

# REFLECTIONS FROM FATHER CLARK

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND THE SITUATION IN VENEZUELA

As we follow events in Venezuela and the President's threats to other countries, let us reflect on what Catholic Social Teaching (CST) offers for guidance to judge the morality of the situation. We are not looking at politics and whom we support on an all or nothing basis. We are looking at what the Catholic Church teaches about such situations.

The bedrock principle of CST is the dignity of the human person. This principle governs all our actions. Governments exist to safeguard the dignity of each human person and the common good. Pope Leo in his remarks about the removal by the United States of President Maduro expressed first concern for the people of Venezuela in keeping with this fundamental principle. He said that the good of the people of that nation must be prioritized above any other situation. Granted that Maduro was a dictator and guilty of many crimes against the people and so was not safeguarding the dignity of his people, but the United States cannot replace one dictator with another under the guise that the end justifies the means. Our government is also under the obligation to protect the rights and sovereignty of the people of Venezuela and not only our own interests and agenda.

Another principle of CST is the call to family, community, and participation. We are social beings and have the right to participate in the organization of society through economics and politics, law, and policy. A corollary of this principle is that of subsidiarity, which means that decisions should be made at the most local level, as close as possible to the people affected. Therefore, the statements that the US will control Venezuela and allow local rule if it is in conformity with US policy and designs are against Catholic Social Teaching. An illustration of the demands of this principle is, as Pope Leo said, "guaranteeing the sovereignty of the country, ensuring the rule of law enshrined in its constitution, respecting human and civil rights of each and every person, and working together to build a peaceful future..."

Catholic Social Teaching enshrines a preferential option for the poor. The most vulnerable members of society must be protected and cared for. There is great poverty in Venezuela with an acute scarcity of food. Appropriating the oil resources of the country will cause the economy to crash and people to suffer more. Care for the poor must guide all policy decisions.

Finally, the principle of solidarity demands that we as Catholics cannot sit on the sidelines and continue our lives with disinterest to what is happening in Venezuela and other countries. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and sons and daughters of one Father in heaven. What affects one affects all. Our prayers, concerns, and action must reach out to all our brothers and sisters in need.

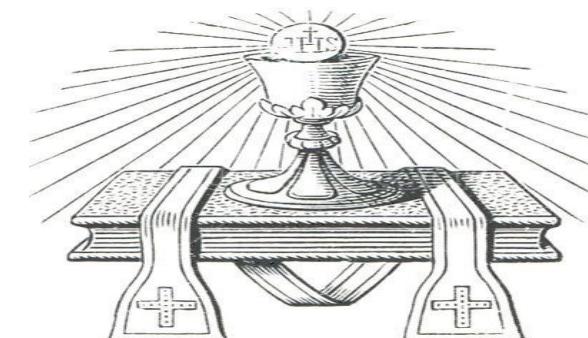
**-Father Thomas Clark, SSJ**



## THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD ~ JANUARY 11, 2026

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*Immaculate Conception Church is a Black Catholic Church  
serving the family of God and feeding the soul of the Community.*

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**IN RESIDENCE:** Father Fred Kammer, S.J. ....(225) 774-3241  
**SECRETARY:** Renae Welsh/John Edwards.....(225) 775-7067  
**PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION:**  
- COORDINATOR: Gloria DeRouen .....(225) 936-8162  
- ASSISTANT TO COORDINATOR: Stephanie Yearby .....(214) 881-5663  
**RCIA COORDINATOR:** Cathy Glover .....(225) 772-6099  
**MLK/SU CATHOLIC STUDENT CENTER:**  
Joyce Johnson - Wilfred Johnson .....(225) 775-8691



### Mass Schedule

**Saturday Vigil Mass:** 4:00 PM

**Sunday Mass:** 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM

**Weekday Masses:** MLK Chapel  
12:10 PM

Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri.



## Weekly Announcements

### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Today we mark the conclusion of the Christmas season with the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord. In the spirit of the Epiphany, Jesus is revealed as God's beloved Son in whom He is well pleased as he is baptized by John. On Monday, we return to Ordinary Time with its green vestments until Ash Wednesday on February 18.

In the eastern Churches, the celebration Christ's birth is identical with the Epiphany or Theophany (revelation of God). The mysteries of Christ are celebrated together: the visit of the Magi, the Baptism, and the changing of water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana. In these three events, Jesus is revealed as the Light of the World, the Beloved Son of God, and the Bridegroom who will marry us, his people.

### MLK BIRTHDAY MASS AND BREAKFAST

We will celebrate the Birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday, January 19 with Mass at 9:00 AM followed by breakfast in the Parish Activity Center. Please come out and celebrate the legacy of this great preacher and prophet. When many of the things he fought for are under attack, we must hold up his light of truth and justice.

### EUCARISTIC MINISTERS TO THE HOMEBOUND

Father Clark is looking for Eucharistic Ministers to bring Communion to the homebound members of our parish. He has sent out an email to Eucharistic Ministers with names of those in need of receiving Communion at home. Please reflect on your ability to answer this call to service. You do not need to bring Communion every week.

It can be arranged according to your needs and the need of the one to whom you are bringing Communion.

### BIBLE STUDY RESUMES

Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, January 14 at 7:00-8:00 PM on Zoom and on Thursday, January 15 at 10:30 AM in the Parish Activity Center at 10:30 AM.

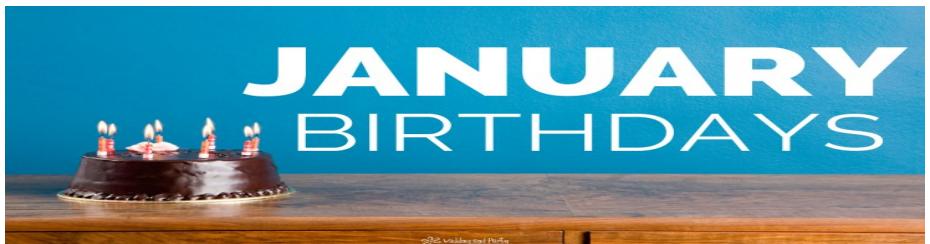
### PARISH COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES ON JANUARY 20

There will be a meeting of the Parish Council of Ministries on Tuesday, January 20 at 6:30 PM in the Parish Activity Center. All chairpersons of parish ministries and organizations are asked to attend. You will receive an agenda and minutes as the date approaches.

### MEETING OF THE LECTORS

There will be a meeting of the lectors on Thursday, January 15 at 6:30 PM in the Parish Activity Center. Please make every effort to attend.

This is our once-a-year meeting to review our obligations as a lector. One of a lector's obligations is to attend the annual meeting.



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

|          |             |      |
|----------|-------------|------|
| JAMES    | HERRING     | 1/11 |
| JOSEPH   | JACKSON     | 1/12 |
| KARINA   | NORWOOD     | 1/12 |
| CRYSTAL  | TURNER      | 1/12 |
| JANELLA  | YOUNGBLOOD  | 1/12 |
| MELVIN   | CHAVIS      | 1/13 |
| BRITTNEY | SMITH       | 1/13 |
| QUIANA   | WRIGHT      | 1/13 |
| TENOA    | ALEX, JR.   | 1/14 |
| ADRAINE  | ANDERSON    | 1/14 |
| CHARLIE  | LEWIS       | 1/14 |
| GLORIA   | BERRY       | 1/14 |
| JONATHAN | JACKSON     | 1/14 |
| ANITTA   | JAMES       | 1/14 |
| ASHER    | LEWIS       | 1/14 |
| THOMAS   | WALKER, SR. | 1/14 |
| COREY    | CHARLES     | 1/15 |
| ROLAND   | DEROUEEN    | 1/15 |
| WILLIAM  | THOMAS, III | 1/15 |
| GERTRUDE | KNIGHT      | 1/16 |
| RAVIN    | MOORE       | 1/16 |
| JALONDA  | MORRIS      | 1/16 |
| EDWIA    | RICHARDSON  | 1/16 |
| HAROLD   | BROWN, JR.  | 1/17 |
| CAROLYN  | CHAMBERS    | 1/17 |
| FLORENCE | JOHNSON     | 1/17 |
| MICHAEL  | LLORENS     | 1/17 |
| JEREMY   | BELONA      | 1/18 |
| TANA     | ALLEN       | 1/18 |
| HAROLD   | BROWN, SR.  | 1/18 |
| LUNZY    | CHRISTOPHER | 1/18 |



The **MLK Catholic Student Center** invites you to a Mardi Gras Party on **Saturday, January 24, 8:00 PM – 11:00 PM**.

#### Tickets:

- \$30 per person
- \$180 for a table of six

Tickets will be available for purchase after all weekend Masses.

Enjoy an evening filled with **food, music, dancing, door prizes, and more** as we celebrate the season and support the ministry of our SU students at the MLK Catholic Student Center.

You may also support the event as a **Patron (\$100), Sponsor (\$50), or Friend (\$25)**.

### Weekly Mass Readings January 12th-January 19th

#### Sunday

#### The Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7  
Acts 10: 34-38  
Matthew 3: 13-17

#### Monday

1 Samuel 1: 1-8  
Mark 1: 14-20

#### Tuesday

1 Samuel 1: 9-20  
Mark 1: 21-28

#### Wednesday

1 Samuel 3: 1-10, 9-20  
Mark 1: 29-39

#### Thursday

1 Samuel 4: 1-11  
Mark 1: 40-45

#### Friday

1 Samuel 8: 4-7, 10-22a  
Mark 2: 1-12

#### Saturday

**Memorial of Saint Anthony, Abbot**

1 Sameul 9: 1-4, 17-19; 10:1  
Mark 2: 1-12

#### Sunday

#### The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7  
Acts 10: 34-38  
Matthew 3: 13-17