

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Saturdays: Msgr. Ryan Hall - 4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Also by appointment

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

The Church provides certain times and preparation for weddings. Please contact the Rectory at least six months in advance to begin the process.

REGISTRATION

Every family and person within the parish is encouraged to register with the Parish.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 2:00 p.m. A required Baptism preparation meeting for parents meets on the first Monday of the month at 8:00 p.m. Godparents are welcome. Please register in advance for the class and Baptism. Godparent Pre-Requisites: Godparents must be practicing Catholics in good standing, 16 years of age or older, Baptized and Confirmed Catholic.

ON BECOMING A CATHOLIC

Those seeking information about the Catholic Faith are invited to contact Fr. Valentine at the Rectory at 621-2222.

CARE OF THE SICK

Please notify the Rectory and Human Concerns Ministries if there is anyone seriously ill so that we can provide spiritual care.



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

Michele Brown
Kathleen Capuano
Pat Cempa
Mary Ann Cifarelli
Barbara Coe
Rebekah Cole
Virginia Connors
Emma Cook
Kevin Cronin
Paul Cronin
John Damiano
Linda De Stio
John Paul DiNonno
James Dougherty
Eric DuBois
Elizabeth Fenamore
Natalie Finamore
Noel Glen
Stephen Grabher
Ida Kelly

Christine Kenney
Maria Kim
Douglas Knehr
Anne Krukowski
Frank Krukowski
Richard Malon
Jonathan Mannina
Marilyn Manning
Stuey Manzione
Freida Navarro
Victoria Oxer
Justin Paradine
Marion Prendergast
Gregory Racaniello
Jaxon Rivera
Roy Rodrigues
Charles Strecker
Peter Vanatta
Clotida Vecchione
Jacqueline Verde
Anne Wright
Mary Wybailie
Anthony



THE MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday January 16: SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:30 a.m. People of the Parish
9:00 a.m. George Berardinelli
by Paula Berardinelli
11:00 a.m. Rose Della Ratta
by Daughter Kathryn, & Angelo Grande
Tom McCormack
by Angelo, Roseann & Michael Stanco
David Sullivan
by MaryAnne & Richard Collins
12:30 p.m. Thomas Dredger
by Joan Grau

Monday January 17: Saint Anthony, Abbot

9:00 a.m. Joseph Carbonaro
by Sarah Carbonaro

Tuesday January 18: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Helen Byrne
by the O'Neil Family

Wednesday January 19: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Dolores O'Hara
by Richard O'Hara

Thursday January 20: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Roy J. Friend
by Kathleen & Michael Friend

Friday January 21: Saint Agnes, Virgin & Martyr

9:00 a.m. Patricia Tomasone
by Sister, Lora Lofaro

Saturday January 22: Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

5:00 p.m. Dorothy Ceriello
by Joey & Diane Ceriello
Clifford Sharkey & Peter Zuccaro
by the Sharkey Family

Sunday January 23: THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:30 a.m. Frank & Stephanie Weyland
by the Family
9:00 a.m. People of the Parish
11:00 a.m. John Hawkins
by Roseann McMahon & Michelle Perone
Tom McCormack
by Michelle Perone
Carol McMahon
by Michelle Perone
12:30 p.m. Thomas Dredger
by Joan Grau

READINGS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2022 SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Isaiah 62: 1-5

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

Gospel: John 2: 1-11

FOCUS: God intends to make each one of us a new creation in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah encourages the people, giving them hope for the future and reminding them of God's love for them. We can take encouragement from these same words, especially since Christ has come for us. The Lord longs to breathe his divine life into each of us, making us new and whole.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Isaiah prophesies Zion's reversal of fortune. Saint Paul writes to the Corinthians that all have been endowed with different gifts and charisms, each generated by the same God - Father, Son, and Spirit. In the Gospel, Jesus and his mother attend a wedding at Cana in Galilee. When they run out of wine, Mary instructs the servers, *do whatever he tells you*. Jesus turns water into wine.

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK, JANUARY 23, 2022 THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Nehemiah 8: 2-4a, 5-6, 8-10

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 12-30, or 12: 12-14, 27

Gospel: Luke 1: 1-4; 4: 14-21

From Liturgical Commission Publishing, Lansing, MI

FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE

PARISH SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Parish Sacrificial Giving - Living Stewardship ~ Pillar of Prayer: As Mary intercedes for the newlyweds, let us ask to intercede for us as well. This week pray extra Hail Marys and ask her for the wisdom and courage to "do whatever He tells you."

Sunday Offering ~ January 8/9, 2022 \$5,838.00*
Same Week Last Year \$4,389.00*

Mass Attendance for ~ January 8/9, 2022 307
Same Week Last Year 286**

Christmas Offering to Date \$44,724.00*
Christmas Last Year \$55,239.00

Faith Direct ~ December, 2021 \$9,919.24
(4 Sundays at \$2,480.00 per week)

**Does not include Faith Direct*

***Mass Attendance at 50% capacity under*

2021 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

St. Mary's Parish Assessed Goal	\$65,200.00
Amount Raised to Date	\$33,835.00
Numbers of Gifts and/or Pledges	100
Percentage of Goal	51.89%

Celebrants for the Weekend of January 22/23, 2022*

	Celebrants*	Lector
Sat. 5:00 pm	Fr. Valentine	P. Kalenka - L
Sun 7:30 am	Fr. Valentine	M. Doran - L
9:00 am	Fr. Lauder	C. Vanatta - L
11:00 am	Fr. Valentine	Volunteer Needed
12:30 pm	Fr. Valentine	M. Donaldson - L

* Subject to last minute changes.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

In observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, the Rectory Office will be closed on **Monday January 17, 2022**. There will be a 9:00 a.m. Mass in the church.



THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends:

If you've ever asked yourself, "What's wrong with the world?" you'd be in good company. The very question is the title of a 1910 book by the writer G.K. Chesterton, who was an odd figure for his time: an upper class English *Catholic*. His popularity stems from the much-beloved *Father Brown* novels, which even today are adapted as movies. Those of us who attended the seminary are familiar with Chesterton's more theological works: *Orthodoxy*, *Heretics*, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, and *The Dumb Ox* (the life of St. Thomas Aquinas). Chesterton was a passionate apologist for Catholicism, all while making his case with equal parts self-effacement and dry humor. Legend has it that the editor of the *Times of London* asked the famous writers of the time, "What is *wrong* with the world?" According to the Chesterton Society, he is known to have replied, "Dear Sir, *I am*. Yours, G.K. Chesterton." Ha! Only a genuinely humble person can be trusted with great questions like God, existence, life and death, good and evil, and all the rest. According to *Wikipedia*, Chesterton admired but sharply criticized two of the greatest wits of his time: Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw. He rejected Wilde's pessimistic hedonism because for Chesterton, the hope of heaven is true realism. (One thing *Wikipedia* does *not* mention is that Wilde embraced the Church in his last days, finding in it the peace and joy that had eluded him in life.) Likewise, Chesterton repudiated many of Shaw's most deeply held convictions, among them "progressivism" and eugenics. The first amounts to a kind of contempt for the human condition and the weakness and limitation it implies. Shaw also championed the idea, quite popular at the time, that certain races were inherently superior to others. (Sounds familiar?) Sad to say: unlike Wilde, Shaw never considered the Christian message for himself. Strange, isn't it, that popular doctrines diminishing human dignity keep popping up throughout history? Civilization has perhaps always felt the lure of pleasure, and panicked in the face of pain or sacrifice. But from my perch, I've also noticed that when human beings—imperfect as they may be—refuse to conform to dehumanizing policies and practices that are presently being foisted upon society, that they are deemed "less than": intelligent, moral, even *human*...

All of which leads to Chesterton's famous quote from his book. He writes: "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult, and left untried." Amen. Let's face it: the Gospel asks nothing less than *everything* from us. Jesus tells the rich young man: "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor; you have riches in heaven. Then come and follow me." Now of course it would be wrong to read the Scriptures literally, or at least every time. (Parents would be negligent not to see to the temporal needs of their families.) Still, when an individual allows the full force of the gospel to dictate the course of one's life...the result is nothing short of miraculous. One such individual is the founder of western monasticism, St. Antony of the Desert, the 3rd-century "rich young man" who took the challenge of the Lord seriously, renouncing a life of luxury, and seeking God through a life of poverty, prayer, work. His denial of riches appears to have served him the way blindness sharpens a person's other senses. He retained every bit Scripture so that books became unnecessary; his battles against demonic forces attest to his utter reliance upon God; and his attention to the movements of the heart made him a master of the spiritual life, whose knowledge benefitted people from all backgrounds. We Catholics know that the Christian life is difficult, but we have also experienced the blessings that accrue to it. Let us pray to St. Antony that we may be equal to the task—and the glory—of Christian discipleship.

Faithfully,
Fr. Valentine

ST. MARY'S CHURCH CHOIR REGISTRATION FORM

(Please fill out and return to the Rectory)

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Voice (check): Soprano ____ Alto ____ Tenor ____ Bass ____



**Choir Rehearsals have begun on Thursday evenings
from 7:30 to 9:00 PM in the Lower Church.
All are welcome!**

PARISH REGISTRATION REQUEST

I/we would like to register in the parish of St. Mary's.

Please send me a Parish Census to complete so I can become a parishioner of St. Mary's. Please send my Census to:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

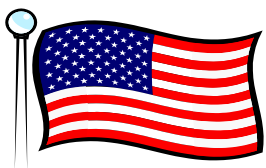
Please return to the Rectory Office

FAITH DIRECT

The most convenient and secure way for your weekly offering to fund and support our parish's ministries is eGiving through *Faith Direct*. To enroll, go online to www.faithdirect.net and use our parish code **NY559**, or fill out an enrollment form from the parish office and mail the form to Faith Direct.

Please note that because it takes time for the envelope company to process changes, you may still receive weekly envelopes for a while after signing up with Faith Direct. And you will continue to receive special mailings and mailings at Christmas and Easter.

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVE



Lord, hold these men and women in your loving hands and protect them as they protect us and bless them for their self-forgetting acts. We pray for peace in our world and an end to war. Amen.

CAPT Brendan Echausse
COL Daniel Friend
PV1 Joseph M. Friend
CDR Christian R. Foschi
PFC Steven Hyyti
CAPT David Jacobs
SK1 John D. Klick
PFC Michael P. Lanciki
CAPT Eric W. Lipp

LCpl Caitlin Lyons
LT Dennis Mackin
Cpl Tommy Mozer
SGT Julio Ortiz II
LCpl Jonathan Peres
SSGT Jonathan Porto
PVT Michael Starczewski
SPC Luke Whitting
RCT Jordan J. Williams

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protector against the
wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him,
we humbly pray;
And do Thou,
O Prince of the Heavenly Host,
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**





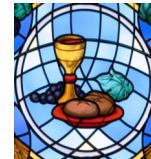
Through your generous donations, St. Mary's Human Concerns again made Christmas joyous for more than 55 families in our community. Many of the gift cards and food vouchers were donated anonymously.

Thanks to one and all for your generosity and support.

MASS INTENTIONS

Mass intentions are available for weekdays and weekends in January and February 2022. Please call the Rectory Office at 621-6222 if you wish to arrange for Masses.

Thank you.



HUMAN CONCERNS MINISTRY

FOOD PANTRY IN URGENT NEED:

St. Mary's Food Pantry has had a great demand for food, and is running low on staples.

We ask that when you do your grocery shopping, you consider purchasing extra items to donate to the Food Pantry.



The Human Concerns Food Pantry is in urgent need of the following items: soups, cereals, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, and cookies.

Gift cards from Stop & Shop or other food stores will also be helpful. Please bring your donations to Msgr. Ryan Hall at 440 Round Hill Road, Roslyn Heights.

Those in need of food or other supplies may call Elsie Calderone at 626-1097, or send her an email to outreachstmary7@gmail.com in order to sign up with Human Concerns. After registration is complete, they may come to Msgr. Ryan Hall to pick up supplies from 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Fr. Lauder's Catholic Novel

Fr. Lauder's Series of 50 lectures on the Catholic Novel, each 15 minutes long, are available on YouTube.

Current Covid Guidelines The Diocesan Office of the Vicar General

The Governor of New York State has included houses of worship in her recent directives. Therefore we ask that all parishioners (two years of age and older) to comply with the requirements to wear masks when participating in any activities on parish grounds. The state requirement is currently in effect until January 15, 2022. We will continue to adapt accordingly as new information becomes available. Your patience and Christian charity towards one another during this difficult time is appreciated.



300 CLUB

of St. Mary's



- 300 Club enrollment is open to St. Mary's parishioners, friends & family
- 300+ members at \$100.00 each subscription
- THREE prizes are awarded monthly:
 - 1st \$250.00
 - 2nd \$100.00
 - 3rd \$50.00
- A \$1000.00 Grand Prize is awarded at year end

When.....

Enroll by March 18, 2022

First Monthly Winner....

March 31, 2022

Grand Prize Drawing

March 2023

Fill out, tear off and mail in the form below..

Name _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____ Phone _____

Number Choice:

Choose a number between 305 and 999 (existing members can keep current number or request a new one)

1st Choice _____

Keep my 2019/2020 number(s) _____

2nd Choice _____

Auto Pick a number for me _____

Membership is \$100.00 for one year for each number. Make check payable to **St. Mary's Church**

Mail form and check to: Church of St. Mary, 110 Bryant Avenue, Roslyn NY 11576 (or place in the collection basket.)

Processional Hymn:

Hail to the Lord's Anointed



1. Hail to the Lord's A - noint - ed, Great Da - vid's Great-er Son!
2. He comes with suc - cor speed - y To those who suf - fer wrong;
3. To him shall prayer un - ceas - sing And dai - ly vows as - cend;



Hail in the time ap - point - ed, His reign on earth be - gun!
 To help the poor and need - y, And bid the weak be strong;
 His king dom still in - creas - ing A king-dom with- out end.



He comes to break op - pres - sion, To set the cap - tives free;
 To give them songs for sigh - ing, Their dark- ness turn to light.
 The tide of time shall nev - er His cov - e - nant re - move,



To take a - way trans - gres - sions, And rule in eq - ui - ty.
 Whose souls, con-demned and dy - ing, Are pre-cious in his sight.
 His name shall stand for - ev - er; That name to us is love.

Responsorial Psalm



Pro - claim his mar-vel-ous deeds to all the na - tions.

Offertory Hymn: Come, Join in Cana's Feast

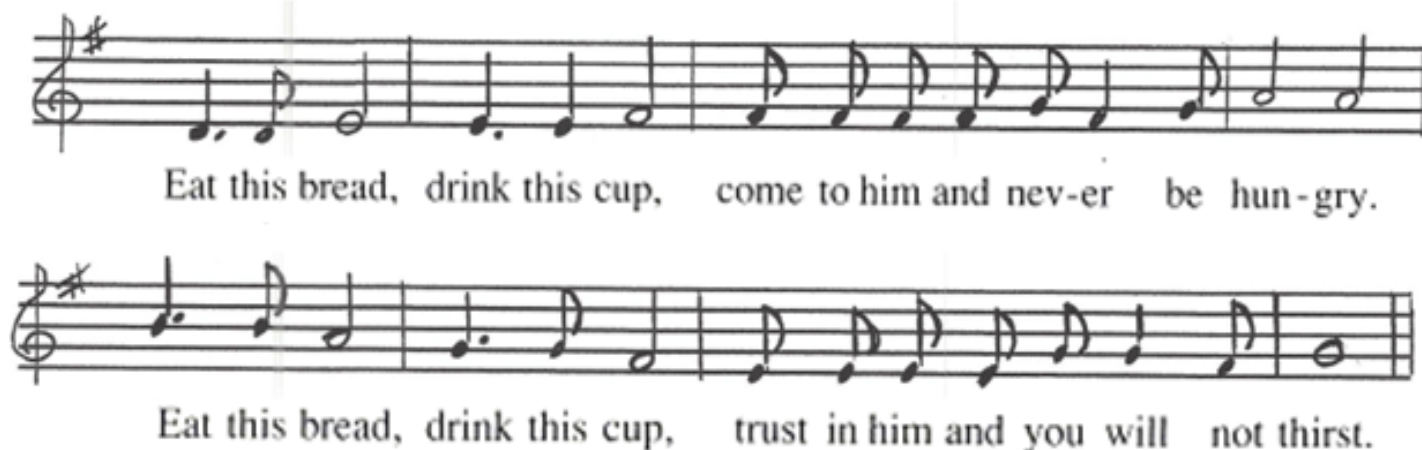


1. Come, join in Ca - na's feast Where
 2. The old wine now is gone From
 3. But Christ, the Word made flesh, Bids

Christ is hon-ored guest. He wel-comes all who
 jars that stand a - part. No long-er can it
 wa - ter turn to wine. He fills our emp-ty

come to taste The wine his hands have blessed.
 sat - is - fy The yearn - ing, thirst - ing heart
 cups a - gain With grace and truth di - vine.

Communion Hymn: Eat This Bread



Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to him and nev-er be hun-gry.

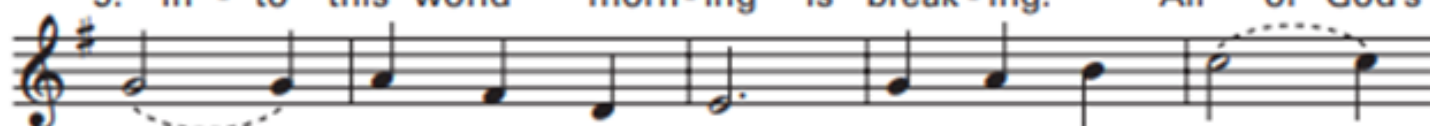
Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in him and you will not thirst.

Recessional Hymn: Christ, Be Our Light

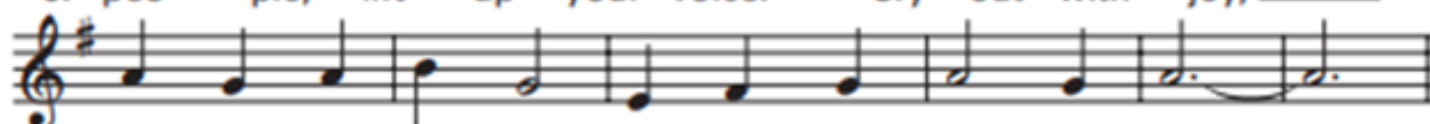
Verses



1. This is the night of new be - gin - nings. This is the
 2. This is the night Christ our re - deem - er rose from the
 3. Now will the fire kin - dled in dark - ness burn to dis -
 4. Sing of the hope deep - er than dy - ing. Sing of the
 5. In - to this world morn - ing is break - ing. All of God's



1. night when heav - en meets earth. This is the night _____
 2. grave tri - um - phant and free, leav - ing the tomb of
 3. pel the shad - ows of night. Star of the morn - ing,
 4. pow'r _____ strong - er than death. Sing of the love _____
 5. peo - ple, lift up your voice. Cry out with joy, _____

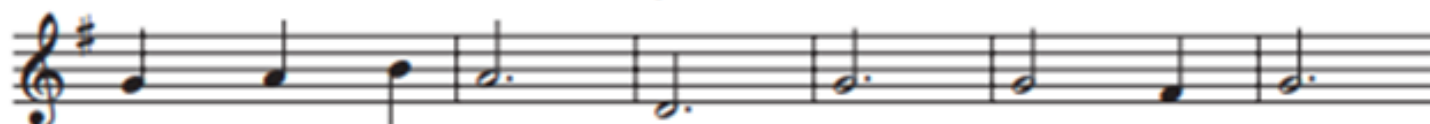


1. filled with God's glo - ry, prom - ise of our new birth!
 2. e - vil and dark - ness, emp - ty for all to see.
 3. Je - sus our Sav - ior, you are the world's true light!
 4. end - less as heav - en, dawn - ing through - out the earth.
 5. tell out the sto - ry, all of the earth re - joice.

Refrain



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.



Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light!



Shine in your church gath - ered to - day.

The following three pages are a reprint of last week's bulletin - January 8/9, 2022

Our apologies for the error in last year's bulletin on the weekend of January 8th & 9th. Thank you for your patience.

Mass Intentions

Sunday January 9, 2022 thru
Sunday January 16, 2022

Financial Page

December 18/19, 2021
December 26, 2021
January 1/2, 2022
Christmas, 2021

Fr. Valentine's Pastor's Page

January 8/9, 2022

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

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Also by appointment

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Please notify the Rectory and Human Concerns

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK**

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Barbara Coe
Rebekah Cole
Virginia Connors
Emma Cook
Kevin Cronin
Paul Cronin
John Damiano
Linda De Stio
John Paul DiNonno
James Dougherty
Eric DuBois
Elizabeth Fenamore
Natalie Finamore
Noel Glen
Stephen Grabher
Ida Kelly

Christine Kenney
Maria Kim
Douglas Knehr
Anne Krukowski
Frank Krukowski
Richard Malon
Jonathan Mannina
Marilyn Manning
Stuey Manzione
Freida Navarro
Victoria Oxer
Justin Paradine
Marion Prendergast
Gregory Racaniello
Jaxon Rivera
Roy Rodrigues
Charles Strecker
Peter Vanatta
Clotida Vecchione
Jacqueline Verde
Anne Wright
Mary Wybaillie
Anthony

...AND FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED



John Rafferty

**THE MASS INTENTIONS
FOR THE WEEK****Sunday January 9: BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

7:30 a.m. People of the Parish
9:00 a.m. Marie Farriacielli
by The Dellavecchia Family
11:00 a.m. Gerri LaRosa Cowan
by John Della Ratta
Tom McCormack
by The Abramowitz Family
Lucyan Wierzbicki
by Irene & Family
12:30 p.m. Fred Dimino
by Jo Dimino

Monday January 10: Weekday (First week in Ordinary Time)

9:00 a.m. Antonio Piazza
by Vito & Maria Greco

Tuesday January 11: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Dolores O'Hara
by Richard O'Hara

Wednesday January 12: Weekday

9:00 a.m. For the intentions of Alba Vezza
by The Govoni Family

Thursday January 13: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Leon Cempa
by The Wheelers Family

Friday January 14: Weekday

9:00 a.m. Mary Lenihan
by The Sheerin Family

Saturday January 15: Weekday

5:00 p.m. Margaret Ellen Breen Hayes
by Barbara Nakelski
Cornelia Massimo
by Her daughter

Sunday January 16: SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:30 a.m. People of the Parish
9:00 a.m. George Berardinelli
by Paula Berardinelli
11:00 a.m. Tom McCormack
by Angelo, Roseann & Michael Stanco
David Sullivan
by MaryAnne & Richard Collins
12:30 p.m. Thomas Dredger
by Joan Grau

READINGS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 2022 THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

First Reading: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11

Second Reading: Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7

Gospel: Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

FOCUS: *The grace of God has appeared, saving all.*

All grace we receive - actual and sanctifying - comes through God's kindness, generous love, and mercy. Nothing we do merits this gift, or the salvation it provides. Through the sacraments, first among them baptism, we are infused with the Holy Spirit and made *heirs in hope of eternal life*.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Isaiah speaks the Lord's words for Jerusalem to take comfort because their *service is at an end*. In the second reading, Paul writes that *[Christ] saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit*. In the Gospel, after Jesus is baptized, the Spirit descends upon him, and a voice speaks from heaven.

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK, JANUARY 16, 2022 SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Isaiah 62: 1-5

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

Gospel: John 2: 1-11

From Liturgical Commission Publishing, Lansing, MI

Celebrants for the Weekend of January 15/16, 2022

	Celebrants*	Lector
Sat. 5:00 pm	Fr. Valentine	Volunteer Needed
Sun 7:30 am	Fr. Lauder	Volunteer Needed
9:00 am	Fr. Valentine	Volunteer Needed
11:00 am	Fr. Valentine	J. Ferreira - L
12:30 pm	Fr. Valentine	Volunteer Needed

* Subject to last minute changes.

FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE

PARISH SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Parish Sacrificial Giving - Living Stewardship ~ Pillar of Hospitality: As baptized Catholics, we are on a mission to spread the Good News to all those we meet. One of the ways we can do this is by lending a hand to someone in need. Perhaps you have an elderly friend, neighbor or relative who could use a hand around the house this week? Reach out to them and honor God with your works.

Sunday Offering ~ December 18/19, 2021 \$7,104.00*
Same Week Last Year \$5,294.00*

Mass Attendance for ~ December 18/19, 2021 443
Same Week Last Year 305**

Sunday Offering ~ December 26, 2021 \$2,527.00*
Same Week Last Year \$5,924.00*

Mass Attendance for ~ December 26, 2021 192
Same Week Last Year 247**

Sunday Offering ~ January 1/2, 2022 \$5,777.00*
Same Week Last Year \$6,332.00*

Mass Attendance for ~ January 1/2, 2022 299
Same Week Last Year 299**

Christmas Offertory to Date \$41,174.00*
Christmas Last Year \$55,239.00

Mass Attendance for Christmas 688
Christmas Last Year 357**

**Does not include Faith Direct*

***Mass Attendance at 50% capacity under Covid 19 Guidelines*

A REMINDER REGARDING DONATIONS TO ST. MARY'S

All checks should be made payable to **St. Mary's Church**. If the check is for a special purpose, please indicate that on the memo line. For example: Human Concerns, 300 Club, Religious Education, Diocesan Collection, etc.



THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends:

"Is Jesus Christ the Son of God?" *[thinks]*

God: Jesus was my son. Buddha was my son. Mohammed. Moses. You. The man who said there was no room in the inn was my Son. And so is the one who charges eleven dollars for a steak. *[Oh, God! (1977), starring George Burns]*

Cute word game, no? By the same logic, thirty minutes with commercials is all you need to understand the meaning of life, reconcile enemies, comfort widows, and guide teenagers through adolescence. Yet celebrities preach endless, nonsensical sermons about "morality" with a fanaticism worthy of the Spanish Inquisition. They've got it backwards. The Old Testament prophet Micah (6:8), distinguishing true religion from its pagan counterpart, tells us: "You have been told, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: only to do the right and to love goodness, *and to walk humbly with your God!*" The modern version is: "Take God seriously, and don't take yourself too seriously." We should not limit God with our small ideas.

It demands a lot to explore the great questions of life; clever answers never satisfy us. This is particularly true when it comes to our relationship with God our Father. Today, the Church celebrates the Baptism of the Lord, when the crowd hears the Father speak directly to Jesus: "You are my Son; with you I am well pleased." OK, so Jesus is God's Son. But then isn't Buddha, or Mohammed, or you, the son (or daughter) of God? If so, the claim of Jesus' unique relationship to the Father becomes meaningless. So how do we approach the question?

The Catholic tradition, thank heaven, is rooted in the idea of *analogy*, according to which the same word enjoys various levels of meaning. This is how, e.g. we explain that things exist, but God *is* Existence. Likewise, then we say Jesus is God's "Son," we mean that everything God is, Jesus is: creator of the world, source of our existence, and the one in whom we have eternal life. We are not sons or daughters of God in this sense, for we do not possess the divine nature. Yet Jesus also shares in our human nature, which is why he could be born, grow, eat and drink, feel pleasure and pain, learn, and die just as we do. What is special about the Baptism of Christ is that, through him, believers receive the "Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom. 8:15). Jesus is God's Son by *nature*, and we, by *adoption*. The same Holy Spirit that descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove is the same Spirit that animates the Church today, the Spirit that binds us to one another and to God. In the Mass for St. John the Baptist, we pray: "To make holy the flowing waters he baptized the very author of Baptism." Jesus blesses the waters of baptism so we may become the "children of God" (1 John 3:2).

Our artwork this week is Pietro Perugino's "Baptism of Christ" (1482) which resides in the Sistine Chapel. Notice that the central figure of the painting is the Holy Spirit. Catholics should remember that the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, and that the Spirit is the bond of love between us. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit may anoint us as he does the Servant of God (Is. 42:1-4) to bring the good news of Christ to our world.

Faithfully,
Fr. Valentine