



St. Aloysius Gonzaga

PARISH COMMUNITY

157 Cleveland Drive, Cheektowaga, New York 14215

Web Site: stalschurch.com

Rectory:..... 833-1715 Religious Education Office: ... 836-9657

Rectory Fax:..... 837-5703 Convent: 834-1889

Rectory E-Mail: .. stalschurch@aol.com Parish Hall: 836-4617

St. Aloysius Gonzaga
1568 – 1591
Patron Saint of Youth

St. Aloysius Gonzaga is shown carrying a victim of the Roman plague. He eventually succumbed to the illness himself, dying at the age of twenty-three. He is seen in the Jesuit habit, which he donned, having left the royal courts and riches of his family castle.

PARISH LEADERSHIP

Pastor:

Rev. Peter J. Popadick

Weekend Assistants:

Rev. Martin X. Moleski, SJ

Rev. Msgr. Matt Wendzikowski

Parish Trustees:

Thomas L. Franczyk (Business Manager)

Richard W. Jauch

Pastoral Care/Parish Outreach Coordinator:

Sister Maryann Kolb, SSJ * 833-1715

Music Ministry/Choir Director:

Lee Peters * 207-0430

Religious Education/RCIA Coordinator:

Robert Rybarczyk * 688-1380

Web Master:

John Fahey * 510-6798

Evangelization Committee Coordinator:

John McMahon * 833-3454

Parish Council Contact:

Paul & Donna Lewis * 834-8493

Finance Committee Chairperson:

Thomas Gaulin * 833-1715

Eucharistic Adoration Director:

Frank Guglielmo * 832-1519

Pro-Life Coordinators Contact:

Rose Fera & John Tomasello

MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal, our purpose, is threefold:

- (1) to proclaim the saving mission of Jesus Christ through word and sacrament to the people of St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish and to strengthen them as a Catholic Church Community;
- (2) to reach out and proclaim the good news to the un-baptized, the un-churched and the inactive; and
- (3) to impact our principles and beliefs upon the community in which we live.

Mass Schedule:

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 p.m.

Sundays: 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Vigil of Holydays: 5:00 p.m.

Holydays: 6:45 and 8:30 a.m., 12:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Monday thru Friday: 6:45 and 8:30 a.m. Saturdays: 8:30 a.m.



Confessions: Saturday: 4:00 to 4:45 p.m.; anytime upon request

Devotions & Prayer:

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Mon.-Fri., 1:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Novena to St. Anthony & St. Theresa: Tuesday before 6:45 a.m. Mass

Stations of the Cross: Fridays of Lent, 7:00 p.m.

Rectory Office Hours: Monday through Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Baptisms: During or after Sunday Masses; Parents are expected to complete Baptism Training Program.

Marriages: Registered couples should contact the Rectory six months in advance and are expected to complete the Pre-Cana Program.

Care of the Sick: The pastoral care of the sick and homebound is a priority of our parish ministers. Please notify the rectory immediately if someone is hospitalized, enters a health care facility or is in need of the Sacrament of the Sick or the Eucharist brought to the home.

Letters of Recommendation: Those chosen to be Godparents at Baptism or Sponsors at Confirmation are to be role models in the practice of the Catholic Faith. Therefore, those seeking a Letter of Recommendation are expected to attend Mass regularly, live according to Gospel Values, be at least 16 years of age, have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, and be generous in their service of others.

Parish Registration: New parishioners are always welcome within the Community of St. Aloysius Gonzaga. Members of the Evangelization Committee meet with new parishioners, sharing with them information on our parish and inviting the new parishioners to become actively involved in the faith life and ministerial opportunities of our parish.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2018
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2018 — ADVENT WEEKDAY

- 6:45 AM All Souls
- 8:30 AM Father David Peter—req. Family & Friends
- 5:00 PM Dorothy & George Belcher—req. Chiarello Family
- 12 Midnight St. Aloysius Parishioners & Their Families

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2018 — THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

- 9:00 AM Deceased members of the Siuda & McMahon Families—req. Family
- 11:00AM Mildred Staebell—req. Sister, Dolores
- NO 5 PM MASS**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2018 — ST. STEPHEN

- 6:45 AM Repose of the soul of Joan M. Freiert
- 8:30 AM Fred Ciccarelli—req. Mike & Bee

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2018 — ST. JOHN, APOSTLE

- 6:45 AM Estate of Dorothy & Harry Dahlheimer
- 8:30 AM Rita J. Pache—req. Therese & Don Stoll

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2018 — THE HOLY INNOCENTS

- 6:45 AM For the Military & Their Families—req. Friends from St. Al's
- 8:30 AM Ernest L. Colucci—req. Daughter, Sr. Mary Jo

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2018 — ST. THOMAS BECKET

- 8:30 AM Repose of the souls of the Klosko & Oczek Families—req. Family
- 5:00 PM For intentions of Jim Cunning on his special Birthday—req. Pat & Jean

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2018 — THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

- 9:00 AM Mecislaus Wendzikowski (Birthday Remembrance)—req. Daughter, Theresa
- 11:00 AM Happy & Blessed New Year to St. Aloysius Parish Family—req. Mel Saile
- 5:00 PM Eugene Wallmeyer—req. Family

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Mary Davis, Loretta Phillips, Dorothy Hensen, Barbara Ross, Andrew Hashimi, William Bystrak, Andrew Richesin, Lisa Blount, Sarah Nelson, Rene Meyer, Dorothy Coyne, Chris Christopher, Maureen Michaels, Dottie Besant, Janice Kerber, Karen Mitchell, Al Stritzel, John Dedloff, Barbara Kelly, Susan Hilburger, Stacey Grant-Littleton, John & Lori Mento, Paulette Adams, Flora Perez, Susan Duquin, Theresa McKibbin, Anne Dyson, Lina Kujawski, Ruth Vaught, Mary Ellen Kern, Paul Pronti, Nancy Hoffman, Rose Oehler, Robert Clinch, Vivian Kurylo, Rylin Boncore, Linda Mento, Charlotte Braun, Timothy Martin, Harry Flynn, Elaine Luparello, Mary and Ferd Philipps, Joshua Rudnicki, Marilyn Roof, John Gatti, Dominic Palmeri, Ashley Kern, Thomas Martin, Louis Augello, Sue Hartke, Nick Ball, John Halper, Luvena Moore, Eileen Somogye, David, Joy Berry, Father Michael Uebler, Hal Lane, John Albarella, Mary Ann Talarico, Joseph Craddock, Davina Kollaranska, Tom Noonan, Marilyn Fiegel, Ken Schuh, Maureen Boncore, Esther Curtin, Felix Mayer, Loraine Wallmeyer, Evangelina St. John, Dorothy Monczynski, Bill Severson, Anne Stepien, Rosemary Causley, and all our parishioners in Nursing Homes.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE DECEASED: Deceased Parishioners, Benefactors, and Family Members

WEEKLY STATISTICS

Weekly Collection \$4,876.00 (Last Year: \$5,065.00)
Weekly Attendance 381 People

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." - Lk 1:41-42



REFLECTING ON THE WORD OF GOD: Our Gospel reading recalls Mary's actions after the announcement of Jesus' birth by the angel Gabriel. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, her cousin, who is also with child. Elizabeth greets Mary with full recognition of the roles that they and their unborn children will play in God's plan for salvation. Both women recall and echo God's history of showing favor upon the people of Israel. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and sings Mary's praise because she bears the Lord. We sing these words of praise to Mary in the Hail Mary. Even John the Baptist, the unborn child in Elizabeth's womb, is said to recognize the presence of the Lord and leaps for joy. It is appropriate in this season of Advent that we consider the role of Mary in God's plan of salvation. Elizabeth describes Mary as the first disciple, as the one who believed that God's word to her would be fulfilled. Mary's faith enabled her to recognize the work of God in her people's history and in her own life. Her openness to God allowed God to work through her so that salvation might come to everyone. Because of this, Mary is a model and symbol of the Church.

- Reflection prepared by parishioner, John Fahey

IN THE WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS: The Gospel for this Sunday of Advent highlights the figure of Mary. We see her when, just after having conceived in faith the Son of God, she makes the long trip from Nazareth, in Galilee, to the hill country of Judah, to visit and help her cousin Elizabeth. The Angel Gabriel had revealed to her that her elderly relative, who did not have children, was in her sixth month of pregnancy. In the meeting between these two women - one old and the other young - it is the young one, Mary, who offers the first greeting. After this greeting, Elizabeth feels enveloped in great astonishment - don't forget this word, astonishment. Elizabeth feels enveloped in great astonishment which is echoed in these words: "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?". At Christmas, God gives us all of himself by giving his Only Son, who is all his joy. It is only with the heart of Mary, the humble and poor daughter of Zion, who became the Mother of the Son of the Most High, that it is possible to rejoice and be glad for the great gift of God and for his unpredictable surprise. May she help us to perceive the astonishment through the birth of Jesus, the gift of gifts, the undeserved gift who brings us salvation. The encounter with Jesus will enable us too to feel this great astonishment.

ANGELUS, SAINT PETER'S SQUARE,
SUNDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2015

CHRISTMAS GREETING: On this Christmas Day – our lights are on and our doors are open – to everyone who wishes to pray, celebrate and join the community of St. Aloysius Gonzaga: parishioners and friends, family, young and old, neighbors and total strangers, seekers and searchers, those with strong Faith and those who struggle with Faith, former parishioners and graduates of our school, the active Catholic and the inactive Catholic – all are welcomed at St. Aloysius Gonzaga this Christmas.

It is a joy and privilege for our Priest – Father Adelmo; our Sisters of St. Joseph – Sister Maryann, Sister Bette, Sister Dorothy and Sister Eleanor, Sister Elizabeth - a Sister of Social Service, and our Felician Sisters – Sister Lorette, Sister Edmund, Sister Kevin and Sister Marcine; our Parish Trustees – Dick Jauch and Tom Franczyk; our Rectory and Parish Staffs – all to join Msgr. Popadick in wishing you a Blessed and Holy Christmas.

- To our faithful parishioners: thank you for praying with us on Sundays and Holy Days and joining us in building up the Body of Christ here by your generous service, especially to the poor and needy;

- To our visitors and guests: thank you for celebrating Christmas with us. You are always welcomed at St. Al's.

- To our parishioners who only pray with us occasionally: We miss you at the Table of the Lord. If there is anything we can do to help you reconnect with the Church, return to Mass and Confession, just give us a call.

- To our home-bound parishioners and those who reside in health care facilities: we depend so much on your prayers. You are a most important part of our parish family.

Everyone is welcome. Please know you always have a "home" at St. Aloysius Gonzaga. A Blessed and Holy Christmas!

NEED HELP WITH THE ANNULMENT PROCESS: Sometimes beginning the process leading to a Church annulment can be overwhelming. If anyone is in need of information about the annulment process – or would like help in actually beginning the process – give Father Peter a call. With some guidance the process becomes less overwhelming and can actually lead to peace and healing.

FRIDAY BINGO: We begin at 7:30 PM in the school; doors open at 6:15 PM. Prizes total \$3,000. Games are all paper. Assigned workers are asked to report by 6:30 PM.
SATURDAY BINGO: Doors open at noon; Casino Bingo begins at 12:30 PM & Bingo games start at 1:00 PM. Prizes total \$1,800+.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE: Please note the times of our Christmas Celebrations this year. Our Christmas Eve Mass is at 5PM. There will be the traditional Midnight Mass, preceded by Carols and Readings beginning at 11:30 PM. On Christmas Day, the Children's Liturgy of the Word will be a part of the 9AM Mass. Christmas Mass will also be celebrated at 11AM. There will be NO 5PM Mass on Christmas Day.

Consider inviting a family member, neighbor, co-worker, friend who has fallen away from the Catholic Church or is unchurched to come to Christmas Mass with you at St. Al's. Your invitation could be just the grace a person needs to begin the journey "home" to the Catholic Church.

CHRISTMAS REFLECTION: "This night, you on this visited planet, your rescue is here. You can breathe. Your God extends now on straw.

He unfolds himself in the stench you want to hide, in that mess that is your impossible, in the mucked straw you don't want anyone to know.

Rejected at the inn, holy God comes in small where you feel rejected and small. God is with you now. Wherever you are – in a soundless cry or hidden brokenness or in your ache – God always wants to be with you. You are not ever left alone in this. We are never left alone in this; God is with us...This is love you cannot comprehend. You can only feel and touch this kind. There, in the place where you feel rejected, you can be touched by God. There, in the places you feel small, you can touch God. He came in the flesh. Come kneel close. Let the warm breath of heaven fall on you."

- from: *One Thousand Gifts* by Ann Voskamp

CATHOLIC BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: Our discussion of Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Rejoice and Be Glad*, will resume on Thursday, January 24th, at 7PM in the rectory. The focus of the discussion will be Chapter 3, "In the Light of the Master", paragraphs 63 thru 109. In this chapter, Pope Francis reflects on the Beatitudes encouraging us to "allow the words of Jesus to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live." But the Holy Father also points out that the Beatitudes show "with great simplicity what it means to be holy".

Even if you have not attended previous book discussions, all are most welcomed to be a part of our group as an "active listener" or "active speaker". You will be amazed at the depth of the discussion and the openness of those attending to share the joys and challenges of their personal faith journeys. Copies of *Rejoice and Be Glad* are available (free of charge) to anyone who wishes to join the group or use the Pope's Apostolic Exhortation privately. Hope to see you at the book discussion on January 24th.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK: Every once in a while, Sister Maryann and Father Peter remind parishioners and family members to keep them up-to-date on the health needs of our parishioners.

One of the clearest realities of the Gospel is the great love and compassion Jesus had for the sick and the suffering. It is a privilege for Sister Maryann and Father Peter – and those who minister with them – to continue the healing Presence of Jesus in our world. But they can do this only if they are aware of the changing health needs of our people. So please! – if someone is admitted to the hospital, please call the rectory immediately. If a person goes to a health facility for rehab or more permanently, let them know. If someone is home-bound or is recovering at home, it would be a joy for Sister, our Ministers of Communion and Father to visit. And if you call the rectory and don't receive a response in a day or two, please call again – notes easily get lost (especially on Father Peter's desk!).

If anyone wishes to receive the Sacrament of the Sick, this can be arranged after any 8:30AM weekday Mass or after Mass on a Sunday. This Sacrament may also be celebrated privately.

Again it is a privilege and honor for Parish Ministers, Sister Maryann and Father Peter to bring the healing Presence of Jesus to our parishioners and friends. Your keeping our Parish Staff current on the health needs of our people will help us exercise this ministry with compassion and love.

CATHOLICS COME HOME: The traditional Christmas song says: "I'll be home for Christmas..." – "home" being with family and friends – "home" also being at Peace with God and gathered at the Altar celebrating Mass. Christmas is that graced-time when we remember where we came from spiritually: our Baptism, First Communion, Marriage, home parish.

We all know someone who does not practice the faith. We pray that person comes "home" to the Church for Christmas, joins us regularly at the Table of the Lord. Invite that person to come to Mass with you on Christmas Day. Encourage that person to visit www.CatholicsComeHome.org. Our lights are on. Our doors are open. We here at St. Al's can hardly wait to say to everyone: "Welcome Home!"

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS: Bob Rybarczyk, Parish Director of Faith Formation, and our RCIA "Team" invite any adults – college age and older – to become a part of our RCIA experience. The RCIA is meant for individuals baptized Catholic but really never "raised Catholic" – so they may need help in preparing for Eucharist, Penance and/or Confirmation. It is also meant for those baptized in another Christian Community who wish now to explore the possibility of entering the Catholic Church. Individuals never baptized in any Faith who are considering entering the Catholic Church are also invited to participate.

For more information speak with Bob or Father Peter or call the rectory.

ADULT PREPARATION FOR SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION: For many different reasons, a person may not have received the Sacrament of Confirmation at the usual time – during the high school years. With the new year, our parish will once again be preparing adult candidates - women and men of college age and older - to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. If anyone wishes to be a part of this Confirmation Preparation, please call the rectory or speak directly with Bob Rybarczyk, our parish Director of Faith Formation, or with Father Peter. It will be a joy and privilege for us to work with all candidates as we grow together in faith and deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ.

PASTORAL COUNSELING: We live in a very stress-filled world – a world in which relationships are strained, expectations are unreal and unfair, self-esteem is low and the future is unclear and uncertain. Often times, while knowing we could use a little help to pull us through, we do not know where to turn.

Sister Michele Jackson, a licensed Pastoral Counselor, is available to be of help as you navigate through the challenges and issues of daily living. As a Pastoral Counselor, Sister Michele integrates your personal spiritual journey – your faith – into the healing process. The end result is both wholeness and holiness.

Sister Michele's Office is located in our school building. For more information on her Pastoral Counseling practice or to arrange an appointment, Sister Michele may be reached at 390-9836.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: Two weeks ago, about 35 parishioners gathered in our school hall for our Annual Town Meeting – an opportunity for parishioners and friends to share with one another, Parish Leadership and Father Peter their hopes and expectations for the community of St. Aloysius Gonzaga as we continue our journey as people of Faith and Service. The meeting lasted over an hour and a half with many people speaking, sharing their ideas on our strengths and weaknesses, our achievements and our challenges. Among the items discussed were:

- There seemed to be a consensus that the funds generated by our participation in the Diocesan Program, Upon This Rock, be used to paint the interior of the Church, but only after the leaking roof issues have been resolved.

- There was an openness to revising the current week-end Mass schedule, working with neighboring parishes to assure a variety of Mass times.

- Our greatest challenges were recruiting and retaining our parishioners, the aging and greying of our parishioners, outreach to fallen away Catholics and greater involvement of our youth at Mass and through ministry.

- We should welcome visitors and provide opportunities for new parishioners to meet with Parish Leadership, tour our facilities and invite personally new parishioners to engage in various ministries.

- Comments were made that our Masses are too long, our choice of hymns is limited, the need to keep a regular response to the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass. Also a wise parishioner asked that we make sure our sidewalks are "salted" adequately during the winter months.

There were also other written and spoken interventions affirming the good and faithful parishioners of our parish – many of whom are involved in more than one ministry and always found participating at Mass and at Eucharistic Adoration.

Our Town Meeting gave us a wonderful opportunity to share, reflect and plan together as we journey into the future. One person wrote: "We must be people of Hope!" – and doesn't that say it all.

NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS: Are you looking for a different way in which to welcome the New Year – a way to thank God for His Blessings in 2018 and seek His Love throughout 2019? Our Cloistered Carmelite Nuns invite us to join them for Holy Mass beginning at 11:30PM on New Year's Eve at the Carmelite Monastery, 75 Carmel Road, off Hertel, in Buffalo. Father Peter Santandreu will be Celebrant.

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