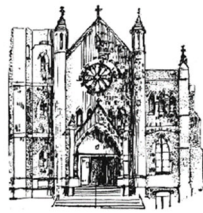


CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

607 Central Avenue
Albany, New York 12206-1918



Established 1902

www.BlessedSacramentAlbany.org
Office: 9-4 M-F (518) 482-3375
Rev. Daniel Quinn, *Pastor*
Rev. Kyle Gorenski, *Parochial Vicar*
Rev. Francis O'Connor, *Shrine Chaplain*
Rev. Dr. Gerald Ladouceur, *Deacon*
Ed Savoy, *Music Director*
Barbara Collen, *Parish Secretary*
Office: BlessedSacramentALB@gmail.com
Bulletin: bulletin.BlessedSacrament@gmail.com

Faith Formation

Meghan Pannone, *Director*
Shannon Crisafulli, *Coordinator*
FaithFormationBSC@gmail.com

Works of Mercy

Food Pantry Mon. & Thurs., 10-11:30
Sr. Patricia Lynch, *Coordinator*
The Boutique Sat., 9-12 (donations Tues. & Fri., 9-12)
Jean Huber, Heidi Stack, Michelle Syrotynski,
and MaryEllen Walsh
Sr. Maureen Joyce Outreach Center
369 Livingston Ave., Albany, NY; (518) 462-9885

Blessed Sacrament School

info@BlessedSacramentSchool.net (518) 438-5854
Alexandra Faith Morazan, *Principal*
Andrea Roberts, *School Office Administrator*
Kristine Ruddy, *Development Director*
www.BlessedSacramentSchool.net



Fourth Sunday of Advent & Nativity of the Lord

December 23-26, 2023

Weekend Masses — 4 p.m. Saturdays; 9 a.m. Sundays
Sunday 6 p.m. Mass in Urdu

Weekday Masses — As scheduled below

Adoration — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays

Confession — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays; 3 to 3:40 p.m. Saturdays

<p>Saturday 12/23/23 — 4:00 PM</p> <p><i>Pro Populo</i> "For the people of the parish"</p>	<p>9:00 AM † Carmela DiCarlo † Gerald Miller</p>	<p>Sunday 12/24/23 Christmas Eve 4:00 PM</p> <p>† Shawn Meher † Lindsey Marie Whalen † Rocco Saponara</p>	<p>12:00 AM <i>Pro Populo</i> "For The People of the Parish"</p>	<p>Monday 12/25/23 — 9:00 AM</p> <p>† DiCarlo Family † Mary Ellen Kalled † Helena Stefan Wittbrodt † Casimir Deutsch 4:00 PM (Urdu)</p>	
<p>Tuesday 12/26/23 — 7:00 AM</p> <p>† Helen & Stephen Zakens † James B Ryan † Clara Shannon † Judith Early † Frank A DeSorbo † Rose & Joseph DeSorbo † Catherine & George Bruno</p> <p><i>Feast of St. Stephen, first martyr</i></p>		<p>Wed. 12/27/23 — 7:00 AM</p> <p>† Judy Early All the Souls in Purgatory</p> <p><i>Feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist</i></p>		<p>Thursday 12/28/23 — 12 PM</p> <p>† Dave Cratty † David Scaringe † Victor Cruz</p> <p><i>Feast of the Holy Innocents</i> 12:30-1:30 — Confession & Adoration</p>	<p>Friday 12/29/23 — 12:00 PM</p> <p>† Lynn Busch ♥ Michael Anthony Sparks † Gerald Neugebauer</p> <p><i>Feast of St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr</i></p>

Please note: Mass intentions with a † indicate that the person is deceased; ♥ indicates that the person is alive.

Funerals

Baptisms

From the Pastor's Desk

In the northern hemisphere, Christmas and the Winter Solstice — the day of the year with the least amount of sunlight — are near each other on the calendar in a symbolic way. The sunlight starts to increase a few minutes each day after (this year) Friday, December 22nd. Similarly, St. John the Baptist's feast day is June 24th, about when the sun starts spending less time in the sky each day. Placing our feasts in this way, to truly signify what John says ("He must increase; I must decrease") puts real material on our beliefs and really makes John's words tangible. His words start to fade away, and Jesus's presence at Christmas grows along with the light in the sky — and eventually, the warmth of the sun, air, and earth all follow suit until new growth comes out of the earth in spring. What seemed like death instead buds forth new life.

Our beliefs take on the life of symbols when they are rooted in the tangible things of the material of the earth. So also does God take on the material of the earth to better communicate to us all that God *is*. But more than taking on the material of the sun and earth, in a pantheistic sort of way, he skips over all the lesser of his creations and joins us on earth in the full and confrontational personhood of a baby. He is Jesus: divine as well as clothed in humanity. He is a baby, a boy, a man. He has a way of life, things to say, beliefs to share, and help and grace to give. In this way, it can easily be mistaken for one human way of life among many — one set of beliefs proposed by one human among many. Or, he can be seen, as we see him, as the presence of God among us — the one unique savior of the world!

From Faith Formation & Youth Ministry

The fourth Sunday of Advent represents LOVE — the ultimate love of God that He might send His only Son for us. We light the final candle, leading us to eagerly await the new Kingdom of God on earth.

A great big thank you to all of the families who participated in the Christmas Pageant last week. It was truly a beautiful reminder of God's love, as displayed on the faces and in the voices of our young parishioners.

Our next Faith Formation session is Sunday, January 7th, beginning with 9 a.m. Mass then refreshments and breakout sessions until 11:30 a.m. Registration is open all year and can be found on the parish website, or e-mail us at faithformationbsc@gmail.com.

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish all of our parish families a blessed Christmas and a peace-filled new year!

Please Note: Tuesday, 12/26, Mass will be at 7:00 a.m. and there will be no confession or adoration.

Upcoming Dates

- 1/6 — Holy Name Society meeting, 7 p.m.
- 1/15 — Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (all parish offices closed)

Blessed Sacrament Christmas Mass Schedule

12/24 — Christmas Eve: 4 p.m. and Midnight
12/25 — Christmas Day: 9 a.m. (English) and 4 p.m. (Urdu)
1/1 — New Year's Day: 7 a.m.

Shrine Church Christmas Mass Schedule

12/24 — Christmas Eve: 4:30 p.m., carols; 5 p.m. Mass (bilingual)
12/25 — Christmas Day: 9 a.m. (English); 11 a.m. (Spanish)
1/1 — New Year's Day: 11 a.m. (bilingual)

Tea & Short Reads Join us once again for another round of Tea and Short Reads! This time, we will have poems, essays, and short stories to share — all with a Christian theme. We're meeting the Wednesdays of January at the Pine Hills Branch of the Albany Public Library, 517 Western Ave., at 12:30 p.m. Follow this link for access to the readings: <https://blessedsacramentalbany.org/tea-short-reads/>.

Diocesan Year-End Donations In early January after all December gifts are entered, the diocesan stewardship office will work on preparing and mailing tax acknowledgements for donors who made their gifts to the Appeal or Re-Igniting Our Faith in 2023. Individuals are encouraged *not* to call the stewardship office to inquire about them and instead obtain more information through the parish office. Tax acknowledgements are a priority in January, with the goal of donors receiving in-home statements by the end of January.

Calling All Young Adults Are you looking for a faith-based community where you can establish friendships? Please join us! Find a young-adult group near you: <https://www.rcda.org/youbelong>. <https://www.rcda.org/youbelong>

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Responsorial: Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL NEWS

Phone: (518) 438-5854 | E-mail: info@blessedsacramentschool.net

From all of us at Blessed Sacrament School ... we wish you a happy, healthy Christmas season and the best new year ever!

***What we've been up to:** We are finishing this year strong: book reports, cards for the homebound, STEM projects, science experiments, author signings, and so much more!

***Help us earn first place!** Just a reminder to drop off or send in your Colonie Center Mall receipts for School Bucks! We are so close to the end of the year, and we are in a tight race with St. Pius X! All receipts — including Whole Foods, movies, and restaurants — count!

***Sacrament of Baptism:** In our diocesan newspaper, *The Evangelist*, you can look back at the historic day at Blessed Sacrament Church when 17 children, including 11 of our students, were baptized! Check out the article and photos online: <https://evangelist.org/news/2023/dec/14/baptisms-baptisms-baptisms/>.

***Annual Tuition Assistance Drive:** Letters have gone out to our regular donors and alumni, but we also appeal to new donors (and everyone!) to support Catholic education for our children. It costs about \$10,000 to educate each child in our school for a year. Due to your generosity over the years, we have been able to keep tuition relatively low. A child in Grades K-8 is \$5,000; a second child in the same family is \$2,100; and we ask \$500 for each additional child. Tuition for three- and four-year-olds in preschool is \$5,800. The biggest expense that tuition pays for is our teachers. Our teachers' salaries average is only \$39,000, and we would like to be able to pay more reasonable salaries in the future. **We have received a grant from the Mons Concept Foundation, which will match all donations received for the school between October 1st and December 31st up to \$125,000!** Please note that donations to cover the cost of refinishing the gym floor count toward the matching grant. *Please help us provide the remaining amount!*

Christmas Giving Program We have reached our goal! Thank you so very much for your support! Any additional money received will be used to serve additional school children.

Food Pantry We currently need pasta, coffee, peanut butter, jelly, laundry soap, bar soap, and shampoo. Our food pantry is open Mondays and Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

Flower Power Our food pantry has been selected as a *Hannaford Bloomin' 4 Good* nonprofit partner! We'll receive \$1 for each specially marked *Bloomin' 4 Good* bouquet sold during the month of January at 96 Wolf Rd., Windsor Plaza, Colonie.

The Boutique The Boutique is open Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon, and accepts donations on Tuesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m.-noon. We'll be closed for inventory and cleaning on 12/26, 12/29, 1/2, and 1/5. We cannot accept Christmas and spring/summer clothes at this time. We have a great need for men's and children's winter coats.

Blanket Ministry Would you be willing to share your time and skills to create blankets for newly baptized children and for those who are homebound and in nursing facilities? Here is what we need: for baptisms, we would like solid white blankets measuring at least 30" by 30". They can be knitted, crocheted, finished fleece, or quilted. *(Please note that many of our children being baptized here at Blessed Sacrament are often over one year old.* For more information, please contact our parish office.

Holy Name Society You may request \$1 raffle tickets by calling Gene at (518) 265-0242 or by e-mailing your home address to loparco88888@yahoo.com. Also, leave your name or get tickets in the rectory. Our next meeting is scheduled for January 6th at 7 p.m.

Catholic Connections Fr. Matt Duclos, parochial vicar at Christ the King (Albany), St. Lucy/St. Bernadette (Altamont), St. Matthew's (Voorheesville), and St. Thomas (Delmar) discusses what to expect and how to prepare for receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession): <https://www.facebook.com/DioceseOfAlbany/videos/1598061197400390>.

Pastoral Blessings "Broaden and enrich": read Bishop Scharfenberger's statement on the new Vatican document on pastoral blessings: <https://evangelist.org/news/2023/dec/19/broaden-and-enrich/>.



Stay Connected

- Please visit and bookmark our parish website: blessedsacramentalbany.org
 - "Like" our Facebook page: [Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church](https://www.facebook.com/BlessedSacramentCatholicChurch) (Sunday Masses are livestreamed here)
 - View our YouTube channel: [Blessed Sacrament Church](https://www.youtube.com/BlessedSacramentChurch), Albany, NY
- E-mail: blessedsacramentalb@gmail.com
 - myParishApp — text app to 55321
 - Parish bulletin: Lisanne Jensen, editor: bulletin.blessedsacrament@gmail.com



School Thank You Another year has passed, and I cannot thank you enough for your continued support for allowing our students a chance for a brighter future. We want to thank you for your continued support and wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year! Thank you! -Kris Ruddy, Advancement Director, Blessed Sacrament School
Artwork by our own student, Isabella Awan, 6th Grade

DePaul Residence As part of Catholic Charities Housing, DePaul provides stable, permanent housing for homeless men and women — most of whom face many barriers to securing housing, such as mental health disabilities. This year, we are experiencing the same turn of economy and loss of services that many others are facing. To provide these residents with a Christmas celebration, would anyone willing to contribute items such as cookies, brownies, or other treats? If you can help, contact Lisa Johnson at Lisa.Johnson@ccrcda.org.

Asylum Seekers Thank You A big thank you to everyone involved in planning and volunteering at Capital District Border Watch's Celebrate Asylum Dinner and Fundraiser on 11/19 and to all who attended enjoyed delicious food, learned about asylum, and heard from local asylum seekers. We are deeply grateful for your donations, and collaboration. We raised close to \$4,000!



Urdu Community of Blessed Sacrament Church

We proudly offer a 6 p.m. Mass in Urdu every Sunday at Blessed Sacrament Church! *Thank you so very much for your prayers and continued support of our community!* Wishing you a beautiful Christmas season and a joyous new year!



SHRINE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF THE AMERICAS
A MISSION OF BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH

These are dark days — the shortest of the year. And the constant barrage of dark news on TV just adds to the darkness. But, during these days the words of an old song which my mother used to sing run through my mind: "He made the night

run through my mind: "He made the night a little bit brighter wherever he would roam, the Old Lamplighter of long, long ago." During this dark time, a great light comes into our lives: Jesus, the Light of the World. We let this Light seep into any dark corner of our lives, and the night becomes as bright as day. Take the rosary in your hands these days and let the mysteries guide your prayer. Receive Jesus in the Eucharist, into your heart. "Glory to God in the Highest." We here at Our Lady of the Americas wish and pray a bright Merry Christmas for you. Love, Fr. O'Connor and all of us at Our Lady of Americas. Merry Christmas! P.S.: May Jesus bring great light into your heart. ~Fr. O'Connor

REV. FRANCIS O'CONNOR, CHAPLAIN | REV. MR. MIGUEL FABIAN, DEACON
ALEJANDRA SAUCEDO, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE | DEBBIE KLOSE, ORGANIST
CONFESORA FRANCO, FAITH FORMATION

273 CENTRAL AVE., ALBANY, NEW YORK | (518) 465-3685 | WWW.OURLADYOFTHEAMERICAS.ORG
MASS: SUNDAY, 9:00 AM (ENGLISH) & 11:00 AM (SPANISH) FRIDAY, 6:30 PM — MASS & ADORATION

Collections and Financial Support



Refinishing Gymnasium Floor	<input type="text" value="0%"/>	0% paid - need \$4,900
New Nativity Figures - Christmas	<input type="text" value="100%"/>	100% paid
Parking Lot Paving & Painting	<input type="text" value="52%"/>	52% paid - need \$6,895

BULLETIN PROVIDED COURTESY OF MCVEIGH FUNERAL HOME



New bonus points opportunity! Every non perishable food item dropped off to Sephora in Colonie Center is worth 500 points!!! Please make sure you let them know to credit Blessed Sacrament. If you can't get to Sephora, drop items off at school or parish office and we will bring them to the store. Please help win the grand prize! It really helps our students.

We receive 2 points for every \$1 spent at Colonie Center Mall! Original receipts must be presented for credit within 60 days from the purchase date. If you submit receipts to our parish office to register and would like to have them back, let us know and we'll mail them back to you. Dining out, including the food court and B.J.'s Brewhouse, are included. Receipts can be registered at the Management Office in the School Bucks Box at the security desk next to Five Guys (or at our parish office; we will register them for you).

December 2023

3X: Sephora, J.Crew, Foot Locker, Daily Thread
4X: H&M, Carter's/OshKosh, Five Below, and Cinnabon

Pictures with Santa will earn an additional 500 points!

Offertory Report

Regular: \$7,966
Flowers: \$830
Christmas: \$600
Fuel: \$90