May it be done to me according to your word

24 December 2017: 4th Sunday of Advent
The Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation is held 3pm-4pm on Saturday, 8am on First Saturday, or by appointment. Please contact the secretary at the Parish Office if you are interested in any of the following: Baptism, Matrimony (six months prior to the desired wedding date), Anointing of the Sick, Christian Initiation of Adults, or joining the parish.

To arrange a pastoral visit for Homebound Parishioners please contact Kathleen Dieffenbaugher at the Parish Office.

Eucharistic Adoration is held Monday 8am-5pm, 6pm-10pm; Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8am-5pm; Wednesday 10am-5pm; Saturday 8am-noon.

### Collection & Attendance Data: Dec. 16/17 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:30pm</td>
<td>232</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30am</td>
<td>156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30am</td>
<td>245</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>820</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st Collection: $10,492.00  
2nd Collection: $1,964.00  
(Other Collections: $4,261.61)

**TOTAL:** $16,717.61
MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 23
7:30am  ⚫Lucille Rapp
4:30pm  ⚫Kirchner-Coleman-Nau Families

Sunday, December 24
9:00am  People of the Parish
4:00pm  Parish Youth
7:00pm  Commemorative Mass Association
12 Midnight Deceased Loved Ones

Monday, December 25
10:00am People of the Parish

Tuesday, December 26
**9:00am  ⚫Steve Carter

Wednesday, December 27
8:30am  ⚫Ron Matella
5:30pm  NO MASS at 5:30pm

Thursday, December 28
7:30am  ⚫Hook-Fink-Lutz Families

Friday, December 29
7:30am  ⚫William J. Rempe

Saturday, December 30
7:30am  ⚫Dolores Burke
4:30pm  ⚫Jess Ciripompa

Sunday, December 31
7:30am  ⚫Angie Palmer
9:00am  ⚫Richard Teachout
11:30am ⚫Edward W. Rapp

The Sanctuary Candle beside the tabernacle burns this week (Dec. 24-30) in memory of:

Steve Carter

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward all!

Msgr. Peterson, Father Bill and the entire Parish Staff want to wish all of you a wonderful Christmas season. May the joy of Christ’s birth be the joy of our lives! We are grateful for all of your prayers, service, and gifts throughout the entire year! Special thanks to all those that have assisted us during the Advent and Christmas season through your ministries to our church! From the nativity fairies to the Mass and music ministers, it takes all of you to complete our preparation and celebration of the Lord’s birth. Be assured of our prayers for you, and our hope that you have a happy and holy Christmas!

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Children of the parish are somewhat focused on Santa Claus these days, who is keeping an eye on who’s naughty and who’s nice. Santa Claus, with his heavenly patron Saint Nicholas, has been more or less in charge of gift-giving to American children for a hundred years or so. In other places, perhaps more attentive to our Christian tradition, there are different gift-bearers. In Greece, Saint Basil delivers the presents on his feast day, December 31, and makes sure everyone is sprinkled with holy water. The Baby Jesus is in charge elsewhere, called the Christkind in Austria and Belgium, El Niño Jesús in Columbia, and Le Petit Jesus in France, where he shares his duties with Père Noël. In the Czech Republic almost everyone is atheist, but Ježíšek, the infant Jesus, brings gifts to one and all. In Poland the “Star Man” is said to bring the gifts, although often he turns out to be the village priest in disguise. Saint Nicholas, not his Americanized cousin, is the giver in Holland, where he wears a bishop’s miter, and in Russia, where he wears a bishop’s crown. Soviet Russia tried to dethrone Saint Nicholas and promote Grandfather Frost, but no one was much fooled by this attempt to squeeze religion out of Christ’s birth. One country has a saintly woman in charge of the gifts, Saint Lucy, honored in Sweden on December 13, when children serve their parents breakfast in bed, and others awake to news that they have been nominated for a Nobel Prize. Some children have a second round of gifts on Epiphany, when the magi assume the gift-giving duties. In general, the gifts of Christmas are simple pleasures, not great heaps of treasures. Once upon a time, a new pair of socks or an orange was enough for us. No matter what gifts we receive, all of them are to point us to the true gift, and the true giver.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

“Give your Hands to Serve and your Hearts to Love”

Thank you to the 144 parishioners who have brought us to 79% of our goal, BUT we need more of you to respond to this appeal which supports programs that benefit parishes throughout the diocese (including our own parish!) Please consider making a gift today at this link:  www.dwc.org/CSA

$63,845
$50,453
79%
LITURGICAL MINISTERS

**Dec. 26-29 Weekday 7:30am Altar Server:** Benjamin Halicki

**Saturday, December 30, 4:30pm**
Sacristan: Carole Kliner  
Lector: David Post  
Altar Servers: Faith/Sara Zende, Sarina Dieffenbaugh, Alex Tarr  
EMOHCS: Ava Zende, Rose Zende, Alaina Zende, Audrey Dieffenbaugh, Staci Spry

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**Sunday, December 31, 7:30am**
Sacristan: Mary Kay Wensyel  
Lector: Denny Wilson  
Altar Servers: Dawson Zwack, Isaac Smith  
EMOHCS: Mary Kay Wensyel, Pat Plunkett, Gretchen Wilson, Kathy Ulevich, Rudy Conti

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**Sunday, December 31, 9:00am**
Sacristan: Maureen McNabb  
Lector: Adriana Wolf  
Altar Servers: Elizabeth/Adam Wolf, Ryan Linder, Amelia Mandel  
EMOHCS: Maureen McNabb, Margaret Hartzell, Becky Bower, Shelby Imer, Daniel O’Leary

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**Sunday, December 31, 11:30am**
Sacristan: Jennifer Keane  
Lector: Nancy Ellen O’Leary  
Altar Servers: DJ Daugherty, Sarah Keane, Emma/Joseph Nodurft  
EMOHCS: Jennifer Keane, C. Dieffenbaugh, John Moore, Jack Stryker, Adrienne Michaud

**New Lector Workbooks are available in sacristy or Parish Office!!**

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**Journey of the Chalice schedule:**

In the month of December the chalice will transfer at the 7:30am Mass.
**12/24:** Cathy & Quenton Northcraft  
**12/31:** Janet Kelly

*The purpose of the Journey of the Chalice program is to encourage families to pray and promote vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life. Praying for vocations is the most powerful way to support vocations. When we pray for vocations, we lift up to our Father those men and women whom He is calling to follow Him in a special way.*

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**WAYS I CAN MAKE MY PARISH BETTER**

*Pray for the parish*

Keep your pastor, parish staff, school staff and faculty, and fellow parishioners in daily prayer. Saving a rosary, spending time in the Adoration Chapel, fasting, or offering up any suffering, annoyance, or inconvenience we experience for the well-being of the parish will bring rewards not just for the parish, but for us! We will begin to see ourselves as spiritual support for all the good work being done in and through the parish. Pray also for the return of Catholics who have strayed from the practice of their Faith, people raised with no faith, and people searching for meaning and purpose in life.

No parish is perfect, and even the best of parishes can improve. Imagine what would happen if every parishioner did just one little thing to make the parish better!

- Fr. Bill Matheny

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**PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

The Parish Office will be closed from Christmas Day until Tuesday, January 2. 
Phone messages will be checked frequently at 304.242.1560, extension 0.
PSR Update

Our PSR students finished up their semester with a wonderful walk down the street to the Welty Home. The students delivered their handmade Christmas cards, chatted with the residents about their Christmas traditions, and broke into some impromptu Christmas carols. Welty residents also taught the students how to say Merry Christmas in both German and Italian!

St. Michael Parish School of Religion is now on its holiday break. We will resume regular sessions on January 7th. Please direct any questions in the meantime to Nick Mayrand at nmayrand@dwc.org.

Catholic Charities West Virginia

If one suffers in poverty, we all suffer.

Throughout the Mountain State, Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWV) provides vital assistance to the forgotten elderly, the hungry children and the people struggling paycheck to paycheck. Annual contributions to the second collection on Christmas directly impact the amount of assistance and quality of service CCWV provides in our service region of which your parish is a part.

St. Michael Parish warmly welcomes all guests or visitors who are joining us for Mass, especially during these holiday times. We welcome home anyone who has been away from the parish for whatever reason; please know that our doors are always open to you and that our parish family embraces you and earnestly wants for you to become more active in the life of the parish and the many programs and opportunities which are offered here.

If you are new to the area and looking for a parish home, we kindly invite you to join our parish. Please visit our website or contact the Parish Office for registration information. If you are traveling through Wheeling, we are happy to have you with us. You are always welcome and be assured of our prayers for your safe travel home.
At our home, opening the storage boxes for our Christmas tree ornaments is a stroll down Memory Lane. The ordinary looking Rubbermaid bins are truly treasure chests. Each ornament has a story. A few of the ornaments were purchased to commemorate special events. For example; we have a bell dated from the year we were married and a shiny silver cross is from 1994, the year my husband joined the church through RCIA.

The majority of our ornaments were gifts, many of them handmade. As I place them on the tree I reflect upon the person who lovingly created the gift. The handmade ornaments range from gold spray-painted macaroni picture frames from our children (with a good bit of assistance from patient preschool teachers) to my mother’s creative creations and Rosemary Miller's ornaments that Martha Stewart would envy. I also hang sentimental objects that have a bow or hook attached to qualify them as an ornament. Among other things, on our tree you'll find sea shells from family vacations, a scarab from a market place in Cairo, wedding favors and the hospital hats that were placed on the heads of my precious babies within minutes of their entry into the world. I cherish each of the ornaments!

Our parishioners are very similar to the ornaments. There are so many people who make up St. Michael Parish. Each one is unique and special. Look around and you'll see a beautiful collection! We have parishioners who were here for the first Christmas in this location in 1951. And we have wee parishioners who are celebrating their first Christmas. Each and every one of our parishioners are unique, special and important! The same is true of those who are guests. Our visitors are very welcome and it brings us great joy to have new faces. Our pews are filled with treasures!

We are blessed we are to have a church family who joins together to pray, worship and sing praises to the Glory of God. And on Christmas Day, we join together to REJOICE! Today we commemorate the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King and Savior.

God is with us! God is here! And, thank you for being here at St. Michael Parish. *May the angels of Bethlehem watch over you this Christmas and always.*

-Wendy Hinerman, Business Manager
WHO WANTS TO BE A “HEAVENLY” MILLIONAIRE?

CHRISTMAS  The genealogy of Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew is proclaimed on December 17 and Christmas Eve. It is divided into three sets of this many generations:
A. 12
B. 13
C. 14
D. 15

Last week’s answer: November is dedicated to prayer for the dead.

PRO-LIFE CORNER

A Prayer for Life

O Most Holy Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, from Your gentle hand flows the gift of life.

To Your sons and daughters
You have given the role of stewards to care for all of Your creation from womb to tomb.

Hear us as we pray for a greater respect for all of life throughout our world:
- that the unborn may be born,
- that the child may be safe,
- that the teen may be prepared,
- that the young adult may be other-centered,
- that the adult may be selfless,
- that the aged may be revered,
- that the dying may have dignity,
- that the deceased may rest in peace,
- that the resources of creation may be used well,
- that all Your creation may be blessed.

Having served You loyally on earth, may we obtain the rewards of everlasting life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Rev. Michael Perichonich
Leg of the Holy Cross Knights
Limon, CO

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

Pregnant & Need Help:
Northern Panhandle Gabriel Project: 304-639-5039
Birthright International: Helpline: 800.550.4900
Aim Women’s Center (Steubenville, OH): (740) 283-3636
Rachel’s Vineyard: 877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463)
Silent No More: 888-735-3448

Please pray for these men and women serving our country in the military, and for their families:
- Petty Officer First Class Eric J Auber, US Navy
- Staff Sergeant Robert Michael Baker, US Marine Corps
- Sergeant Anthony DiBias, US Army
- Chief Warrant Officer 4 John DiBias, US Army
- Lieutenant Andrew Klug, US Navy
- Captain Zach Lehman, US Marine Corps
- Capt. Michael Neuman, US Army
- Major Christopher Nodurft, US Marine Corps
- Seaman First Class Cody Patterson, US Navy
- Specialist Seth Sleime, US Army
- Sg t. Christopher Snyder, US Army
- First Sergeant Stephen Spohn, US Army
- Sergeant First Class Wendy Spohn, US Army
- Lieutenant Colonel Aaron P Tillman, US Air Force
- Chief Master Sergeant Patrick Van Vranken, US Air Force
- Airman First Class Taylor Wilkinson, US Air Force
- Airman First Class Sierra E. McKenna, US Air Force

Please contact the Parish Office with changes in rank or to add someone to the list. Thanks to ALL who have served or are currently serving!
On Wednesday the 7th grade class visited Central for Innovation Day. 7th graders from all four of the Catholic grade schools were in attendance to learn about some of the new and innovative courses offered at CCHS. Students attended full sessions in 4 classes: robotics, broadcasting, engineering and digital design/music. Our students really enjoyed getting to feel like high schoolers for the day and participated in some very cool projects.

A very special thank you to Miss Graytok, Mrs. Norman, Mrs. Thalman, Mr. Hass and all of the students that participated in the show! It was awesome!
**SMPS TEACHER WISH-LIST**

**3rd:** Lined, wide ruled paper, pencils and construction paper  
**4th:** Student privacy dividers  
**5th:** Tennis balls for chairs, hardwood set of bibles, Theology of the Body Program  
**7th:** Laminating pouches and tennis balls for chairs/desks  
**8th:** New mounting device for Smartboard projector, pencils, dry erase markers, tennis balls for chairs/desks  
**Music:** 25 – 5 gallon buckets  
**Art:** Glue sticks, paper plates, plastic cups, baby wipes  
**Science Lab:** Glue ~ LOTS ~ clear and white.  
**P.E.** Small filing cabinet that locks  
**Hot lunch:** Black rubber mat/rug to absorb water from the sink area  
**Teacher’s Lounge:** 12 new chairs

Thank you to all boys and girls that brought in baked goods for our monthly bake sales. We also thank the Parent Association for organizing these sales that the students love. Most importantly thank you to all of the families that have donated the baked goods.

Our Parent Association is always doing great things for the teachers and staff of St. Michael Parish School. We are truly blessed by their generosity, hard work and dedication to our school.

Mrs. Jones, Ms. Murphy, Miss LaRue, Mrs. Dudzik & Mrs. Wolf enjoying a Christmas breakfast provided by the Parent Association.

**DECEMBER**

**December 21st-January 2nd:** Christmas Break

**JANUARY**

January 3rd: School Resumes  
January 3rd: Texas Roadhouse gift card sales begin  
January 5th: Bake Sale  
January 11th: PA Meeting-School Cafeteria @ 6pm. All are welcome!  
January 11th: Box Top Shopping!  
January 15th: No School MLK Day  
January 18th: Geography Bee  
January 23rd: Early Childhood Open House Session 1  
January 24th: Early childhood Open House Session 2  
January 26th: Father/Daughter Dance  
January 28th-February 3rd: Catholic Schools Week

**Saint Lucy’s Prayer:**

Saint Lucy, you did not hide your light under a basket, but let it shine for the whole world, for all the centuries to see. We may not suffer torture in our lives the way you did, but we are still called to let the light of our Christianity illumine our daily lives. Please help us to have the courage to bring our Christianity into our work, our recreation, our relationships, our conversation every corner of our day.

Amen

**Upcoming Events**

Special thanks to this week’s hot lunch volunteers: Kathleen Dieffenbaugher, Jennie Adams, Julie Blake, Tina Brothers, Beth Schmidt, Dana Tiu, Brenda Steiniger, and Carrie Burns.
“What Are You Doing New Year’s Eve?”

How About Dessert & A Movie?
December 31, 2017   6:45-9:30 PM
The Angelus Center (A&B)

Space is limited
Please RSVP to Launa_post@yahoo.com
or call 724-484-7538
Sponsored by the St. Michael Christian Life Fellowship

From the creators of “God is Not Dead”, we present, “Do You Believe?”
A dozen different souls – all moving in different directions, all longing for something more. As their lives unexpectedly intersect, they each are about to discover there is power in the Cross of Christ….even if they don’t yet believe it. More than a movie, it’s a question we all must answer in our lifetimes:   DO YOU BELIEVE?

FEED THE HUNGRY!!

Under the direction of Jaqueline Kaniecki, St. Michael Parish has been sending volunteers to assist at the 18th Street Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center for many years. Our volunteers assist with meal prep and serving the clients that come on a daily basis. Mrs. Kaniecki is seeking additional volunteers to help through the winter months. Even one hour of your time is beneficial to support the Neighborhood Center.

If you would like to sign up or if you need more information, please call Jaqueline at 304-242-9289!
**YOUTH GROUP NEWS**

*Grades 5-12*

*Jan. 6-7: High School youth group Christmas party will be held at Camp Zion. We will depart at 3:00 p.m. on the 6th and arrive home around 11:00 a.m. on Sunday.*

*January 7: 5th and 6th grade Youth Group Meeting 6:00 to 7:30pm @ the Angelus Center*

January 14: 7th and 8th grade Youth Group Meeting 6:00 to 7:30pm @ the Angelus Center.

January 28th: High School Youth Group Meeting 6:00 to 7:30pm @ the Angelus Center.

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**TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION**

Many people think that Saint Francis originated the Christmas crèche, but its origins go far back. The Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome has housed what is said to be relics of the cradle of Jesus since the seventh century. In time, every year during the Christmas season the reliquary (container for relics) was surrounded by an increasingly grand three-dimensional scene of the place of Jesus’ birth. Rocks and trees, houses, streams, figurines of villagers going about their daily tasks were all included. It was a very dramatic presentation. If you’ve ever seen an elaborate model train installation, you get the idea. The proper term for this depiction is *presepio*, from the Latin word for “surround” or “hedge.”

Over the centuries, the custom spread first to churches, and then to aristocratic homes. In Italy, whole chapels are often set aside for the *presepio*, and it is not unusual to have hundreds of figures. It can sometimes be a challenge to locate the Holy Family amid the crowd, almost like a *Where’s Waldo?* children’s book. The oldest surviving *presepio* is in St. Mary Major and dates from the thirteenth century, although many pieces have been broken or lost. Saint Francis of Assisi took a decidedly creative step in 1233 in the village of Greccio, when he directed his followers to fill a manger with hay and tether an ox and ass nearby. He then invited the villagers to attend Mass outdoors near the crib, the worshipers themselves becoming a living *presepio*. By the seventeenth century, the tradition was well-established, particularly in Naples, and had a firm hold in Portugal, Spain, and in the Provence region of France. Today, it is not unusual to find *presepios* with five hundred figures, a vivid reminder of Emmanuel, God-with-us!
Need a Christmas Gift for someone —
consider enrolling their family in the CMA:
**Commemorative Mass Association**

The CMA is a special program which allows our parishioners and friends to remember their loved ones in a beautiful way. A total of 18 Masses will be celebrated for the repose of the souls of those inscribed in the Parish Commemorative Mass Association throughout the year of enrollment. The cost to enroll is $50. The bulletin will regularly list the names of those enrolled in the CMA.

At the time of enrollment, you will receive a beautiful leatherette-type folder (as seen above) describing the Commemorative Mass Association along with a listing of the Masses to be celebrated. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions or to enroll someone in the CMA.

**PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES, FRANCE**

Fr. John Beckley, SM, the chaplain at Good Shepherd Nursing Home, Wheeling, will be participating in a pilgrimage to Lourdes from July 2-11, 2018. It is sponsored by the National Rosary Pilgrimage and the Lourdes Bureau of the Marist Fathers in Boston. If you would like to consider making this pilgrimage, an itinerary is available at the parish office or by contacting Fr. Beckley (johnbmarist@aol.com)

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MENTORING**

Youth Services System operates a mentoring program, formerly known as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, that matches a caring adult with a child in need of support and adult companionship. We ask that volunteers commit to a minimum of a one-year relationship and at least one get-together with the child per month.

The need is greater than ever. Our hope at YSS is that you might find room in your heart and your life for a child in need of love and attention.

Please contact Jane Ketcham at 304-830-9516 or Jketcham@ysswv.com.

**Christmas Kindness in Advent:**

During the Season of Advent and throughout the Christmas Season, all of us are encouraged to do a little act of kindness for someone in our families, a friend, a co-worker, etc. This act could be a simple note, a card, some candy, or a small gift — anything to let the person know that they are special to you.

**Office of Safe Environment**

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800.352.6513. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880.

**St. Michael Parish gratefully acknowledges this donation in memory of Bill Klettner:**

David and Launa Post

The annual Martin Luther King march will happen on Sunday, Jan. 14th. Walkers will meet at the top of Wheeling Hill at 1:15pm and proceed to downtown Wheeling where there will be a few speakers and a community meal. Last year, St. Michael Parish had it’s best representation of parishioners, young and old alike! We invite all of you to make this year’s number event bigger!
Journey For Home
by Deanna Light & Paul Tate
Spoken and musical reflections to accompany your faith journey. Ideal for times of grief, struggle or longing. CD with mini journal $14.95.

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