

**PRAYER CORNER**

Almighty God, as we ask your help  
for our brothers and sisters who are ill,  
we ask you to help us to be healing people in our time and place.  
May your love touch others through us,  
and may I help all people to live in peace.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

St. Frances of Assisi

**JESUS SPEAKS TO US**

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,  
“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who shall prepare your way;  
the voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight-”

Mark 1:1-3

**November 22 Collection**

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Thank you so much  
for your generosity and support  
of our Parish.



# OUR MOTHER OF MERCY

Historically African-American Catholic Church—all are welcome!

December 6, 2020



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**SECOND SUNDAY OF  
ADVENT—DECEMBER 6th**

In Palestine Christians gather today in Jerusalem for the celebration of holy Mass. In Rome they proceed to the stational church "Holy Cross at Jerusalem" which serves to give the atmosphere of the Holy City.

Why "Jerusalem"? Excavations of ancient sites often reveal a number of strata. When enemies destroyed a city, a new one would rise on the same location, so that today there are several layers of remains, one city, as it were, above the other. Our Jerusalem likewise has four strata. The bottommost layer is the Jerusalem of the Jews, that venerable land where the Lord Jesus began His mission of redemption, where He suffered and died. This is the historical Jerusalem so dear to us Christians. Anyone making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land enters that ancient city with holy awe. That Jerusalem, however, lies buried deep.

For us another has been built upon it, the Jerusalem of Christians, God's kingdom on earth, the holy Church. This city still stands; it is the one which the divine King will enter at Christmas. Now we understand why we will hear so much about Jerusalem during the coming week. We should now clean and adorn our city, improving its streets and avenues through which the Savior will make His entrance. As a motto we should take the words of the precursor, St. John the Baptist: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths; let every valley be filled, every hill be leveled." Holy Mother Church's message today is that the Savior is coming to the Jerusalem of the Christians, to the Church.

Above the second stratum there arises a third, the heavenly Jerusalem at the end of time. Already now the Church sings of this Jerusalem. For during Advent we await the Savior who will appear on the Last Day to take all into "the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven."

Finally, there may be recognized a fourth Jerusalem, our souls in sanctifying grace. This city too must be adorned and prepared, for the King will want to enter. That is our present task.

On Epiphany, the climax to the current season, the Church will cry out: "Arise, shine, O Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee." That is the goal. Today we must prepare for the great King's visit to our city. The whole coming week must be devoted to it. The Church prays: "Awaken our hearts to prepare the way for Your only-begotten Son that we may serve Him with purified hearts."

In the time of the Roman Empire, rulers rode from city to city for the purpose of official visitations. Their appearance, called *epiphany* or *parousia*, was a great event, one preceded by months of preparation. Something analogous takes place in the Jerusalem of our souls. From a high watchtower we see the Lord coming afar off. Suddenly John the Baptist appears; he hurries into the city to announce the King's approach. God condescends to manifest Himself to us in grace; but He demands the proper reception.

Excerpted from *The Church's Year of Grace* by Pius Parsch

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In Loving Memory of  
**Larry & Olga Martinez,**  
One Day at a Time. ✝

Rev. Jerome Gaston LeDoux  
  
February 26, 1930—January 7, 2019

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**Mass Schedule:**

Monday-Friday — 7 a.m.

Saturday — 8 a.m.

Saturday — 5 p.m.

Sunday — 10 a.m.

Holy Day -- see bulletin

**Reconciliation  
(Confession):**

Friday & Saturday Confessions  
9:00 a.m. — noon

**Office Hours:**

Mon, Wed, & Fri  
10 a.m. — 3 p.m.

**FATHER BART'S CORNER**

**My sisters and brothers:**

As we progress through the spiritual journey of Advent, the second Sunday traditionally symbolizes the virtue of Faith. The second purple candle that is lit on this day is known as the "Bethlehem Candle." Reflecting on the journey of Mary and St. Joseph to Bethlehem during the weeks leading up to the first Christmas is a good way to remain in a spirit of humble reflection and penance.

Certainly, even the faith of Mary and St. Joseph must have been put to the test during the arduous journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. They had to travel 90 miles to the city of Joseph's ancestors: south along the flatlands of the Jordan River, then west over the hills surrounding Jerusalem, and on into Bethlehem.

They were not unaccustomed to traveling on foot, but with Mary's advanced state of pregnancy, to say that "the going was rough" would be a terrible understatement, bordering on blasphemy. They would have passed through dry, rough terrains, rocky hillsides, desert valleys and perhaps green olive groves, relying on the kindness of strangers to find a place to rest at night.

All this hardship was borne in a spirit of faith, knowing that what had been promised to them would be fulfilled, despite all physical evidence to the contrary. The Child in Mary's womb would be the Savior of all humanity. The Creator of all the hillsides and valleys through which they passed would soon, so very soon, take His first breath amongst them. Within a matter of days, the entire world would be changed.

*"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1*

**With prayers and love,**

**Fr. Bart, S.V.D**



**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

Monday, December 7

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 7 a.m.**



Tuesday, December 8

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 7 a.m.**



Wednesday, December 9

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 7 a.m.**



Thursday, December 10

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 7 a.m.**

Friday, December 11

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 7 a.m.**



**Adoration: 8:00 a.m. — noon**



Saturday, December 12

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 8 a.m.**



**Mass: 5 p.m.**



Sunday, December 13

**Live Stream on  
our Church Website  
Mass: 10 a.m.**



*Vocation View*

**God calls us to proclaim the Good News. Share the Good News with others. Pray for the grace to be a faith-filled witness of God's love.**

**Divine Word Vocation Office 1  
-800-553-3321  
www.svdvocations.org**

**Weekly Readings**

- 12/07— IS 35:1-10; LK 5:17-26
- 12/08—GN 3:9-15, 20; EPH 1:3-6, 11-12; LK 1:26-38
- 12/09—IS 40:25-31; MT 11:28-30
- 12/10—IS 41:13-20; MT 11:11-15
- 12/11—IS 48:17-19; MT 11:16-19
- 12/12—ZEC 2:14-17; or RV 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab; LK 1:26-38; or LK 1:39-47
- 12/13—IS 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1THES 5:16-24; JN 1:6-8, 19-28

**PARISH CORNER**

“As the journey of Advent continues, as we prepare to celebrate the nativity of Christ, John the Baptist's call to conversion sounds out in our communities. It is a pressing invitation to open our hearts and to welcome the Son of God Who comes among us to make divine judgement manifest. The Father, writes St. John the Evangelist, does not judge anyone, but has entrusted the power of judgement to the Son, because He is the Son of man.

“And it is today, in the present, that we decide our future destiny. It is with our concrete everyday behavior in this life that we determine our eternal fate. At the end of our days on earth, at the moment of death, we will be evaluated on the basis of our likeness or otherwise to the Baby Who is about to be born in the poor grotto of Bethlehem, because He is the measure God has given humanity.

“Through the Gospel John the Baptist continues to speak down the centuries to each generation. His hard clear words bring health to us, the men and women of this day in which even the experience and perception of Christmas often, unfortunately, reflects materialist attitudes. The 'voice' of the great prophet asks us to prepare the way for the coming Lord in the deserts of today, internal and external deserts, thirsting for the water of life which is Christ.” — Benedict XVI

That we are called to live holy lives and invite others to do the same.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Prayer to the Immaculate Conception (Feast: December 8)

Allow me to praise Thee, O most holy Virgin Mary, with my personal commitment and sacrifice.

Allow me to live, work, suffer, be consumed and die for Thee, just for Thee.

Allow me to bring the whole world to Thee.

Allow me to contribute to your ever-greater exaltation, to Thine greatest possible exaltation.

Allow me to give Thee such glory that no one else has ever given up to now.

Allow others to surpass me in zeal for Thine exaltation and me to surpass them, so that by means of such noble rivalry, your glory may increase ever more profoundly, ever more rapidly, ever more intensely as He Who has exalted Thee so indescribably, above all other beings Himself desires.

**Amen.**

*“Prepare the way of the Lord...” - MARK 1:3*

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, puts us on the path to holiness and is an example for others to be holy, too. We are responsible not only for our own lives, but for the lives of others as well.

**CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**PRAYER IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
Jesus prays**

**2603** The evangelists have preserved two more explicit prayers offered by Christ during his public ministry. Each begins with thanksgiving. In the first, Jesus confesses the Father, acknowledges, and blesses him because he has hidden the mysteries of the Kingdom from those who think themselves learned and has revealed them to infants, the poor of the Beatitudes.<sup>48</sup> His exclamation, "Yes, Father!" expresses the depth of his heart, his adherence to the Father's "good pleasure," echoing his mother's *Fiat* at the time of his conception and prefiguring what he will say to the Father in his agony. The whole prayer of Jesus is contained in this loving adherence of his human heart to the mystery of the will of the Father.<sup>49</sup>

**2604** The second prayer, before the raising of Lazarus, is recorded by St. John.<sup>50</sup> Thanksgiving precedes the event: "Father, I thank you for having heard me," which implies that the Father always hears his petitions. Jesus immediately adds: "I know that you always hear me," which implies that Jesus, on his part, *constantly made such petitions*. Jesus' prayer, characterized by thanksgiving, reveals to us how to ask: *before* the gift is given, Jesus commits himself to the One who in giving gives himself. The Giver is more precious than the gift; he is the "treasure"; in him abides his Son's heart; the gift is given "as well."