



HOLY FAMILY
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
inviting all to new life in Christ

***LECTIONARY
BASED
SMALL
CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITIES***

*1st Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2020*

through

*6th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 14, 2021*

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*“For where
two or three
have gathered
together
in my name,
I am there
in their midst”*

(Matthew 18:20)



Covenant Prayer

Loving God,

we ask You to send Your Spirit to guide us

as we gather in the name of Jesus, Your Son.

May we hear Your voice in the Sacred Scriptures

and be open to each other as we pray together and share our lives.

Help us to be in covenant with You, our God, and with one another

by committing to being here as often as we can,

sharing from our heart,

respecting confidentiality

and being Church with and for each other.

May our time of prayer and reflection

deepen our love for You

and strengthen us to go forth to live our lives

rooted in the Good News that we have shared.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen



Small Christian Community Guide

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Gathering of the Small Christian Community

Fostering a Prayerful Environment

- Lighting the Candle
- Music, Silent Prayer
- Covenant Prayer

God Sightings

- How has anyone experienced God's presence or the movement or will of God in the events of your life or our world since the last time we met?

Breaking Open the Sacred Scripture

- Readings
- DVD Reflection
- Faith Sharing Questions

Responding to God's Word

- What am I going to do, concretely, to live the message of the Scriptures this week?
- What can we do, as a Small Christian Community, short-range or long-term, to transform society in light of the Scriptures we have heard proclaimed?
- What outreach or social justice mission should we embrace as a group?

Closing Prayer

- Petitions
- Our Father



1st Sunday of Advent November 29, 2020

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

You, Lord, are our father, our redeemer you are named forever.

Why do you let us wander, O Lord, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?

Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage.

O, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from old. No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him.

Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways!

Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful; all of us have become like unclean people, all our good deeds are like polluted rags; we have all withered like leaves, and our guilt carries us away like the wind.

There is none who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to cling to you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.



1st Sunday of Advent November 29, 2020

GOSPEL

Mark 13:33-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Be watchful! Be alert!

You do not know when the time will come.

“It is like a man traveling abroad.

He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

Watch, therefore;

you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

“May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Isaiah says: “*Why do you let us wander, O Lord, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?*” How does everyday life contribute to us “wandering from his ways?” When this happens, what brings us back?
2. We also hear in Isaiah that God does “*awesome deeds we could not hope for.*” When has God surprised you?
3. Paul tells the Corinthians: “*for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus ... you are not lacking in any spiritual gift.*” What are the times when you are most aware of spiritual gifts?
4. Mark’s Gospel is about being watchful and alert. What are the things that we need to be particularly watchful of?
5. With all the unrest in 2020, what gives you HOPE this Advent season?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Life’s “busy-ness” and distractions make it difficult to stay alert and ready at a moment’s notice, especially for people living in poverty as they are burdened to continually meet their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. How are you an advocate for the poor?



2nd Sunday of Advent December 6, 2020

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

In the desert prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made plain, the rough country, a broad valley.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Go up onto a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God!

Here comes with power the Lord God, who rules by his strong arm; here is his reward with him, his recompense before him.

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8-15

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Peter

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.

The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard “delay,” but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire.

But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.



2nd Sunday of Advent December 6, 2020

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

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

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist.

He fed on locusts and wild honey.

And this is what he proclaimed:

“One mightier than I is coming after me.

I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals.

I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. As people entrusted to do God’s will, how do we “make straight a highway” for those who have been impacted by all that has befallen us in 2020?
2. In Isaiah we also hear that “*the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.*” What or who reveals the glory of the Lord to you?
3. Peter says: “*with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*” How difficult is it to be patient and wait for something in God’s time?
4. In several scriptures, John the Baptist is heard to say that he is unworthy, even to untie Jesus’ sandals. When you hear this, how do you feel?
5. All of us have been baptized with water. When have you felt baptized in the Holy Spirit? How can we make the Holy Spirit a bigger part of our life?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Jesus came as a voice from the silence – a messenger speaking of compassion and justice. What voice do you hear? Where is that voice leading you?



3rd Sunday of Advent December 13, 2020

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because
the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to
heal the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to
the prisoners,
to announce a year of favor from the Lord and a
day of vindication by our God.

I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy
of my soul;
for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and
wrapped me in a mantle of justice,
like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a
bride bedecked with her jewels.
As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden
makes its growth spring up,
so will the Lord God make justice and praise
spring up before all the nations.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint
Paul to the Thessalonians**

Brothers and sisters:
Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.
In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the
will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

Do not quench the Spirit.
Do not despise prophetic utterances.
Test everything; retain what is good.
Refrain from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy
and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be
preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord
Jesus Christ.
The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also
accomplish it.



3rd Sunday of Advent December 13, 2020

John 1.6-8, 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, “Who are you?” he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, “I am not the Christ.”

So they asked him, “What are you then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.”

So they said to him, “Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?” He said: “*I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’* as Isaiah the prophet said.”

Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, “Why do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?”

John answered them, “I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.”

This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Isaiah’s prophecy is directed to people longing for God’s restoration. As God’s stewards, what can we do to bring restoration to the many hurting in our country this past year?
2. In our first reading, we hear: “*in my God is the joy of my soul.*” What in God’s creation brings you joy?
3. Paul says: “*Test everything; retain what is good.*” How do we do this? What are the roadblocks to accomplishing this?
4. In our Gospel, the priests and Levites ask John the Baptist, “*Who are you?*” How would you answer this question, in terms of your faith?
5. John the Baptist said: “*He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.*” Whose story has had a positive impact on your life?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

John the Baptist came to testify to the light, not be the light. The sin of racism needs people of faith to stand up for what is good and just, bringing a light to overcome bias and discrimination. As a person of faith, what impact will this have on you?



4th Sunday of Advent December 20, 2020

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

A reading from the second Book of Samuel

When King David was settled in his palace, and the Lord had given him rest from his enemies on every side, he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!”

Nathan answered the king,

“Go, do whatever you have in mind, for the Lord is with you.”

But that night the Lord spoke to Nathan and said:

“Go, tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: Should you build me a house to dwell in?’

“It was I who took you from the pasture and from the care of the flock to be commander of my people Israel.

I have been with you wherever you went, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you.

And I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth.

“I will fix a place for my people Israel; I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance.

Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as they did of old, since the time I first appointed judges over my people Israel.

I will give you rest from all your enemies.

“The Lord also reveals to you that he will establish a house for you.

And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm.

I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever.”

SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

To him who can strengthen you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages but now manifested through the prophetic writings and, according to the command of the eternal God, made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever. Amen.



4th Sunday of Advent December 20, 2020

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said,
"Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you."
But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then 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. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man!"

And the angel said to her in reply,
"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

"And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God."

Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.
May it be done to me according to your word."
Then the angel departed from her.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. In our first reading, David plans to build a permanent structure to honor the Ark of God, but God has other plans for David. When have you felt God presenting you with other plans, different than those you had in mind?
2. In Samuel, we also hear: "*I will give you rest from all your enemies.*" Have you felt intervention when struggling with a person or a problem?
3. Paul writes a message of hope to the Romans. As we conclude this challenging year, what gives you hope for 2021?
4. The angel Gabriel tells Mary that "*nothing will be impossible for God.*" Have you seen God "do the impossible" for you or someone close to you?
5. God chose Mary, because He knew that Mary would accept His plan. What can we learn from Mary?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

The gospel speaks of Mary's great faith and willingness to accept God's will for her. What roles and responsibilities do we have in fulfilling God's will? In what ways should we share our great faith with others?



The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph December 27, 2020

FIRST READING

Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying:
“Fear not, Abram! I am your shield;
I will make your reward very great.”
But Abram said,
“O Lord God, what good will your gifts be,
if I keep on being childless and have as my heir
the steward of my house, Eliezer?”

Abram continued,
“See, you have given me no offspring,
and so one of my servants will be my heir.”
Then the word of the Lord came to him:
“No, that one shall not be your heir;
your own issue shall be your heir.”
The Lord took Abram outside and said,
“Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you
can.
Just so,” he added, “shall your descendants be.”
Abram put his faith in the Lord,
who credited it to him as an act of righteousness.

The Lord took note of Sarah as he had said he
would; he did for her as he had promised.
Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son
in his old age,
at the set time that God had stated.
Abraham gave the name Isaac to this son of his
whom Sarah bore him.

SECOND READING

Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brothers and sisters:
By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to
go out to a place that he was to receive
as an inheritance;
he went out, not knowing where he was to go.

By faith he received power to generate,
even though he was past the normal age
– and Sarah herself was sterile – for he thought
that the one who had made the promise was
trustworthy.
So it was that there came forth from one man,
himself as good as dead,
descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky
and as countless as the sands on the seashore.

By faith Abraham, when put to the test,
offered up Isaac, and he who had received the
promises was ready to offer his only son,
of whom it was said,
“Through Isaac descendants shall bear your
name.”
He reasoned that God was able to raise even
from the dead, and he received Isaac back
as a symbol.



The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph December 27, 2020

GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,* and to offer the sacrifice of *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons*, in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.

This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted—and you yourself a sword will pierce—so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.



FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. God waited for Abraham and Sarah to be in their advanced years before he gave them Isaac. Have you experienced favor even after you thought the time had passed?
2. How has hope played a role in giving you the gifts of patience and trust?
3. What in life has helped you remain steadfast like Abraham and Sarah?
4. Simeon and Anna lived long enough to see the Lord. How has Jesus been revealed to you?
5. The Gospel concludes by telling us that Jesus “*grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.*” What would you like to know about Jesus’ first 30 years?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Jesus came into the world to model a lifestyle of living justly and devoutly, rejecting godless ways and worldly desires. When have you welcomed a stranger just as Jesus would do?



The Epiphany of the Lord January 3, 2021

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem!
Your light has come, the glory of the Lord
shines upon you.
See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds
cover the peoples;
but upon you the Lord shines, and over you
appears his glory.
Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by
your shining radiance.
Raise your eyes and look about;
they all gather and come to you:
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters in the arms of their nurses.

Then you shall be radiant at what you see,
your heart shall throb and overflow,
for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out
before you, the wealth of nations shall be
brought to you.
Caravans of camels shall fill you,
dromedaries from Midian and Ephah;
all from Sheba shall come bearing gold and
frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of the
Lord.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:
You have heard of the stewardship of God's
grace that was given to me for your benefit,
namely, that the mystery was made known to me
by revelation.

It was not made known to people in other
generations as it has now been revealed
to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:
that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the
same body,
and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus
through the gospel.



The Epiphany of the Lord January 3, 2021

GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,

"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child.

When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage."

After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage.

Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.



FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. In view of COVID, how was your Christmas experience different this season? What really touched or stayed with you?
2. How have the words of the prophets, especially Isaiah, strengthened your faith?
3. Paul could be viewed as the ultimate missionary. Why?
4. Epiphany celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. Are there times you focus on Jesus as only human or only divine, and other times as both?
5. Have you ever been warned by God – in a dream or otherwise – to go down another road?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

The second reading from Ephesians talks about the commissioning of God's grace. What does this mean in your life and how does this commissioning relate to anyone experiencing racial bias and discrimination?



The Baptism of the Lord January 10, 2021

FIRST READING

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord:

Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one with whom I am pleased,
upon whom I have put my spirit;
he shall bring forth justice to the nations,
not crying out, not shouting,
not making his voice heard in the street.
A bruised reed he shall not break,
and a smoldering wick he shall not quench,
until he establishes justice on the earth;
the coastlands will wait for his teaching.

I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of
justice, I have grasped you by the hand;
I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the
people, a light for the nations,
to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out
prisoners from confinement, and from the
dungeon, those who live in darkness.

SECOND READING

Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak to those gathered
in the house of Cornelius, saying:
“In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him
and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.

You know the word that he sent to the Israelites
as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ,
who is Lord of all,
what has happened all over Judea,
beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John
preached,
how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the
Holy Spirit and power.

He went about doing good and healing all those
oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.”



The Baptism of the Lord January 10, 2021

GOSPEL

Mark 1:7-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

This is what John the Baptist proclaimed:
“One mightier than I is coming after me.
I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the
thongs of his sandals.
I have baptized you with water;
he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

It happened in those days that Jesus came
from Nazareth of Galilee
and was baptized in the Jordan by John.

On coming up out of the water he saw the
heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a
dove, descending upon him.

And a voice came from the heavens,
“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well
pleased.”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Isaiah says: “*I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice.*” Why is the victory of justice elusive for so many?
2. We hear in Acts that “*God shows no partiality*”. How do we defend this statement in view of the inequity in the world?
3. In Acts, an emboldened Peter enters the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, to preach the Good News of Jesus. Whose house should you enter?
4. Baptism can occur at any age. Do you have a favorite baptismal story about yourself or someone you know?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in fulfillment of God’s plan to bring a relationship between God and humanity. How do you view your baptism and where it is leading you in your relationship with God, your family, your community?



2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 17, 2021

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19

A reading from the first Book of Samuel

Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord where the ark of God was.

The Lord called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am."

Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me."

"I did not call you," Eli said. "Go back to sleep."

So he went back to sleep.

Again the Lord called Samuel, who rose and went to Eli.

"Here I am," he said. "You called me."

But Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep."

At that time Samuel was not familiar with the Lord, because the Lord had not revealed anything to him as yet.

The Lord called Samuel again, for the third time.

Getting up and going to Eli, he said, "Here I am. You called me."

Then Eli understood that the Lord was calling the youth.

So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply,

'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"

When Samuel went to sleep in his place, the Lord came and revealed his presence, calling out as before, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel answered,

"Speak, for your servant is listening."

Samuel grew up, and the Lord was with him, not permitting any word of his to be without effect.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body;

God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him.

Avoid immorality.

Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

For you have been purchased at a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body.



2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 17, 2021

GOSPEL

John 1:35-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

John was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus.

Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them,

"What are you looking for?"

They said to him, "Rabbi"—which translated means Teacher—, "where are you staying?"

He said to them, "Come, and you will see."

So they went and saw where Jesus was staying, and they stayed with him that day.

It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus.

He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" —which is translated Christ—.

Then he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas" —which is translated Peter.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. The first three times - when the Lord calls for Samuel - he thinks it's Eli. What causes us to miss the Lord's call?

2. As Eli instructed, Samuel responds to God's call with: "*Speak, for your servant is listening.*" When you realize God is calling you, what has been your response?

3. Paul tells us in our second reading that "*your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.*" How do we reconcile this with the needs of our mortal body?

4. In our Gospel, Jesus asks the two disciples who followed him: "*What are you looking for?*" In your faith journey, what are you looking for?

5. Andrew told his brother Simon Peter, "*We have found the Messiah.*" What could have led Andrew to this conclusion so early?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

In the first reading, God calls to Samuel in his sleep and Samuel replies "Speak, for your servant is listening." Who in need is calling your name in the silence of night? How will you respond?



3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 24, 2021

First Reading

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jonah

The word of the Lord came to Jonah, saying:
"Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and
announce to it the message that I will tell you."
So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh,
according to the Lord's bidding.

Now Nineveh was an enormously large city;
it took three days to go through it.
Jonah began his journey through the city, and
had gone but a single day's walk announcing,
"Forty days more and Nineveh shall be
destroyed," when the people of Nineveh
believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of
them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw by their actions how they turned
from their evil way, he repented of the evil
that he had threatened to do to them;
he did not carry it out.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is
running out.
From now on,
let those having wives act as not having them,
those weeping as not weeping,
those rejoicing as not rejoicing,
those buying as not owning,
those using the world as not using it fully.
For the world in its present form is passing
away.



3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 24, 2021

Gospel

Mark 1:14-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God:

"This is the time of fulfillment.

The kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent, and believe in the gospel."

As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen.

Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.

He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John.

They too were in a boat mending their nets.

Then he called them.

So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. God spared the people of Nineveh when they had a change of heart and mind. What does this tell us about the importance of repentance and asking for forgiveness?
2. God "changed his mind" about punishing the people of Nineveh. Have you ever thought that we have the ability to change God's mind?
3. Paul told the Corinthians: "*For the world in its present form is passing away.*" With everything we've witnessed in the past year, is our world passing away?
4. Like the first disciples, what do we have to leave behind to do a better job as "*fishers of men?*"

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

"The world in its present form is passing away." How does this message from the 2nd reading challenge us to live differently? Whose shoes will you walk in this week to understand their unique perspective?



4th Sunday in Ordinary Time January 31, 2021

First Reading

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

Moses spoke to all the people, saying:

"A prophet like me will the Lord, your God, raise up for you from among your own kin; to him you shall listen.

This is exactly what you requested of the Lord, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let us not again hear the voice of the Lord, our God, nor see this great fire any more, lest we die.'

And the Lord said to me, 'This was well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him.

'Whoever will not listen to my words which he speaks in my name, I myself will make him answer for it.

But if a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die.'"

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

I should like you to be free of anxieties.

An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided.

An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit.

A married woman, on the other hand, is anxious about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

I am telling you this for your own benefit, not to impose a restraint upon you, but for the sake of propriety and adherence to the Lord without distraction.



4th Sunday in Ordinary Time January 31, 2021

Gospel

Mark 1:21-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

Then they came to Capernaum,
and on the sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue
and taught.

The people were astonished at his teaching,
for he taught them as one having authority and
not as the scribes.

In their synagogue was a man with an unclean
spirit;
he cried out, “What have you to do with us,
Jesus of Nazareth?
Have you come to destroy us?
I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

Jesus rebuked him and said,
“Quiet! Come out of him!”
The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a
loud cry came out of him.

All were amazed and asked one another,
“What is this?
A new teaching with authority.
He commands even the unclean spirits and they
obey him.”
His fame spread everywhere throughout the
whole region of Galilee.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. How is the Liturgy of the Word enhanced at Mass by hearing both the Old and New Testament readings?
2. As the first reading warns, should we be aware of false prophets?
3. Catholic clergy are unmarried, while this is permitted in the Protestant and Orthodox faiths. What do you see as the pros and cons of both?
4. Our Gospel ends with Jesus casting out an unclean spirit. What does this passage tell us about how to encounter and overcome the demons in our lives?
5. How difficult would it have been for Jesus to spread His Word without the use of miracles?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

More and more people are quick to tell others how to live yet rarely look at how they live their own lives. Jesus has the ultimate authority, but it is not because of what he says but because of what he does. Who do you know that needs to make a change in their life or cast away a “demon”? Are you willing to walk alongside that person through their journey?



5th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 7, 2021

First Reading

Job 7:1-4, 6-7

A reading from the Book of Job

Job spoke, saying:

Is not man's life on earth a drudgery?
Are not his days those of hirelings?
He is a slave who longs for the shade,
a hireling who waits for his wages.
So I have been assigned months of misery,
and troubled nights have been allotted to me.

If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?"
then the night drags on; I am filled with
restlessness until the dawn.
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle;
they come to an end without hope.
Remember that my life is like the wind;
I shall not see happiness again.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to
boast, for an obligation has been imposed on
me, and woe to me if I do not preach it!

If I do so willingly, I have a recompense,
but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted
with a stewardship.

What then is my recompense?

That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of
charge so as not to make full use of my right in
the gospel.

Although I am free in regard to all,
I have made myself a slave to all
so as to win over as many as possible.
To the weak I became weak, to win over the
weak.
I have become all things to all, to save at least
some.

All this I do for the sake of the gospel,
so that I too may have a share in it.



5th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 7, 2021

Gospel

Mark 1:29-39

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

On leaving the synagogue
Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew
with James and John.
Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever.
They immediately told him about her.
He approached, grasped her hand, and helped
her up.
Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought
to him all who were ill or possessed by demons.
The whole town was gathered at the door.
He cured many who were sick with various
diseases, and he drove out many demons,
not permitting them to speak because they knew
him.

Rising very early before dawn, he left and went
off to a deserted place, where he prayed.
Simon and those who were with him pursued
him and on finding him said, "Everyone is
looking for you."
He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby
villages that I may preach there also.
For this purpose have I come."
So he went into their synagogues, preaching and
driving out demons throughout the whole of
Galilee.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. In our first reading, Job lamented his life but did not blame God. How can we avoid blaming God when events in our life take a turn for the worse?
2. At the end of Job, he says: "*I shall not see happiness again.*" How can we help others when they feel the same way?
3. Paul wants us to know that the Good News is for all people. How can we model or demonstrate Paul's message?
4. In our Gospel, Jesus did not permit the demons to speak, "*because they knew him.*" What does this passage mean to you?
5. After helping many, Jesus went to a deserted place to pray. Do you have a specific, quiet place to reflect? How does this enhance your prayer life?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Jesus always took time to go to a secluded and quiet place to pray in order to connect with God. How and when do you find time to get away from distractions to feel God's presence? How does God intend to use you today for a greater purpose?



6th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 14, 2021

First Reading

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

A reading from the Book of Leviticus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron,
"If someone has on his skin a scab or pustule or
blotch which appears to be the sore of leprosy,
he shall be brought to Aaron, the priest,
or to one of the priests among his descendants.
If the man is leprous and unclean,
the priest shall declare him unclean
by reason of the sore on his head.

"The one who bears the sore of leprosy
shall keep his garments rent and his head bare,
and shall muffle his beard;
he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!'
As long as the sore is on him
he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in
fact unclean.
He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside
the camp."

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters,
whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do everything for the glory of God.

Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or
Greeks or the church of God,
just as I try to please everyone in every way,
not seeking my own benefit but that of the
many, that they may be saved.

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.



6th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 14, 2021

Gospel

Mark 1:40-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said,
"If you wish, you can make me clean."
Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him,
"I do will it. Be made clean."
The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean.
Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once.

He said to him,
"See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter.

He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

1. In the time of Leviticus, leprosy was considered a result of sin. Even today, some people view their own or another's misfortune as punishment for a past transgression. If approached, how would you help that person?
2. Paul says: "*Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or the church of God.*" How do we model this message of tolerance in order to be better "imitators of Christ"?
3. In our Gospel, the leper crosses a boundary by kneeling before Jesus, and Jesus crosses a boundary in touching him. What should the church's role be in crossing boundaries to help people?
4. Why did Jesus warn the leper not to publicize his healing? In the leper's defense, why is it so hard to remain silent when we are touched by the power and the glory of God?
5. This Wednesday we begin Lent. How will the events of the past year impact your Lenten journey?

SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTION

Jesus came to announce God's kingdom, a reign of wholeness, healing, restoration and life. In what acts of service are you bringing about the reign of God to your family, your parish, your neighborhood?