

PARISH CALENDAR

Second Sunday
of Advent

Saturday, Dec 7	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass	
Sunday, Dec 8	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass	December 8, 2019
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass	
Monday, Dec 9	..... 10:45 a.m.	Religious Education	Hail, full of grace!
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass	
	..... 7:45 a.m.	Morning Prayer	
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass - Immaculate Conception	
Tuesday, Dec 10	..... 9:00-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open	
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Mass - Immaculate Conception	
	..... 7:45 a.m.	Morning Prayer	
Wednesday, Dec 11	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass	
	..... 7:45 a.m.	Morning Prayer	
Thursday, Dec 12	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass	
	..... 9:00-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open	
	..... 10:30 a.m.	Funeral Mass - Elaine Gabaylo (+)	
Friday, Dec 13	..... 7:30 p.m.	Prayer Meeting - Church	
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass	
Saturday, Dec 14	..... 9:00-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open	
	..... 4:00-4:45 p.m.	Confession	
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass	

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Isaiah: 11:1-10: Isaiah's poetic yearning for the one who will restore peace to Israel.

Romans: 15:4-9: Paul prays for hope and harmony.

Matt:3:1-12: John the Baptist preaches repentance.



One would be hard-pressed to identify another Gospel character as intensely focused as John the Baptizer. He shines clear as a laser beam. There is no doubt about his life's work. He is to announce the coming Messiah and to prepare the waiting world to receive him. Though John is absolutely clear on this mission sometimes his followers are not as clear.

It appears that a considerable portion of the world around Israel is coming to hear what John has to say. He flashes forth suddenly and without introduction in the desert area of Judea announcing a hard, direct message of repentance.

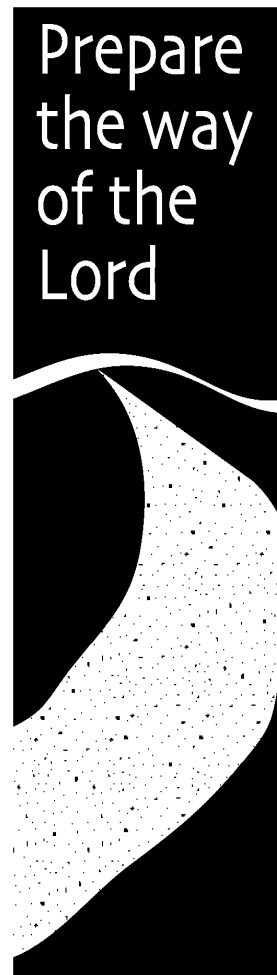
Soon a steady stream of people from all around Judea presses close to see and hear and marvel. They wonder if this is not Elijah come again, for he certainly has the attire and diet of that great prophet.

Those who believe in John's message come forward to receive a baptism of repentance. However, John's blunt judgment of the Pharisees and Sadducees who are in this mass of humanity brings us up a little short. We should note that Matthew's Gospel is characteristically hard on the religious leaders of Israel.

This Gospel holds them responsible for failing to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and, what is worse, for failing to prepare a largely uneducated and trusting population for the coming of a messiah. And so it is that the writer of Matthew's Gospel assigns John the difficult task of upbraiding the Pharisees and Sadducees for their failure.

For good measure, John adds that they can take no pride in their heritage as sons of Abraham. Salvation is God's great and surprising work. It begins here in the Jordan River and it simply never ends. And that, of course, is the great wonder. God offers salvation to people simply because they need it, not because they are children of Abraham or because they are learned or deserving. This great and good news will be brought by someone else mightier than John. This one is coming, and John knows he is not worthy to carry his sandals.

We see Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, which constitutes the first reading this Sunday. We identify Jesus as the one upon whom the Spirit rests, offering those gifts with which we are all familiar: wisdom and understanding, counsel and strength, knowledge and fear of the Lord. This reading has long been a source of inspiration in the Church's Advent prayer and song. The images of a peaceable kingdom have also found their way into the art that graces our Christmas cards yearly. Copyright © 2004, World Library Publications. All rights reserved.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE: If you missed St. Rita's Advent Reconciliation Service there still time for you to attend one, listed are three services for the Leeward Vicariate.

Tuesday, December 10th - Immaculate Conception - Ewa
Thursday, December 12th - St. Joseph - Waipahu
Friday, December 13th - Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Ewa Beach

All services begin at 7 p. m.

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS: Today's special collection is for the Retirement fund for Religious . Thousands of senior Catholics sisters, brothers and religious order priest spent years working in Catholic schools, hospitals, and agencies ---- often for little to no pay. Now, their religious communities do not have enough savings for retirement and elder care. Our gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious helps provide medications, nursing care, and more. Almost 94% of donations aid senior religious. Please be generous. Envelopes are attached to today's bulletin and are in your envelope packet.

PRO - LIFE: Love the Unborn the way Jesus Loves you. Pray to End Abortion Saint Pope John Paul II said "That as Christians we are called to be people of life and for life. Our religion, in a beautiful and mysterious way, is deeply identified with human life. What other world religion remembers the time when its founder was in his mother's womb?"

WORD OF LIFE: "Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. As someone who has been there, I encourage you to support your friends in her journey of being a mother." Learn ten tips at www.respectlife.org/support-her.
USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities "10 Ways to Support Her When She's Unexpectedly Expecting"

WEEKLY READINGS

Dec 8 Sun: 2nd Sunday Advent

Isa:11:1-10; Ps:72; Rom:15:4-9;Mt:3:1-12

Dec 9 Mon: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gen:3:9-15, 20; Ps: 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Ep:1:3-6, 11-12; Lk:1:26-38

Dec 10 Tue: Advent Weekday

Isa:40:1-11; Ps:96:1-2, 3 & 10ac, 11-12, 13; Mt:18:12-14

Dec 11 Wed: Advent Weekday

Isa:40:25-31; Ps:103:1-2, 3-4, 8 & 10; Mt:11:28-30

Dec 12 Thur: Our Lady of Guadalupe

Rev:11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Judith:13:18bcde, 19; Lk:1:39-47

Dec 13 Fri: Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Isa:48:17-19; Ps: 1: 1-2, 3, 4 & 6; Mt:11:16-19

Dec 14 Sat: Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor

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

The Future

To some extent the future is now. Our present acts and attitudes create our future. But we know that we come up short here. Our grasp is not wide enough; our understanding is too paltry. We can fiddle with probabilities and make projections from past experience. We can consult the computer printouts or the Farmer's Almanac, but we can't see very far. We have to tend to our present and think rationally about the future, but a greater truth guides us and tempers our plans. Our faith shows us that our future is in God's hands. There are surprises and wonders in store for us. Often we say to ourselves and others, "Well, who would've think it?" Copyright © 2007, World Library Publications. All rights reserved.

NOTE ON STEWARDSHIP

In today's Gospel reading John the Baptist warns his listeners: "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" The Church's yearly Advent herald is a call to repentance. The season of Advent urges us to be open to a conversion of heart. Christian stewards heed this call daily, and take the need for conversion in their lives seriously. As a family of faith, do we hear this call to conversion amidst the massive holiday spending? The increase in credit card debt? The urge to buy things that are not necessary? The incivility on the roadways during the holidays? Are there patterns in our own lives that need to be converted? (**International Catholic Stewardship Council**)

Reflection

The unity of opposites given in Isaiah seems more or less impossible. The lion and the ox; the wolf and the lamb; the child and the adder. These images are piled up with great exuberance. The author is eager to help us understand the wonders of God's salvation. The paradoxical images help disclose the great reality that with God the impossible is possible, that what we could never have hoped for has already happened. We know they are not to be taken literally, but the images invite us to reconsider what we once thought impossible. We can add a few of our own. The Berlin Wall will never fall; the Republic of South Africa will never be led by a native son or daughter; this or that fractured nation will never unite. This or that heart will never change. God will never visit the earth, not this earth, not now. God's answer to all this nay-saying is a person. God's answer is Jesus Christ. Our hopes and fears are met in him. Copyright © 2004, World Library Publications. All rights reserved

