

**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**

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, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.

Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Luke 1:41-45

**December 12<sup>th</sup> Collection**

Regular:	\$5,928.98
Parish Maintenance:	\$121.00
Mass Intensions:	\$20.00
St. Anne's Altar Society:	\$53.00
St. Anne's Candles:	\$107.50
Social Outreach:	\$300.00
Bricks:	\$800.00
Choir:	\$100.00
Retired Religious:	\$417.00
Immaculate Conception:	\$42.00
Utility Reimbursement:	\$213.74
Online 12/7-12/13:	\$320.50

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 19, 2021



Bulletin printed in-house at:  
**Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church**

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**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT—December 19<sup>th</sup>**

The **Gospel** of this Sunday, Luke 1:38-45 recounts the visit of Mary to St. Elizabeth. An ancient title of Mary is Ark of the Covenant. The Church Fathers saw the parallels between the Old Testament wooden chest containing the divine presence and the Virgin about to give birth to Jesus. This theme is developed in a tape series by Tim Staples. Tim brings out the similarities between today's Gospel and the ascent of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:1-15).

1. As the ark is brought to Jerusalem, King David is overcome with awe saying, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (v. 9)

2. The ark remains three months in the hill country near Jerusalem, bringing great blessings to the house of Obed-edom. (v.11)

3. King David leaps for joy -- dancing before the ark. (v. 13) (Tim Staples, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed*)

In today's Gospel, Elizabeth says to Mary, "Who am I that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" She tells how the babe (John the Baptist) leaped in her womb as she became filled with the Holy Spirit. Finally Mary remains three months with her kinswoman before returning to her home. This Sunday, so close to Christmas, the Church invites us to focus our attention on Mary, round-wombed because of the God-child. As we say in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin: "Ark of the Covenant, pray for us."

--Excerpted from Fr. Phil Bloom

This is the last Sunday of our

preparation for Christmas, the anniversary of Christ's birth. Like Joseph, we can all feel unworthy of the honor of welcoming him into our hearts and our homes. We are indeed unworthy, not because we have little of this world's goods, but because we have so little humility, so little charity, so little faith and trust in God's goodness. Let us try to imitate Joseph and Mary, the humblest of the humble, the kindest of the kindly, and the greatest-ever believers in God's goodness and mercy. We can never hope to equal them, but we can follow them humbly, from afar.

The feast of Christmas should draw the hearts of every child of God towards the furnace of divine love. In the manger, the infinite love of God for us miserable sinners is dramatically and forcefully portrayed before our eyes. In that helpless Baby, represented by a statue, we know that the person, and the power, of the omnipotent Creator and sustainer of the universe lie hidden "He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" for us. He became a creature, like ourselves, so that he would make us sharers in his divine nature. He came on earth to bring us to heaven. He hid his divine nature so that he could cover us with it.

"Unsearchable indeed are the judgements of God, and inscrutable his ways." But though we are unworthy of his infinite love, it nevertheless stands out as clear as the noonday sun in the Incarnation. We realize that we can never make ourselves worthy of this infinite love, but let us imitate Joseph and accept the honor which God is giving us, as we trust that he will continue to make us daily less unworthy.

--Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings* by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.

**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):**

Wednesday 6:00 p.m. — 6:50 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m. — noon

Saturday 4:00 p.m. — 4:50 p.m.

**Office Hours:**

Mon, Wed, & Fri

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



**FATHER BART'S CORNER**

**My sisters and brothers:  
Fourth Week of Advent**

We have now entered into the week which immediately precedes the birth of the Messiah. That long-desired coming might be even tomorrow; and at furthest, that is, when Advent is as long as it can be, the beautiful feast is only seven days from us. So that the Church now counts the hours; she watches day and night, and since December 17 her Offices have assumed an unusual solemnity. At Lauds, she varies the antiphons each day; and at Vespers, in order to express the impatience of her desires for her Jesus, she makes use of the most vehement exclamations to the Messiah, in which she each day gives Him a magnificent title, borrowed from the language of the prophets.

Today, she makes a last effort to stir up the devotion of her children. She leads them to the desert; she shows them John the Baptist, upon whose mission she instructed them on the third Sunday. The voice of the austere Precursor resounds through the wilderness, and penetrates even into the cities. It preaches penance, and the obligation men are under of preparing by self-purification for the coming of Christ. Let us retire from the world during these next few days; or if that may not be by reason of our external duties, let us retire into the quiet of our own hearts and confess our iniquities, as did those true Israelites, who came, full of compunction and of faith in the Messiah, to the Baptist, there to make perfect their preparation for worthily receiving the Redeemer on the day of His appearing to the world. See, then, with what redoubled earnestness the Church, before opening the book of her great prophet, repeats her invitatory:

**The Lord is now nigh; come, let us adore.**

**With prayers and love,**

*Fr. Bart, S.V.D*



**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

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**Monday, December 20**

**Live Stream Mass: 7:00 a.m.**

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**Tuesday, December 21**

**Live Stream Mass: 7:00 a.m.**

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**Wednesday, December 22**

**Live Stream Mass: 7:00 a.m.**

**Adoration: 5:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.**

**Confessions: 5:00 p.m.—6:50 p.m.**

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**Thursday, December 23**

**Live Stream Mass: 7:00 a.m.**

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**Friday, December 24**

**Live Stream Mass: 7:00 a.m.**

**Adoration: 8:00 a.m.—noon**

**Confessions: 9:00 a.m.—noon**

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**Saturday, December 25**

**Midnight Mass 12:00 a.m.  
(no Live Stream)**

**Live Stream Mass: 10 a.m.**

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**Sunday, December 26**

**Live Stream Mass: 10:00 a.m.**

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**Weekday Confessions thirty minutes  
before morning Mass.**

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*Vocation View*

**Mary trusted that the Lord's words to her would be fulfilled. Step out in faith and God will be there to guide you.**

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

**Weekly Readings**

- 12/20—IS 7:10-14; LK 1:26-38
- 12/21—SG 2:8-14 or ZEP 3:14-18a; LK 1:39-45
- 12/22—1 SM 1:24-28; LK 1:46-56
- 12/23—MAL 3:1-4, 23-24; LK 1:57-66
- 12/24—2 SM 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; LK 1:67-79
- 12/25—Vigil Mass—IS 62:1-5; ACTS 13:16-17, 22-25; MT 1:1-25 or MT 1:18-25
- Christmas Day Mass—Is 52:7-10; HEB 1:1-6; JN 1:1-18 or JN 1:1-5, 9-14
- 12/26—SIR 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1 SM 1:20-22, 24-28; COL 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or 1JN 3:1-2, 21-24; LK 2:41-52

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**PARISH CORNER**

**Repairs Continue**

A licensed electrician donated his time to make much needed minor repairs around our Church. We are thankful and grateful for his time and expertise.



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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In Observance of the Christmas Holiday, the Parish office will close beginning December 24<sup>th</sup>. The office will reopen Wednesday morning, January 5, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Beginning January 5, 2022, the Parish office will open on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. We will no longer observe office hours on Mondays. This slight change will help us to better accommodate the needs of our Parishioners and Parish.

Are you needing a Christmas gift idea, for a loved one, a friend or for yourself? We have "The Great Adventure Catholic Bible" available for purchase in the Church office.

Donations of red poinsettias are needed to decorate the altar. If you can help, please bring your poinsettias to the Parish office this Friday by noon. We are deeply appreciative for these donations.

Decorating of the Church will take place after Adoration this Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, at noon. We could really use your help! If you are available to help decorate, then please join us!! Your help is truly welcomed and needed!!!

Christmas Mass is at Midnight and 10:00 a.m. on December 25<sup>th</sup>. There will not be a 5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Sunday Mass on December 26<sup>th</sup> will be at 10:00 a.m. Mass for the New Year is at Midnight and 10:00 a.m. on January 1<sup>st</sup>. There will not be a 5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Sunday Mass on January 2<sup>nd</sup> will be at 10:00 a.m.



Everyone involved in any ministry at any Catholic Church or school is required to attend a Safe and Sacred/Environment class every 2 years. Please create a profile under Virtus.org. and then it will prompt you to sign up for a class. You can pick a location, time and date convenient to your schedule.

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**CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**CHRISTIAN PRAYER**

**"THE SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE GOSPEL"**

**THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**2767** This indivisible gift of the Lord's words and of the Holy Spirit who gives life to them in the hearts of believers has been received and lived by the Church from the beginning. The first communities prayed the Lord's Prayer three times a day,<sup>18</sup> in place of the "Eighteen Benedictions" customary in Jewish piety.

**2768** According to the apostolic tradition, the Lord's Prayer is essentially rooted in liturgical prayer:

[The Lord] teaches us to make prayer in common for all our brethren. For he did not say "my Father" who art in heaven, but "our" Father, offering petitions for the common body.<sup>19</sup>

In all the liturgical traditions, the Lord's Prayer is an integral part of the major hours of the Divine Office. In the three sacraments of Christian initiation its ecclesial character is especially in evidence:

**2769** In Baptism and Confirmation, the handing on (traditio) of the Lord's Prayer signifies new birth into the divine life. Since Christian prayer is our speaking to God with the very word of God, those who are "born anew" . . . through the living and abiding word of God<sup>20</sup> learn to invoke their Father by the one Word he always hears. They can henceforth do so, for the seal of the Holy Spirit's anointing is indelibly placed on their hearts, ears, lips, indeed their whole filial being. This is why most of the patristic commentaries on the Our Father are addressed to catechumens and neophytes. When the Church prays the Lord's Prayer, it is always the people made up of the "new-born" who pray and obtain mercy.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Didache 8, 3: SCh 248, 174.

<sup>19</sup> St. John Chrysostom, Hom. in Mt. 19, 4: PG 57, 278.

<sup>20</sup> 1 Pet 1:23.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. 1 Pet 2:1-10.

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