



# Divine Mercy Parish

## Mass Schedule for the Week of February 25, 2024

### *Monday, February 26, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Living & Deceased Members of Divine Mercy Parish  
2:00 - 4 PM Chapel Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
6-6:30 PM DM Confessions

### *Tuesday, February 27, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Joseph & Anna Savakinas by Daughter  
5-6:00 PM DM Confessions & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
6-7:00 PM DM Stations of the Cross/Benediction

### *Wednesday, February 28, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Edward Sivak by Family

### *Thursday, February 29, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Anne Zeplin by Maryann Bruni & Family

### *Friday, March 1, 2024*

7:30 AM DM John McElroy by Sr. Helene  
2:30 PM DM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
3:00 PM DM Stations of the Cross/Benediction  
6:30PM DM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
7:00 PM DM Stations of the Cross (En Espanol)

### *Saturday, March 2, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Joseph Zancosky by Joan Zancusky & Maria Rittle  
3:45 PM DM Divine Mercy Chaplet  
4:00 PM DM Happy Anniversary in Heaven, Bill Webb - Love You, Jackie

### *Sunday, March 3, 2024*

7:30 AM DM Konstanti Hiczan by Niece, Cathy & Family  
9:40 AM DM Divine Mercy Chaplet  
10:00 AM DM Edward & Sophie Prosack by Son, John  
12:30 PM DM Living & Deceased Priests – Diocese of Allentown  
*En Espanol*

“The clergy and religious of the Diocese of Allentown continue to stand ready to provide steadfast support and prayers during this difficult time,” said Bishop Schlert. “Just as St. Joseph protected the Holy Family, we turn to St. Joseph to protect us at this time of uncertainty and pandemic.” We invite all the faithful who are quarantined during this time and unable to receive Holy Communion, to offer their prayers for healing throughout the world. Pray the Holy Rosary, on [www.EWTN.com/tv/shows/sunday-Mass-live](http://www.EWTN.com/tv/shows/sunday-Mass-live). Pray this prayer for spiritual communion and set aside time for prayer with the Sacred Scriptures of the day – go to [www.wordamongus.org](http://www.wordamongus.org).

### **An Act of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



### **Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel**

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

### **Prayer to Your Guardian Angel**

Angel of God,  
my guardian dear,  
To whom God's love  
Commits me here,  
Ever this day,  
be at my side,  
To light and guard,  
Rule and guide.

### **Prayer for Our Country**

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of America, please help our country. Help us to return to what is decent, right and proper. Help us to return to respect for ourselves and others, into truth in dealing with ourselves and others, to self-control and self-discipline and, especially, to a deep love for your Son and his teachings. Protect us from those who would destroy us from within. Our Lady, we place ourselves and our country under your mantel. Pray for us and help us. Amen.

### **Divine Mercy Chaplet**

When: Every 1st Sunday of the month  
Time: 3:00 PM  
Where: St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish, Mahanoy City

### **Divine Mercy Collections**

2/18 – \$ 6,292.00



**Divine Mercy Memorial Fund**

**Diane Kalyan**  
 \$10 Husband, Ron & family  
**Michael Breslosky Sr.**  
 \$100 Sister, Cindi, brother-in-law,  
 Ed Sr. & nephew, Ed Jr.  
 Shafransky  
 \$10 Dan & Diane Monlish  
 \$10 Julie Buchinsky  
**Robert & Anne Zeplin**  
 \$25 Louis & Donna Kowalski  
**George R. “Junior” Kosar**  
 \$10 Ed & Fran Domkus  
**Ann Kelly**  
 \$20 Karen & Ashleigh Salada  
**Special intentions**  
 \$5 Anonymous



**And Best Wishes to our Pastor, Msgr. Bocian** who will celebrate his 52nd anniversary in the priesthood on March 18th. We wish Msgr. many more years in the priesthood and we will continue to pray for him that God will bless him with good health & many more years at our parish.

**During Lent, there will be NO adoration in the chapel on a Wednesday or Friday due to Adoration, Confessions, Benediction & Stations of the Cross held on Tuesday evening beginning at 5:00 PM and Adoration and Stations of the Cross & Benediction held every Friday at 3:00 PM all held at Divine Mercy**



**Flee Temptation**

Christians are meant for Heaven. Yet, the world can work against our efforts for holiness. St. Peter tells us to “*escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires*” (2 Peter 1:4). Ask God often to protect you from sin, to give you the wisdom and courage to make good choices and, become sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. God will reveal when you've messed up, and rejoice with you when you get it right.

**Divine Mercy**

**Sanctuary** In memory of my beloved Parents & Sister, Angelo & Enrica & Jean Romano by Ann Romano  
**Divine Mercy** Special intention for Bill Keephart by Ann Romano  
**Blessed Mother** In memory of Ann Marie Bobrowsky on her birthday by Daughter, Anna Rose  
**Blessed Mother** In loving memory of Rose Pribish by Daughter-in-law, Joann & Grandson, Zach  
**Blessed Mother** In loving memory of Rose Pribish by Buchinsky family  
**Blessed Mother** God’s blessings for my two buddies, Cookie & Mary Ann by Dolores Micko  
**St. Ann** Special intentions by Marguerite Oravitz Fell & family  
**St. Joseph** In memory of Karvois & Connell families by Marilyn Connell  
**St. Joseph** God’s blessings for Msgr. Bocian by Dolores Micko  
**OLMC** Special intentions by Ann Marnell Lehman  
**OLMC** Special intentions for John Kelly family  
**OLMC** Special intentions for John Kelly family

**St. Casimir**

**Sanctuary** In memory of Sophie & Adam Zukowski by Nephew, Albert Majewski  
**Divine Mercy** In loving memory of Frank Macus by Fran & Maria  
**Divine Mercy** In loving memory of John McGuire by Wife, Peggy  
**Divine Mercy** Prayers & good health for J.M., S.M., M.S., A.M., Z. S., T.S., R.G., G.M., L.B. & J. B.  
**Divine Mercy** Special intentions for Christopher, Hope, Marc, Donna, Benjamin & Morgan  
**Divine Mercy** Special intentions for Richard Mader by Domkus family  
**Divine Mercy** In memory of John & Helen Pukavige by children  
**Divine Mercy** Special intentions by Louis & Donna Kowalski  
**Blessed Mother** In loving memory of Joe & Joestelle by Wife/Mother  
**Blessed Mother** In loving memory of Leonard & Lillian Mankiewicz by Fran & Maria  
**Blessed Mother** Special intentions, in thanksgiving & good health for Msgr. Bocian, Stephen Bocian, George Huss, Estelle McLaren, Joann Pribish, Julie Buchinsky, Scarlet Henry, Mary Lou Scardino & Christa Beecroft  
**Sacred Heart** In loving memory of my Dad, George Rittle by Daughter, Maria  
**Sacred Heart** In memory of Peggy Blaschock by Barb Guzinski  
**Sacred Heart** In memory of Sophie Kalinowski on her birthday in heaven by Friend, Mary Lou  
**Sacred Heart** Special intentions for Christopher, Marc & Christa  
**St. Anthony** Special intentions for Christopher, Marc & Christa

**Chapel**

**Sanctuary** In loving memory of Gino Bruni by Wife & Family  
**Blessed Mother** Prayers & good health for Emily Seigel by Uncle Ed & Aunt Kerri  
**St. Joseph** Special intentions by Msgr. B

**SOMETHING FOR LENT**

This Lent, you will have a golden opportunity on the Hallow App to journey through Father Walter Ciszeks' book, "He Leadeth Me." For as Father Mike Schmitz said, "He Leadeth Me is probably the most influential book that I've read in my life in the last twenty years, maybe my entire life. So if you want to read a book that will change your life ... It will change the way you look at God. It will change the way you look at your own life. It will change the way you pray." You will be able to even download the Hallow App for free for 3 months.



**Holy Communion to the Homebound**

If any parishioner is homebound in any way and would like to receive Holy Communion, please call the parish office 462-1968 or Sr. Marietta 590-0435.

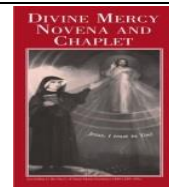
**Tax Time** is approaching us very quickly. Need a copy of your contribution sheet? Again, this year we will not be mailing out the contribution sheets to every parishioner of our parish. Therefore, if you would like a copy for tax purposes, it is necessary for you to call the parish office at 462-1968 in a request for your contribution sheet for 2023. We will mail this sheet directly to you.



**Bautismos Todos** están invitados a bautizar a sus hijos. Aún si usted no está casado en la Iglesia se puede bautizar a su bebé. Sin embargo, le pedimos que seleccione una pareja que se casó en la Iglesia Católica para ser sus padrinos. Si un padrino / madrina es una persona soltera, él / ella puede convertirse en una condición de que, esa persona ha recibido el bautismo. Por favor, tenga en cuenta que una pareja, civilmente casada o una persona que vive junto a otra persona como una pareja no está calificada para ser un padrino/madrina. Si son de fuera de nuestra parroquia, por favor, díles de obtener un certificado de elegibilidad de su pastor al menos dos semanas de anticipación. Padre llevará a cabo clases de bautismo, tanto para los padres y padrinos y administrar el rito del bautismo. Por favor, visite la oficina parroquia(108 W.Cherry St., Shenandoah. Teléfono 570 (4621968) para reservar fechas y rellenar formularios. El proceso es muy fácil.

**Divine Mercy Novena**

will be recited every Sunday for nine weeks which began on Sunday, February 4th. The Divine Mercy pamphlet will be available in the church vestibule. The Novena will be recited before the Chaplet every Sunday.



**Open Registration for the 2024-2025 Divine Mercy Pre-school Program**

Under the Direction of Mrs. Sharon Tobin, B.A. Exceptional Child Study. Pre-school will be held at the Fr. Walter Ciszek Education Center (Trinity Academy), 233 W. Cherry Street, Shenandoah, PA 17976. Phone: 462-3927. **\*Registration Fee for 2024-2025 is \$75.00.**



Children ages 3, 4 and 5 welcome for half and/or full day Pre-school classes Monday through Friday. Our Pre-school Program follows a modified Montessori method to prepare your child for the world of learning and his/her admission to Kindergarten. Attendance five days per week allows your child to benefit by participating in more of the learning opportunities provided.

Please call Sr. Patricia Mount at 462-3927 for more information or to request a registration packet. All community registrations began the week of February 20th.



**Holy Thursday**

Thurs. 3/28	Mass of the Lord's Supper	7:00 PM	Divine Mercy
	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament	7:45 – 8:30 PM	Divine Mercy

**Good Friday**

Friday 3/29	Confession	10-11AM	Divine Mercy
	Stations of the Cross	Noon	Divine Mercy
	Good Friday Services	3:00 PM	Divine Mercy
	Visitation of the Tomb	4-5 PM	Divine Mercy
	Spanish - Veneration of the Cross, Stations, Reading of the Passion and Communion Service	5:00 PM	Divine Mercy

**Holy Saturday**

Saturday 3/30	Blessing of Baskets	1:00 PM	Divine Mercy
	Holy Saturday Vigil Mass	<b>8:00 PM</b>	Divine Mercy

Holy Water will be available after the Easter Vigil Liturgy

**Easter Sunday**

Sunday 3/31	Easter Sunday Mass	7:30AM	Divine Mercy
	Easter Sunday Mass	10:00AM	Divine Mercy
	Easter Sunday Mass (en español)	12:30 PM	Divine Mercy



**Divine Mercy Parish**  
**Pierogies are available at the parish office**  
**\$ 8.00 per dozen.**

**Diocesan Information**

**If a Prenatal Diagnosis is Poor... You are not alone. There is help.** The Diocese of Allentown has a network of concerned parents and professionals who have experienced or worked closely with issues surrounding poor prenatal diagnosis. For support, contact: Sr. Janice Marie Johnson, . Johnson@allentowndiocese.org or 610-289-8900 x 245.  
**Victim Assistance Coordinator** The Diocese of Allentown provides assistance to anyone who, as a minor, was sexually abused by a priest, deacon, or employee/volunteer of the Diocese/Parish. Parents, guardians, children and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the Diocese of Allentown for more information about this program. The fullness of compassion should be extended to these victims by the Church. Victim Assistance Coordinator—**Direct Telephone Number:** 1-800-791-9209. To learn more about the Diocese of Allentown’s Youth Protection Programs, Sexual Abuse Policy, and Code of Conduct, please visit [www.allentowndiocese.org](http://www.allentowndiocese.org) and click on “Youth Protection ” in the upper right hand- corner of the page.

**Attention all Safe Environment Coordinators!**

Mandated reporter trainings and Protecting God’s Children Workshops will now be available virtually. If you are interested, please contact Pam Russo Secretary, Youth Protection and Catholic Human Services  
 P.O. Box F, Allentown, PA 18105-1538  
 610-871-5200 ext. 2204  
[prusso@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:prusso@allentowndiocese.org)

**Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service**

If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop, please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at [www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org) or by calling 800-276-1562

**Servicio de Denuncia de Abusos de Obispos Católicos**

Si tiene una denuncia de abuso contra un Obispo, comuníquese con el Servicio de Denuncias de Abuso de Obispos Católicos en [www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org) o llamando al 800-276-1562

**WEEKLY MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR**

**MARCH 2ND & 3RD – ALL MASSES AT DIVINE MERCY**

Mass Time	Lector	Eucharistic Minister	Altar Server
4:00 PM	Elchisak, Michele	Heckard, Louise	Blank,Name
7:30 AM	Selvocki, Joseph	Bronk, Cathy	Snitzer, Isabella
10:00 AM	Grochowski, Anne	Domkus, Fran	Rakus, Evan

**Celebrate God’s Goodness** The Bernardine Franciscan Sisters invite you to their gala, Bernardine Bonanza, on Friday, March 8th to support their retired and infirm Sisters. To purchase tickets or for more information about this fun-filled event, held at Alvernia University’s Plex, visit [www.bfranciscan.org](http://www.bfranciscan.org) or call Sr. Maria Bartos at 484-334-6815.



**Easter Memorials & Easter Flower Memorials** This year the booklet for the Easter Memorials and Easter Flower Memorials will be printed again by our bulletin company. You will find an envelope for each one in your packet of March envelopes. Dated: March 17th. **The deadline for having your Easter Memorials & Easter Flower Memorials sent to the office will be Monday, March 18th. All memorials must be sent to the publishing company early. Any memorials received after Monday, March 18th will NOT be included with the Easter Bulletin. They will be published in a later bulletin. Please keep in mind, this date may change. If any change, it will be published in bulletin.**

**Do You Want a Memorial or Candle in Bulletin for Easter?**  
**Please read the following for the deadline date.**

All Information for Easter Sunday Bulletin .... Candles, memorials etc. will be due on Monday, March 18th. Any information received after that, will be published in a later bulletin.



**Lenten Day of Prayer Wednesday, March 20th**

**8:00 AM immediately following 7:30 AM Mass to 6:00 PM - Chapel**

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus - Philippians 4:6-7

“God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer.” – Mother Teresa

- 8:00 AM (Right after 7:30 AM Mass) to 6:00 PM - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Adoration in Chapel

**Sign in sheets will be available in the vestibule closer to our Lenten Day of Prayer**

Next Prayer Group will meet at the Father Ciszek Center **on Thursday, March 7th at 6:30 PM.**

**Next Bible Group: Thursday, March 14th at 6:30 PM at the Father Ciszek Center.**

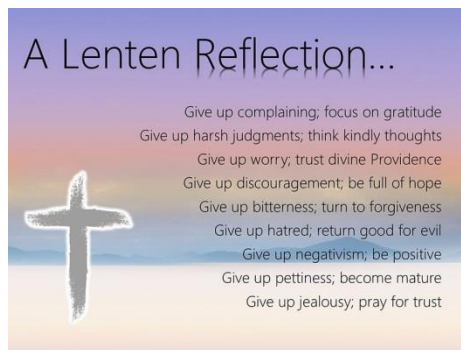
**Next Franciscan Group: Thursday, March 21st at 6:30 PM at the Father Ciszek Center.**

For more information, call Sr. Marietta 590-0435 or the parish office 462-1968.

**Redner’s “Save – A- Tape” Receipts**

**Divine Mercy Parish** is still collecting the “Save-A-Tape” from Redner’s Markets. Please drop off your receipts in the collection or mail box or bring them to the parish office during regular office hours. The parish will receive a check for 1% of what is collected. Please support your parish and collect the receipts. Thank you for all of your support throughout the year. It is greatly appreciated. **Please do not cut any of the receipt away.**

**A Little Reminder For Cemetery Lot Owners** in order to keep bringing all our Parish Cemeteries in line with the guidelines and regulations of the Diocese the following will still be enforced: all bricks, fine & crushed stone, plants, fresh & plastic flowers not in containers, fences, borders of all types will be removed & discarded immediately due to the fact that they cause a problem for maintenance of your lot. Again, anything that interferes with the mowing & trimming of grass will be removed at the family’s expense. Containers should not interfere with the care of the cemetery grounds. If they do, the containers will be removed immediately. No planting of flowers, trees, or shrubs allowed. Plastic flowers must be in containers also.



**Financial Report --January**

Net January Income	\$ 48,610.16	Expenses	\$ 46,134.62
		Insurance	\$ 7,422.00
		Assessments	\$ 4,023.00
Total Income	\$ 48,610.16	Total Expenses	\$ 57,579.62
Expenses over income	\$ 8,969.52	This shows a loss of	\$ 8,969.52



**Our parish is in need of Lectors, Altar Servers and Eucharistic Ministers. If you are interested in any of these ministries, we ask that you please call the parish office at 462-1968.**

**Lent is the Liturgical Season** of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church’s liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert in fasting and prayer”. Below are some ideas to do during the Lenten season:

- Start a journal for your prayer intentions. Wait and see how God, who always answers prayer, answers yours.
- It is our Christian responsibility to abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent as a form of penance.
- Pick a saint to learn about and imitate. Ask for his or her special help and protection during Lent.
- Read the gospel for Sunday before you go to church and write down two things you learned and keep it with you throughout the day
- Grow in your faith by believing that God is there for you. Entrust your worries to God and know he will take care of it.
- Call Catholic Relief Services to see how you can help.
- Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, given to the world through Sr. Faustina to help repair the hurt caused by sin.
- Pray for God to bless someone you don’t like, or who you know doesn’t like you.
- Support your parish’s Lent collections, whether it is the Bishop’s Lenten campaign, Operation Rice Bowl or a mission collection.
- Adopt a priest or member of a religious order in your diocese and pray for them every day of Lent.

**Works of Mercy**

The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are actions we can perform that extend God’s compassion and mercy to those in need.

**The Corporal Works of Mercy** are these kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Feed the hungry           | Visit the sick       |
| Give drink to the thirsty | Visit the imprisoned |
| Clothe the naked          | Bury the dead        |
| Shelter the homeless      |                      |

**The Spiritual Works of Mercy** are acts of compassion, as listed below by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Counsel the doubtful  | Forgive offenses                 |
| Instruct the ignorant | Bear wrongs patiently            |
| Admonish sinners      | Pray for the living and the dead |
| Comfort the afflicted |                                  |



Please pray for the soul of Robert Zeplin, Sister Helene’s brother-in-law who recently passed away. Please keep Sister Helene & her family in your prayers.

**The New You**

Lent is our chance to leave our old ways behind and adopt a new way of life. When Easter comes, what will the new you be like?

**Be a more positive thinker.**

This is the keystone habit that will help you form the other important habits. Squash negative thinking and trust that God will work with you to accomplish goals you set that are in harmony with his will.

**Focus on what’s important.**

First, identify what is most important to you – family, friends, faith, and so on. Then eliminate everything else. Not only will you be free to focus on what is most important, this habit will spill over into other areas of your life, such as tasks, projects, and communication.

**Find a powerful prayer routine.**

The best prayer routines are the ones we follow every day. A firm, daily routine helps you focus on what’s important, not just what comes up. Make sure to concentrate on Scripture and add time to listen, too.

**Add kindness.**

Kindness is genuinely caring for others, wanting the best for them, and taking action to demonstrate that caring. Each day, make a decision to add an act of kindness to your day. Let someone go ahead of you in line, give a sincere compliment to a stranger, praise a coworker’s effort, greet a passerby.



**Upcoming Events**

**HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE EASTER CANDY** - Butter Cream, Coconut Cream or Peanut Butter Eggs - \$11.00 per box. *Sorry, no mixed boxes.* Proceeds benefit St. Patrick Parish – All orders are due by March 8th. To place an order, please call the Parish Office at 622-1802, ext 0. **Candy** may be picked up in our Parish Center (313 Mahantongo St., Pottsville) during the Palm Sunday Weekend Bake Sale - March 23rd from 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM or March 24th from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM. All **candy** MUST be pre-ordered and pre-paid.

**St. John the Baptist R.C. Church LENTEN DINNERS** at St. John’s Russell Building 9th & Schuylkill Ave., Pottsville will be held every Friday during Lent 4:00 PM to 7 PM (No dinner on Good Friday) **Menu is as follows:** Baked Haddock **OR** “Special Fish of the Week” includes: Macaroni and Cheese with Stewed Tomatoes **OR** Mashed Potatoes, Clam Chowder, Side Salad, Fresh Vegetable of the week, Roll, Beverage, Dessert. **The “Special Fish Options” are as follows:** March 1st: Seared and Roasted Salmon with Balsamic Glaze March 8th: Stuffed Flounder with Lemon Butter March 15th: Herb and Panko Crusted Tilapia March 22nd: presently Baked Haddock only (may change) **Prices are as follows:** Adult meal with Fish \$18.00, Adult meal without Fish \$14.00, Child’s meal with Fish \$10.00, Child’s meal without Fish \$ 6.00. For more information, please call St. John’s Rectory at 622-5470.

**St. Ambrose Church (201 Randel Street, Schuylkill Haven) will be having a Taize Prayer Service** on Wednesday, February 28th at 6:30PM. During the Taize prayer experience, we gather with each other and in the presence of Jesus Christ to express our faith in word and song. We’ll sing hymns of simple thoughts and few words, allowing us to rest in the mystery of God. For more information, please call the St. Ambrose office at 385-1031.

**St. Ambrose Church (201 Randel Street, Schuylkill Haven) will be having a Holy Hour** with John Paul Kasperowicz on Wednesday, March 13th at 6:30PM. John Paul, founder of the Ministry of the Single-hearted retreat and music ministry as well as Big Heart Harvest farming ministry, will lead us in prayer and reflection before our Eucharistic Lord. For more information, please call St. Ambrose at 385-1031.

**The Shenandoah Valley Drama Club is proud to announce that this year’s production will “Disney’s The Little Mermaid.”** There will be two evening performances on Friday & Saturday April 26 & 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM and a Sunday Matinee on April 28th at 1:00 PM. Circle these dates on your calendar and join the SV Drama Club for this evening with Disney.

**Shenandoah Senior Citizens Bus Trip** to Sights & Sound to see “Daniel” on July 11th. Lunch at Hershey Farms Cost: \$158.00 .... Need deposit \$25.00. For more information, please call 462-1344 and leave a message.

**Self-denial Options for Lent**



Self-denial is a slippery discipline, especially at Lent, when Christians traditionally give up something they like to eat.

Ages ago when believers gave up meat, eggs, and milk, they were suffering genuine hardship because they didn’t have many other options in their diet.

Today, giving up a certain food is easy—there is always more to replace it. No meat, no problem. We’ve got fish and soy products, blender drinks, and protein bars. In addition, there is always the thought lurking in the back of my mind that if I cut back on food a bit I might lose a few pounds.

There are other options for self-denial as we commemorate our Lord’s 40 days in the desert as He began His earthly ministry. To add to your commemoration of Lent, or to begin now or anytime, consider these disciplines that may not be as obvious as food, but can be quite difficult:

*We can give up our time.* We can give up our free time and spend more time with Jesus, in His word, or serving others. This can be a genuine sacrifice, because for many today there is little free time.

*We can give up control of our words to Jesus.* This is hard for us because we want to speak first, to give our opinion. For Lent we can give up our words so we can listen carefully to others.

*We can give up feelings of resentment.* Living the Christian life is hard and few appreciate how hard we try but no matter how difficult our day, remember Jesus sees your efforts and loves you.

Spend time alone with Jesus, as He did with His Father in the desert. Ask Him what He wants you to give up. Obey Him faithfully, in secret, and your Easter reward won’t only be a few lost pounds, but a closer walk with your Savior.