This team is working on two goals first – nurturing and growing our Transfiguration Community by encouraging the growth of small Christian communities within our parish, and creating a culture of invitation, where everyone is encouraged to share their gifts and talents with the parish.

**Communications** – The Communications team is working to better publicize upcoming events, and to support the communications needs of the other sub-teams.

If you have any interest in serving on any of the sub-teams, please do not hesitate to contact the group leader!

## AUTUMN AT TRANSFIGURATION



**Blessing of the Pets**



**Dr. Arun Gandhi**



**Fall Clothing Drive**



**Healthy Sisters Soup Sale**



**Garlic Sale**



**Oktoberfest**



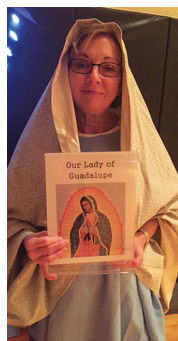
**Oktoberfest**



**Grace Choir**



**Saintly Trick or Treat**



**Kentucky Mens Retreat**



# DONATIONS 101

## How your “Treasure” is received...

Welcome to the first edition of FINANCE CORNER - this quarter's topic is about how Transfiguration receives your gift of treasure...

What is EFT? It's Electronic Funds Transfer, and approximately 14% of parishioners at Transfiguration use it. Simply put, you sign up thru Transfiguration to have a dollar amount electronically transferred on a regular schedule – directly to the parish account – normally near the 1st or the 15th of every month (or the closest business day). EFT has the advantages for both donors and Transfiguration – as the transfers are automatic, no one needs to remember envelopes or write checks for regular donations. The advantage for Transfiguration is that the timing of these donor's gift is known and regular. It is also a highly secure method of donating. A Win-Win.

What is EBP? This is Electronic Bill Pay, and approximately 4% of parishioners at Transfiguration use it. A bit like EFT, the transaction is done electronically by the donor – and their bank then sends a physical check directly to the parish. The differences between EFT and EBP are that the donor controls the timing and the amount of the gift every time. No envelopes are needed for this type of donation.

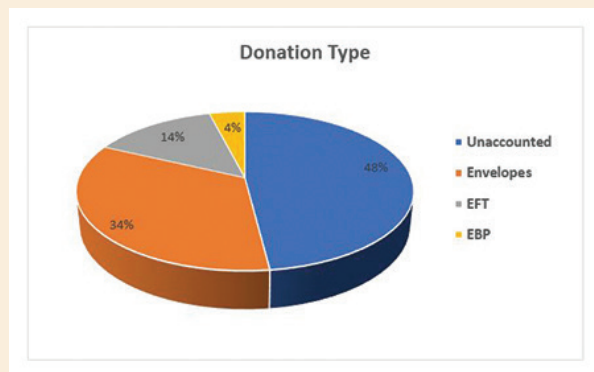
Many parishioners choose envelopes for their donation. Some love to physically bring in their donation and place it in the collection baskets at Mass. There are approximately 34%

of parishioners that use this method of sharing their gift of treasure. Did you know that we have 5 to 6 adult volunteers for this weekly Collection Ministry? It also offers some of our youngest parishioners something special to contribute during Mass when they help to pass the baskets.

Everyone who donates with EFT, EBP, or envelopes receives an end of year statement from the parish with documentation of their donations (for records and tax purposes).

We are happy to receive loose cash that is put anonymously in our collections baskets, and some visitors use this method of sharing their treasure. Usually, about 2% of our weekly donations are recorded as loose cash donations. Cash donations go as “unaccounted.” Approximately 48% of registered parishioners have unaccounted or no recorded contribution.

Thank you to everyone who shares their gift of treasure!



## Parishioner Spotlight: Hearne Family

Our parishioner spotlight this issue is on the Hearne family. Darrell and Jennifer are parents of three: Ethan (14 and in the 9th grade), Adam (12 and in the 7th grade) and Anna (9 and in the 4th grade). The family isn't complete without beloved Rockne, their collie.

The Rochester area has always been home for Darrell and Jenn, who grew up in Greece and met as 7th graders at Hoover Drive school. They moved to Pittsford in 2006 and joined Transfiguration on the recommendation of several neighbors. Outside of Transfiguration, the family enjoys traveling to the Outer Banks and Florida, and a wide variety of physical activities. Ethan and Adam run cross country, and Anna cheers. Jenn loves to work out at Orange Theory and just completed a half-marathon. Darrell recently took up biking.



The Hearne family are regulars at 4:30 Mass, where Ethan and Anna often serve as acolytes. Both parents also serve at Mass, Darrell as a Eucharistic Minister, and Jenn as a Lector. Their favorite Masses are the Easter triduum, which they look forward to attending every year.

In addition to serving at Mass, the Hearne family participates in many other activities. Darrell is a small group leader for a Confirmation class and has coached CYO basketball. Jenn is a regular at VBS, the clothing drive, the school supply drive and the Christmas Basket program. Jenn remarked: “We have found Transfiguration to be a very supportive community with a lot of opportunities to serve.”

Many thanks to the Hearne family for sharing their gifts with the Parish.

# RAIHN

## ROCHESTER AREA INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK

RAIHN is a not-for-profit, culturally-competent organization that assists homeless families to achieve sustainable independence by supporting them with tailored services, including shelter, food, personalized case management, and a diverse network of caring volunteers. RAIHN is an affiliate of Family Promise, a national network with 207 shelters in 43 states, representing nearly 6,000 faith communities and more than 180,000 volunteers. Locally, RAIHN consists of 13 host congregations representing 10 different faith traditions that are supported by 29 other churches. We, at the Church of the Transfiguration, serve as one of 4 supporting congregations to our host congregation: Mary Magdalene Church in East Rochester.

Specifically, the RAIHN ministry provides a transition for families (parents with children) that have temporarily lost their housing. These are truly homeless, but not the stereotypical image that comes to mind. They have lost their homes due to fire, loss of livelihood, illness, new to the Rochester area ... many of the crises that you or I might encounter. The families are referred to the program and are pre-screened for addictions, abuse, and mental illness. They just need a break to get their lives back on track.

With a rotation of 13 host congregations currently available to provide up to 15 beds for our homeless guests, each host congregation serves these families about 4 weeks per year, offering them a private bedroom for evening shelter, three sound meals each day, and recreational family activities. During the day, the families return to the Day Center on Webster Avenue for personalized care management, transportation assistance, access to shower/laundry facilities, access to housing & job placement counseling/networking, and other basic daily personal needs.

The average length of stay for a RAIHN family is 43 days, with an amazing 85% of graduate families in stable environments after their first year of independence. In 2017, RAIHN provided shelter services to 33 families, consisting of just over 100 individuals including 57 children. That amounted to 4,170 bed nights and 12,510 meals. Over the past 14 years, RAIHN has provided services to 423 families, consisting of 1,323 individuals including 722 children.

Our Transfiguration RAIHN team currently serves each Monday and Saturday evenings during our specific rotation weeks. Our final rotation week for 2018 is December 16-22 when our team of 33 trained volunteers will prepare a meal, serve/share that meal, provide evening companionship and family assistance, or provide overnight support. This is a great opportunity for Transfiguration families to help the less fortunate. Our Middle & Senior High School Youth groups also provide invaluable help and assistance with our younger guests.

—Barbara and John Balzano

## Christmas Basket Program

All of us are called by the gospel to value the human spirit and treat each other with dignity as we are all made in the image and likeness of God. What would that look like in a perfect world? In this case....certainly no poverty, homelessness, dysfunction or mental illness. But we all know we don't live in a perfect world nor do we have perfect families. But what we do know is that Jesus offers all of us hope.

Within our small program here at Transfiguration, we offer the hope of Jesus to those living in these worlds of poverty. We don't know them personally but this is what Jesus asks of us, to see his face in everyone, to hear the cry of the poor, and to be his hands and his feet.

I welcome you to join us this Christmas season in our efforts to offer a Christmas meal with a small gift to each family God has placed in our path this year. Sponsor a family (after all Masses on the weekends of 12/1 and 12/8), donate a wrapped gift from our Sharing Tree, bake cookies (drop off 12/19-20), help assemble (12/19), help gift wrap (12/20) or help deliver (12/21). Questions or sign-up to join us... [margie.benza@dor.org](mailto:margie.benza@dor.org) or 248-2427 x244. Thank you!

—Margie Benza





## CHRISTMAS WISHES FROM THE TRANSFIGURATION STAFF

*Wishing you a joyful and Christ centered Christmas!*

**-Fr. Michael Bausch**

*May the tender touch of the newborn Jesus be still within your hearts this Christmas Season offering peace and gratitude for the Holy Gift wrapped in swaddling clothes. Joyous Christmas blessings to you and your families!*

**-Margie Benza**

*May you all receive the gift of happiness and love this Christmas. And then share your gift with others! Have a blessed and joyful Christmas.*

**-Eric Bessette**

*I wish for peace on earth and happiness for all.*

**-Paul Celentano**

*Wishing our entire Transfiguration family abundant joy and many blessings this Christmas season and always.*

**-Pat DiLaura**

*May Christ find a home in your heart, as you prepare a place for Him, and may you feel God's love in quiet moments and in the bustle of friends and family.*

**-Anne Gallagher**

*Merry Christmas and blessings into and throughout the New Year!*

**-Meg Kastner**

*Hoping you can feel love, joy, and peace this Christmas season.*

**-Sandi Lazzaro**

*May your Christmas season be filled with joy and light.*

**-Maureen O'Connor**

*Wishing you a wonderful Christmas shared with your loved ones.*

**-Tim Smith**

*One of the real joys of the Christmas Season is the opportunity to say Thank You to all who make Transfiguration a true blessing for so many! Merry Christmas and continued blessing.*

**-Rose Volker**

*May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you this holiday, and through the coming year.*

**-Nancy Wahl**

*Wishing you Peace, Joy and Love in your hearts.*

**-Sue Wallace**

*Wishing you a warm and special Christmas.*

**-Chris Washington**

*During this time of faith and family, may the true meaning of Christmas fill you with joy. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.*

**-Vicky Wejko**



Fr. Mike, Chris, Deacon Pat, Sue, and Tim



Maureen and Nancy



Paul



Deacon Eric



Front row: Sue, Margie, Chris and Vicky  
Back row: Sandi, Anne, Fr. Mike, Meg and Rose