

DISCIPLES CALLED TO WITNESS

St John the Evangelist Parish / St. Mary Parish

Bellaire - Neffs - Shadyside - Powhatan Point

www.bnspcatholic.org

Mission Statement : Inspired by the Holy Spirit and our Lord Jesus Christ, we strive to grow in faith, love and service to God and our neighbors.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C, DAILY READINGS CYCLE I DECEMBER 8TH, 2024

St John Church (SJ) - 415 37th St, Bellaire, OH 43906

St. Mary Church (SM) - 240 E 40th St, Shadyside, OH 43947

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 4:00 PM - SM Saturday 5:30 PM - SJ
Sunday 11:00 AM - SM Sunday 9:30 AM - SJ

WEEKDAY MASS

6:00 p.m. (Mon.) SJ 8:00 a.m. (Wed. & Fri.) – SJ 8:00 a.m. (Tues. & Thurs.) - SM 8:00 a.m.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. - SM
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. - SJ
Monday: 5:00p.m. - 5:45p.m. - SJ
Tuesday & Thursday: 7:30 -7:45a.m. - SM
Wednesday & Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 7:45a.m. - SJ

CENTRAL OFFICE

3745 Tallman Ave., Bellaire, OH 43906
Phone - (740) 676-0051 - Fax - (740) 671-9776
Email: office@bnspcatholic.org

**Office Hours: M,W,F -
8:00am- 12:00pm / 1:00pm-4:00pm**

Fr. Daniel Heusel, Pastor (SJ), Pastor (SM)

Cell: (740) 298-4158

Email: dheusel@diosteub.org

Mrs. Tonya Grimm, Secretary
(740) 676-0051

Email: stjohns3745@comcast.net

St. Mary Central Grade School, Martins Ferry

(740) 633-5424

Mrs. Theresa Young, Principal



We use Flocknote to connect with you!

1. Text MISSION2LOVE to 84576 or 2.Go to StJohnandStMaryparishes.flocknote.com and sign up there! Receive updates, including the weekly bulletin, via email and text message!



www.fb.me/stjohn.bellaire.neffs
www.fb.me/stmary.shadyside.powhatan



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."
- Lk 3:5-6

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. RLP

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your son, but may our Learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Collect of the Second Sunday of Advent

RESCUED



MESSAGE SERIES

Why am I here? Where am I going? How do I get there? We struggle with these questions because we've lost the story, the big picture of reality as God has created it. The story of reality is actually gospel, "good news"! How can we believe and be transformed by the gospel? Once we understand that the gospel is not merely "good" news but explosive, life-changing news, we will never be the same again. And in response to God's work in our lives, what part can we play in recreating the world for God's good plan? This 4-week series prepares us to celebrate Christmas by helping us to see the world through God's lens, with a clear vision of the plot and the outcome of the story we're living in, a story we can easily remember and explain in four words: Created—Captured—Rescued—Response
Week Two: Captured - Why is everything so messed up?

Scripture: Luke 3:3

There is only one God and he is good and loving. He created everything to be good. How did it go so wrong? God did not create evil but he gave both the angels and human beings freedom. One angel rebelled out of envy and others joined him. We have an enemy who seeks to destroy us, Satan, or, the Devil. He tempted our first parents to turn away from God through sin. Now we are in slavery to sin. We have been captured and are in need of rescue.

Fr. Dan's Intentions for the Week

Saturday, December 7th, 2nd Sunday of Advent
 4:00p.m. (SM) + Janie Vasey (Brothers & Sisters)
 5:30p.m. (SJ) + Patricia Cervelli 3 year anniversary
 deceased (Family)

Sunday, December 8th, 2nd Sunday of Advent
 9:30a.m. (SJ) + Patsy Tedeschi (The Eller Family)
 11:00a.m.(SM) + For the people of St. John's & St. Mary's

Monday, December 9th The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

***9:00a.m. (SM)** + Pearl Rubino (Fr. Dan Heusel)
 ***12:05 (SJ)** + For the People of St. John's & St. Mary's
 ***6:00p.m. (SM)** + Rick Boron (Merryman & Soos Families)

Tuesday, December 10th, Our Lady of Loreto
 8:00a.m. (SM) + Bailey Bellissimo (Fr. Dan Heusel)

Wednesday, December 11th, St. Damasus 1
 8:00a.m. (SJ) + Josephine Busack (Bob & Andrea Koteles)

Thursday, December 12th, Our Lady of Guadalupe
 9:00a.m. (SM) +Walter & Marge Waligura Jr. (Family)

Friday, December 13th, St. Lucy
 8:00a.m. (SJ) + Patricia Bates (Catholic Woman's Club)

Saturday, December 14th
 4:00p.m. (SM) + Larry Phillips (Paula & Sons)
 5:30p.m. (SJ) Paula St. John Happy Birthday (Daughter ~ Tonya)

Sunday, December 15th
 9:30a.m. (SJ) + Norma Harpur Bladen & William Norman Bladen (Chris Bladen)
 11:00a.m.(SM) + For the People of St. Mary's & St. John's

Mass Times for the Holy Day of Obligation

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Monday: 9:00a.m. St. Mary's Church
 12:05p.m. St. John's Church
 6:00p.m. St. Mary's Church



Lord, bless and protect those serving our country,

especially: Lt. Col. Brian Zeno, Airmen 1st Class Curtis McElfresh, Sgt. Christopher Wetzell, Lance Corporal Zachary Knowlton, Staff Sgt. Wm. Kayne Melko, HTF Kory Melko, Sgt. Joshua Hall, Staff Sgt. Aaron Loeffler, Tech Sgt. Craig DeBeni, Major Trey Vasey, Capt. Tom Dyer, Staff Sgt. Josh Pempek, Mitchell Rataiczak, Master Sgt. Chris Dipold, Sgt. Ryan James, Sgt. Dylan Frizzi, Sgt. Jake Foster and Pvt William Clegg , Petty Officer Alex Rader, Pvt. Colton T. Selmon, 1st Lt. DJ Olexa, Staff Sgt. Kelsey (Ryncarz) Turner, Senior Airman Cameron Opic, PFC D'eondre Burney, Petty Officer Jared Keiser, Petty Officer Brody P. Halenar, Major Alex Beveridge, Lance Cpl. Keenan Cook

Weekend of November December 14/15

St. John's :
Dec. 14th EM: C. Biden **Lector :** T. Bonfini
Dec. 15th EM: T. Young **Lector :** L.A. Bonfini

St. Mary's :
Dec. 14th EM: J. Ferrelli **Lector:** S. Ferrelli
Dec. 15th EM: L. Kernik **Lector:** M. Brown

Offertory Collection

For the Weekend of November 30/December 1st

St. John's: Adult (109env) \$8,955, Loose \$346, Christmas (7env) \$102, Christmas Flowers (22env) \$440, Religious Retirement (1env) \$100, St. Vincent de Paul (6env) \$136, Grade School (1env) \$50, Building Fund (3env) \$45, Candles \$213.79

St. Mary's: Adult (42env) \$1,615, Loose \$185, Christmas (2env) \$145, Christmas Flowers (19env) \$438, Religious Retirement (1env) \$20, St. Vincent de Paul (1env) \$100, Grade School (2env) \$35, Building Fund (4env) \$110, Food Pantry (6env) \$477, Youth Group (1env) \$200

PRAYER LIST



Please Note: *This prayer list is an important part of our love for our brothers and sisters in need. Names will be included on this list for four weeks at a time. After four weeks a person's name will be removed but can be added again the next week simply by calling the office. Please pray for the following:* Vicky Oboy, Lindy & Don Freed, Jax McCort, Dominic Alexander, Lou Ann Kinder, Fr. Sam Saprano, Mgrs. Gene Mullett, Fr. Tom Petronek, Dorothy Kresak, Jeff & Mandy Fahey, Quentin Scott Coyne, Magan Nichole Sechrest, Jeremy Chirpas, Tyce Hughes, Isaac Salva, Baby Everett Sommers, Lucy Kowalski, John Bires Jr., Shannon Koher, Ed and Rose Grammar, Susan Gray, Jackie (Donahue) Woods, Joe Boston Jr., Camden Brown, Peggy Kotson, Tom Galinski, Susan Vasey, Bob, Bill & Tom, "Chic" & Debbie Henderson, Kay Bambeck, Mary Kay Hanasky, Ann Hodges, Zachary Oboy, Tom & Margie Merryman, Craig Blacker, Patrick Strain and granddaughter, Halen, Jim Garczyk, Natalie McFeley, John Hanasky, Beverly Kolenich Beau Boston, Sharon Leonard, Rosalind Fitch, Trey Nelms, Michelle (Tamborllo) Glover, Joey Sabinsky, Brian B., Jaime Ellis, Roger Peters, Mary Siglar, Anthony De Genova, Jerry & Phyllis, Adam Ruskowski, Jeff Doneson, Joe Budrevich, Rudy Bresiger, Cathy Ciulles, Warren Wright , Rich Price, Marlyn Marling, Jay Morgan, Kathy Kavmirski, Sherri Rader, Sandy (Donahue) Bass, Kyrie Vincent, Kevin Roseberry, Janice Arno, Andrew Zaborek, Kim Scott, Joyce Mellott, Cookie Busack, Gwen Brown, Bobby Roth, Peg Stipetich, Sarah Stipetich, Rhonda Tipton, Rebecca Brown, Mary DeGenova, Megan Kristin Sechrest, Lori Runyan, Monroe DeLuca, Albert DeBlasis, Mary Jo Garner, Camden Thomas, Julie Sharpe



Memorial Donations to St. John's Church

In Memory of Mary Catherine Nixon by Ed & Sandra Marling
In Memory of Carol DeVendra by Dennis Pogany.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Carol DeVendra & Thomas Frank Sable**. We offer our prayers also for their loved ones. *If you have a family member that dies but was not buried from our parishes please call the parish office, we would like to include them here in this space.*



ADVENT SMALL GROUPS

We are beginning our Small Groups this week. We have several of groups that meet at different times. Its not too late to join—if you see a day and time that you like just call or text me at (740) 298-4158.:

- Sunday afternoon Women’s Group (1:30pm)
- Sunday evening Women’s Group (6:30pm)
- Sunday evening Mixed Group (6:30pm—starts next Sunday, December 15th)
- Monday afternoon Mixed Group (1:00pm.)
- Tuesday evening Women’s Group (6:30pm).
- Wednesday evening Men’s Group (6:30pm).
- Thursday morning Women’s Group, (after morning mass)
- Thursday afternoon Mixed Group (1:30pm)
- Saturday morning Men’s Group (8:15am)

We will be getting to know each other and studying the Rescued book. If you have any questions please call or text me at (740) 298-4158.



ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
ANNUAL GIVING TREE

The St. Vincent de Paul’s 10th annual Giving Tree begins this weekend! We are helping 21 Bellaire children to have a special Christmas. Many thanks for your support—we look forward to another successful year! Gifts may be returned at St. John weekend masses through December 8th. Monetary donations welcome (we will shop for you!) - Give to a SVdP member at the tree; we are happy to provide you with a receipt if needed. Please do not return your gift at daily mass (unless you give directly to Fr Dan). Contact us to arrange pick-up to ensure your gift is received. Questions? Call Pam (304) 280-9089 or Kelli (304) 281-6779. Thank You!

This Week

- Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Advent**
 - 9:30-10:45 Family Faith Formation (SM)
 - 5:00pm Advent Lessons and Carols (SJ)
 - 6:30pm 7th-12th Grade Youth Group (SMRE)
- Monday: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary—Patroness of St. Mary Church, Shadyside. A Holy Day of Obligation.** See mass schedule on page 2.
- Tuesday: 9:00am-5:00pm Eucharistic Adoration (SM)**
 - 12:00 p.m. Holy Hour in Honor of the Immaculate Conception (SM)
 - 6:00pm Pastoral Council (SJ)
- Wed. 6:30p.m. Penance Service St. Joseph (Tiltonsville)**
6:30p.m. Evening Prayer in Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Thursday: 6:00p.m. St. Vincent de Paul (SJH)**
7:00p.m. OCIA (SJH)
- Next Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Advent**
 - 9:30-10:45 Family Faith Formation (SM)
 - 3:00p.m. Penance Service (SJ)



GOSPEL MEDITATION

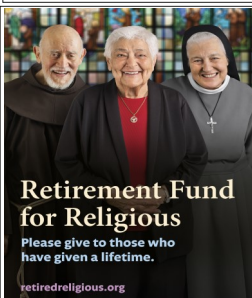
In the year 1995, in the seventeenth year of my life, when Fife Symington was governor of Arizona, Bill Clinton was president of the United States, Chuck Keiffer was pastor of St. Theresa parish in Phoenix, Arizona, and Ron and Mary were my parents, the word of God came to my youth minister Eric and through him I started to see the salvation of God. Soon, Christ came into my life never to leave. I’m thankful beyond words.

Why am I being so specific, you ask? Because in the Gospel this week we hear the specific names of people holding civic and religious authority in first century Palestine when **“the word of God came to John the Baptist:”** Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip, Lysanias, Annas, Caiaphas, and Zechariah. All this is meant to help us see that God breaks into our *history*, into real human events. Jesus is no mere myth. He is the Word-which-breaks-in, in concrete moments, you might say. And now we anticipate his coming once again in our specific situations.

Advent challenge: Name as many civic and religious leaders who are in authority currently in your life. Now, name who the potential John the Baptists may be. A spouse? A friend? A podcaster? A work colleague who brings God’s word to you? Spend a moment considering that this comprises the concrete, historical setting into which Christ wishes to come. Then, with these specifics in mind, pray: “Come, Lord Jesus. Come.”

— *Father John Muir*

©LPi



Woman and men religious offer gratitude.

“Sincere thanks to the donors of the Retirement Fund for Religious. I hope we meet, if not in this world, then in the next,” says Sister Teresa Korycka, 81 of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. Your gift impacts over 24,000 senior women and men religious, providing them a dignified retirement. To learn how your donation helps, visit retiredreligious.org

ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

Join us for the second year of a beautiful new Advent tradition for our parishes. This Sunday, December 8, at 5:00pm at St. John’s. This beautiful, meditative, prayer service combines scripture readings (the lessons) with Advent hymns (the carols) to help us see God’s promise of a Savior, fulfilled in the birth of Jesus!



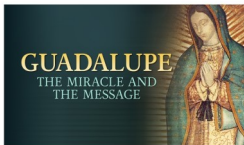
Any child who would like to sing with the St. Mary’s Shadyside Choir for the Christmas Eve 4:00p.m. mass is asked to attend practice on Sunday, December 22nd., after the 11:00a.m. mass.

THIS WEEK ON
FORMED

Week of December 08, 2024



Christmas Special | Laugh and Grow Bible for Kids
Hosted by the Hopeful World, this beautiful retelling of the story of Jesus' birth will help kids understand the true meaning of Christmas. Viewers both young and old will be filled with hope as they recall God's promise fulfilled through our Savior's arrival.



Guadalupe: The Miracle and the Message
Enjoy this film narrated by Jim Caviezel that walks us through our Mother's miraculous appearance to Juan Diego, an encounter that has influenced the conversion of millions of people.



What Is The Immaculate Conception?
What is the Immaculate Conception? Use this video to help teach kids about this great mystery of our faith.

Our parish has a FORMED subscription.
Visit signup.formed.org and select our parish name.

An offering from the AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE and *gracialis process*



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We use Flocknote to stay connected!

1. Text MISSION2LOVE to 84576 or
2. Go to StJohnandStMaryparishes.flocknote.com and sign up there! Receive updates,

including the weekly bulletin, and daily reminders via email and text message! It's free for you!



MASSTIMES.ORG

Travelling? Never miss a weekend mass by finding mass times near your destination. Just go to masstimes.org and enter the city, state or zip code of the place you'll be visiting. And bring Fr. Dan back a bulletin!

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS AND THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

3rd Sunday of Advent / December 15, 2024

First Reading:

The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a mighty savior;
he will rejoice over you with gladness. (Zep 3:17)

Psalm:

Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel. (Is 12:6)

Second Reading:

The Lord is near.
Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God. (Phil 4:5-6)

Gospel:

The crowds asked John the Baptist,
"What should we do?" (Lk 3:10)

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CCC 30, 163, 301, 736, 1829, 1832, 2015, 2362: joy
CCC 523-524, 535: John prepares the way for the Messiah
CCC 430-435: Jesus the Savior

Readings for the week of December 8, 2024

Sunday: Bar 5:1-9/Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6 (3)/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6

Monday: Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

Tuesday: Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13/Mt 18:12-14

Wednesday: Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30

Thursday: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

Friday: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19

Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Next Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 (6)/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18



PRAYER – FOR EVERYDAY AND EVERYBODY

Prayer of Preparation

With abiding hope as we look forward to Jesus' arrival —

Make straight the paths, Lord!
Fill us with holy excitement, in Your name.
Amen.

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

The Straight Path

Ten to fifteen years ago the Department of Transportation decided that it would be fun to give everyone in my zip code something to complain about and replaced most of our major intersections with roundabouts.

This wouldn't be so irksome, I suppose, if I understood how to navigate a roundabout. In theory I do, I've read all the rules and I've watched those cute little YouTube videos where they show you which car is supposed to go at what time. But theory and practice are rather different. And the bottom line is, I never approach a roundabout without taking a deep, anxious breath and tightening my grip on the steering wheel, not entirely sure what my next move should be.

I think of roundabouts every time I hear today's Gospel reading, where John the Baptist echoes Isaiah in beseeching us to make straight the paths of the Lord. See, I always think I've made a straight path between me and God. I go to Mass. I go to Confession. I say my prayers.

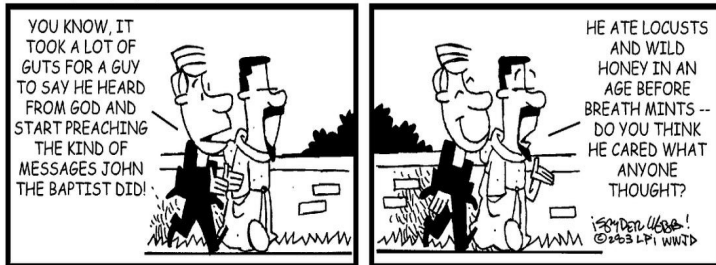
He can get to me if He wants, I tell myself.

But without realizing it, I put up roundabouts. I make rules. *You go here, God, and then I go here. I'll do this, God, but first You do this. You stay in your lane, and I stay in mine.* Eventually I find myself taking a different route altogether; the road that stretches between me and Him is too daunting. I start avoiding it.

Sometimes I think God wants the path to be straight not for Himself but for us. He can handle a roundabout. But He knows that when we must run to Him, we have to do it without thinking. In the dark. In fear, in anxiety.

So, this Advent, beware the roundabouts. Make straight the path. ©LPi

2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT



LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

John the Baptist was appointed to prepare the way for the Lord. This Advent, follow his example and prepare the way for the Lord. Invite the Lord to make straight the roads in your life that wind, and to smooth all that is rough in your heart.

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

God's Personal Assistants

If you have ever planned a large-scale event, whether it's a musical performance or a religious conference, you may have dealt with someone's personal assistant. Possibly this person would be a representative of the keynote speaker or the master of ceremonies for the local bishop; perhaps it's even the staffer of a local politician or the lackey of a well-known musical act.

Personal assistants are masters of stewardship — overseeing things in their boss' absence. They prepare the way. This person's job is to get everything ready for the person in charge, so that when he or she shows up — whoever he or she is — it's smooth sailing for them to do whatever it is they need to do: sing, speak, pray, mingle, what-have-you. It's usually a big job full of little things, a gig where attention to detail is key.

God is the guest of honor in our life, the keynote speaker, the main event. And what He wants — what He needs — to do is to change our hearts. Constantly, over, and over, and over again.

We are all His personal assistants in this endeavor. We need to prepare the way of the Lord, to make straight His paths. We need to make everything ready so that when He shows up — however He shows up, whether it's in the form of a neighbor in need or a burning bush right in front of us — everything is ready for Him to do His job.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPi

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



ST. JOHN'S AND ST. MARY'S DISCOVERY TOOL

POWERED BY MINISTRY ARCHITECTS VOLUNTEER ACCELERATOR

We offer to all our parishioners a short but powerful survey— what are calling our Discovery Tool! In just a few minutes, you'll have your results and a better sense of how your interests and gifts align with the service opportunities and ministries of our church. When we understand more about our God-given talents and what brings us joy and a sense of purpose, we are better equipped to walk in love -- serving God, our parish, and our community as Jesus calls us to do. Scan the QR code to find the link to the survey, or on our website - bnspcatholic.org

**SAINT OF THE WEEK –
EXAMPLES OF OUR
FAITH**

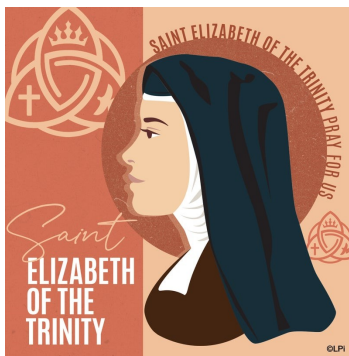
**St. Elizabeth of the Trinity |
November 8**

Biography

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity (1880-1906) was born Elizabeth Catez in Avor, France, where her father was stationed with the military. She was the eldest of two girls. Her father died in 1887 and the widow and her daughters moved to Dijon. Their apartment was close to the city's Carmelite monastery. Elizabeth was a stubborn child with a hot temper, but she was also a good student and an accomplished pianist.

Fascinated by the nuns at the nearby convent and inspired by Thérèse of Lisieux (also a Carmelite), Elizabeth began her religious journey. At just 14 years old she made a personal vow of virginity and set her mind on becoming a Carmelite. Elizabeth's mother opposed her desire to enter the convent and asked that she wait until she was 21. The saint worked with troubled youth and children, catechizing them while she waited.

Finally, Elizabeth was able to enter the Carmel in Dijon in 1901. She loved being a part of the community. She found particular peace and connection with the Trinity in contemplative prayer. Much of what she wrote has been published, including many of her letters and her prayer, "O My God, Trinity Whom I Adore." Elizabeth would be with the Carmelites for only five years before she succumbed to Addison's disease after much suffering. Before her death she said she was sure it would increase her joy in heaven if her friends asked for her help. She was canonized in 2016 by Pope Francis. Her fierce belief in the Trinity within us, reachable through contemplative prayer, and her deep wish that we embrace God's love by letting ourselves be loved are her powerful legacy. St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, pray for us!
© LPi



**WHY DO WE DO THAT? - CATHOLIC LIFE
EXPLAINED Las Posadas**

Question:

What is the Hispanic Advent custom of "Las Posadas"?

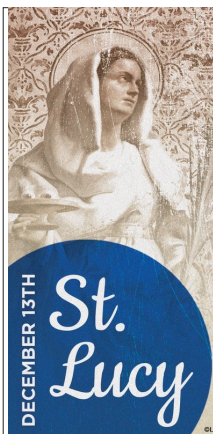
Answer:

"Posada" is the Spanish word for inn or lodging. "Las Posadas" refers to a traditional Advent custom in preparation for the birth of Jesus, beginning on December 16. For nine successive evenings, groups reenact the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem.

Two children dress as Mary and Joseph, sometimes with Mary riding on an actual donkey. They are usually accompanied by children dressed as angels and shepherds along with the Wise Men. Adults accompany them as they process to designated homes where they sing Christmas songs and request lodging. Part of the group enters the home and becomes the chorus that responds to the request for lodging. In the beginning the request is rebuffed. They move to several more homes where the ritual is repeated. Eventually, at the last home, their need is recognized, and they all enter the home where a party ensues. This is repeated in different neighborhoods and homes each of the nine days.

While this custom teaches children an important aspect of the Christmas story, it also emphasizes the need for hospitality to strangers and the continual need we all have to make room for Jesus in our "posada." As we struggle to arrive at a fair and just immigration policy, it would be good to recall the fact that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were also immigrants looking for a hospitable place to dwell.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



**SAINT OF THE WEEK –
EXAMPLES OF OUR FAITH**

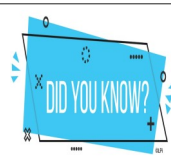
St. Lucy | Feast Day December 13

A name that means "light," St. Lucy (283 – 304) is the patron saint of those blind or suffering with eye trouble. Not much is known about her life, except that she was determined to remain a virgin and thus refused marriage. History tells the story of a frustrated suitor who eventually accused St. Lucy of being a Christian (at crime at the time), and she was executed in Syracuse, Sicily, in the year 304.


Today, we celebrate a number of traditions that incorporate symbolic meaning of St. Lucy as the "bearer" of light in the darkness of winter. This is particularly seen in Scandinavian countries, with their long dark winters. There, a young girl dressed in a white dress and a red sash (as the symbol of martyrdom) carries palms and wears a crown or wreath of candles on her head. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, girls dressed as Lucy carry rolls and cookies in procession as songs are sung. ©LPi

CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: Who does the first and second readings during Mass?




Answer: The Lector.



REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE
First Reading:
 The prophet Baruch offers the Israelites in Babylonian exile a vision of hope in which their broken relationship with God will be fully restored. Is there a broken relationship you could help heal this Advent season?


Second Reading:
 Paul prays with joy over the partnership he experiences with the believers in Phillipi. What relationships in your life bring you joy?

Gospel:
 Luke is careful to place the activities of John the Baptist in their proper historical and political context, showing how God acts in human history. Can you think of a time in your personal history when you felt God present?



SAINT OF THE WEEK – EXAMPLES OF OUR FAITH
St. John of the Cross


"Let us rejoice, O my Beloved!" December 14th is the feast of mystic, poet, and reformer, St. John of the Cross. St. Teresa of Avila enlisted his assistance in reforming the Carmelite order. The proposed reforms didn't go over well, and John was imprisoned. Rather than become discouraged or defiant, John turned to prayer. His time in prison resulted in some of the greatest mystical poetry the Church has seen. After his escape, his efforts were recognized and honored by the Carmelites. While he was appointed to the highest office in his order, dissension forced him into solitude again. Following Christ isn't always easy, nor will it always be received well by everyone around us. John of the Cross teaches us that these challenges can be opportunities to unite ourselves closer to Jesus.



BUILDING A CULTURE OF LIFE
The pain of abortion – from one who knows...

Respect All Life

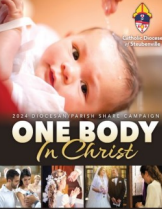
"When I found out I was pregnant, I was so scared and felt like I didn't know where to turn. I felt like I had no other choice. After I had my abortion I felt relief at first. But after 7 years of denial it finally hit me. I was so scared when I found out what an abortion really [is]. I was so angry at my family and boyfriend (now husband). I felt like nobody was there for me. I was angry at the clinic personnel for saying everything would be fine. I found Project Rachel and they helped me start to grieve [for] my child. So many women feel that if they had more support and truth during their crisis pregnancy many lives would have been saved." Help is available: Call 1-800-712-HELP.



Our Lady of Guadalupe

When Mary appeared to Juan Diego as Our Lady of Guadalupe, she had encouraging words for him. "Am I not here, I who am your mother?" In the image on Juan Diego's tilma (tunic), Mary identifies herself with the Aztec people. She has their hair and features, their symbolic maternity dress. She incorporated their important symbols of the sun, moon, and stars.

Today's Mass includes two Gospel options. Both are familiar passages from the Gospel of Luke - the Annunciation and the Visitation. Both are equally relevant to today's feast because Mary's yes to Christ isn't only to care for him but to come to us. Our Lady of Guadalupe is pregnant. The image bears witness to Mary's yes to conceive the Savior of the World. But even in her pregnancy, she goes to care for Elizabeth. Now Mother to all the world, Mary comes to the aid of her children, reminding them of her presence among them.



Please help us reach our 2024 D/PSC Campaign Goals
St. John Parish Goal: \$36,097 Total Received to Date : \$30,137.
St. Mary Parish Goal: \$19,038 Total Received to Date: \$19,235. Pledge cards/envelopes are available at the entrances to the church and also in the parish office.

★ ★ ★

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
 OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES IT'S NOT SO MUCH WHAT YOU SAY AS WHO YOU'RE SAYING IT TO.

FOR INSTANCE?

FOR INSTANCE, EVE SAID "YES" TO THE DEVIL, BUT MARY SAID "YES" TO GOD!

I SAY YES TO GOD, NOT TO THE DEVIL.



Immaculate Conception

"Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing!" December 8th is one of our feasts celebrating Mary - the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. From the beginnings of the Church, spiritual writers and theologians have acknowledged the

innocence and holiness of Mary. St. Irenaeus called her the "new Eve." Both faced with the pure freedom to accept or reject God, Mary began with work of redemption with her yes to Christ! The Church began to celebrate the feast of Mary's conception in the early Middle Ages. In 1854, Pope Pius IX infallibly declared that Mary was free of original sin from the first moment of her conception. On this feast day, we celebrate the beauty and goodness of Our Lady!

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

Be The Flame for Others

I remember growing up in Catholic school and having to make construction paper Advent wreaths every single year! The little yellow flames would be cut out and held until each new candle was lit. Great idea, except for the fact that the chance you could find the flames greatly diminished as each week passed. I will bet over 50% of the wreaths never received a 4th flame! Of course by then, most kids in elementary school had moved on to Christmas. Christmas was not a day. It was an entire experience of vacation from school.

You may or may not have an Advent wreath in your home or office, but those flames are rather insignificant to the flame that should be burning in our hearts during this season. How are you finding ways to light your fire? How are you preparing the way for Christ to come into your life and the lives of those around you in a more profound way?

The ritual of an Advent wreath is a good idea for anyone. But don't think that your preparations are done simply because you have one. You are called to be a flame to others during this season, reminding them of why we celebrate this time at all. Each person is a candle to be lit, and you have the gifts, given to you by God, to light them. At Christmas, you want God to look at you and see all the light generated by those He lit through you. Now is the time. Don't wait until Advent is almost over. You might not be able to find your own flames if you wait too long.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

"Did you hear about the shepherd who wanted a new job?"



"He fell asleep counting sheep."

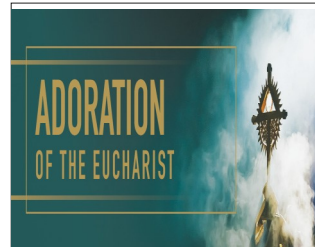


Shepherding was a lowly job in the biblical era, but shepherds were the first notified of Jesus' birth!

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Every Tuesday
9:00am—5:00pm,
St. Mary's Church
Benediction begins at 4:50pm
Come and be in His Presence!

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

OH MARY,
CONCEIVED
WITHOUT SIN,
PRAY FOR US
WHO HAVE
RECOURSE
TO THEE.



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The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.” — Lk 1:30-31

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

OPEN THE DOOR FOR CHRIST

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The Seven Essential Elements of Parish Life

Evangelization – The ways in which a parish continues to spread the Good News of Jesus, especially (though not exclusively)

through personal and communal sharing of faith. (66)

Worship – The communal witness to the sovereignty of God, the abiding presence of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church, particularly in the Sunday Eucharist and other sacramental and liturgical rites. (70)

Word – Those things that pertain to the ongoing process of spiritual maturation and growth of individuals and as a community of faith. “The deepening of faith results from echoing God’s word, which takes place in a variety of ways and in multiple contexts within the life of the Church.” The word “catechesis” denotes the process of handing on the faith. (73)

Community – The element of parish life which “draws parishioners together in mutual support, activity, celebration and growth. It is the unity that results when members become involved with one another in all aspects of the pastoral mission.” A parish is a place where everyone belongs. Inclusivity and mutuality are hallmarks of community. (76)

Service – The mission to which Christ calls the Church clearly includes works of charity and justice. “We cannot be truly ‘Catholic’ unless we hear and heed the Church’s call to serve those in need and work for justice and peace.” *Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Ministry of the Parish*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1993. (79)

Stewardship – We are called to make the most responsible use of our gifts and resources. “Stewardship, for believers, involves the sharing of individual time, talents, and treasure, as well as the commitment of communal resources (temporal, financial, human, etc.) in service to the community of faith.” (83)

Leadership – “Effective parish pastoral councils require a shared leadership among clergy and laity which calls forth the gifts of visioning, planning, empowering, and evaluating. These gifts are placed at the service of the community for the fulfillment of the pastoral mission.” (87)

Eucharist at the Center – “The communal celebration of Sunday Eucharist (which includes the Saturday evening Vigil) is both the source and summit of the seven essential elements of parish life.” (90)

From *Revisioning the Parish Pastoral Council*, by Mary Ann Gubish and Susan Jenny, S.C. with Arlene McGannon, Paulist Press, 2001.

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