



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS | 1946-2021

**God's love knows no barriers. St. Pascal's...where all people matter.**

Welcome! We hope you enjoy your time with us. Whether you are just visiting or looking for a parish home, it's great to have you with us. Whatever your life circumstances, wherever you have been or whatever has happened in your life, you are welcome here.

DECEMBER 19, 2021 | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## OUR STAFF

### Pastor

Fr. John Mitchell | ext 125  
john.mitchell@stpascals.org

### Deacon

Rev. Mr. Richard Moore  
richard.moore@stpascals.org

### Business Administrator

Theresa Ruttger | ext 130  
theresa.ruttger@stpascals.org

### Director of Facilities and Maintenance

Mike Kelleher | ext 134  
mike.kelleher@stpascals.org

### Pastoral Associate for Music

Sharon Balcom | ext 126  
sharon.balcom@stpascals.org

### Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation

Kim Roering | ext 128  
kim.roering@stpascals.org

### Communications & Office Manager

Thea Munoz | ext 133  
thea.munoz@stpascals.org

### Administrative Assistant

Marla Eberhardt | ext 132  
marla.eberhardt@stpascals.org

### Welcome Desk

Karri Creamer | ext 120  
karri.creamer@stpascals.org

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM



### Mass Times

Saturday 4:30 PM | Sunday 8:45 & 10:30 AM (ASL) | Tuesday - Friday 8:00 AM

1757 Conway Street | Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106 | 651.774.1585

website: [www.stpascals.org](http://www.stpascals.org) | email: [church@stpascals.org](mailto:church@stpascals.org)

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### THE BLESSING OF A NATIVITY SCENE

The custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi who made the Christmas crèche or Nativity Scene for Christmas Eve in the year 1223. When a Nativity Scene is set up in the home, you might like to use the following blessing:

**All:** *(Make the sign of the cross.)* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**All:** Who made heaven and earth.

Someone reads the Scripture passage from Luke 2:1-8.

**Leader:** God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love. When our need for a Savior was great, you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus brings us joy, peace, justice, mercy, and love. Lord God, we ask for your blessing upon all people who look upon this Nativity scene; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**Giving Tree.** We are participating in Catholic Charities Giving Tree to ensure children and adults have access to essential items such as clothing, housewares, self-care items and toys. Take a tag from the Giving Tree in the Gathering Space or go to the following link: [cctwincities.org/our-organization/events/giving-tree/](https://cctwincities.org/our-organization/events/giving-tree/).

**Step 1:** Select an item(s) from the Giving Tree list.

**Step 2:** Shop for your selected gift(s) online or at your favorite store.

**Step 3:** Drop off your unwrapped gift at one of the locations listed below:

CATHOLIC CHARITIES DISTRIBUTION CENTER

341 Chester St., Saint Paul, MN 55107  
Monday - Friday (9:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

ST. PASCAL BAYLON CHURCH, (before December 25)

1757 Conway St., Saint Paul, MN 55106 The Giving Tree bin is located inside the Main Church doors (Door #3).

SHIP YOUR GIFT DIRECTLY TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Purchase your gift online and ship it directly to the Catholic Charities Distribution Center, 341 Chester Street, St. Paul, MN 55107.

**Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for December 2021: *Catechists.*** Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God Bless You,

Father John Mitchell

## Christmas Masses

### Friday, December 24

4:00 PM Liturgy (no incense)  
*Carols 20 minutes before Mass*  
10:00 PM Liturgy  
*Carols 20 minutes before Mass*

### Saturday, December 25

10:00 AM Liturgy (ASL)  
*Carols 15 minutes before Mass*

Please note: There is no 4:30 PM Anticipatory Mass for December 26 (Feast of the Holy Family).

## Fourth Sunday of Advent:

### *The Vision We Let In*

*Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled*  
—Luke 1:45

On the show Shark Tank, entrepreneurs present ideas to a panel of investors called "Sharks." If one of these Sharks believes in the vision and character of the person, he or she will invest their own money on a leap of faith, believing that payback will come later. What if God was on "Shark Tank" and we were panelists? Would we believe God's vision enough to invest our lives?

This is what Mary faced. Gabriel, serving as God's emissary, presented God's vision—let me come to life within you. Mary said yes and went all in. Do we? Is this not the very same proposal God places before us each day?

Belief in God is not a simple matter of believing that God exists or that God will provide; it's about buying into God's vision for creation and investing out lives in it. Are we prepared to do that? Are we prepared for the blessings that come with it?

*As you hear the world around you today, listen and attend with the ear of your heart. What message does the angel whisper to you?*

—S. James Meyer

## Parish Office Holiday Hours

The parish office will be closed at 11:30 AM on Tuesday, December 21 for a staff holiday celebration; all day Friday, December 24 and Monday, December 27 for the Christmas holiday and on Friday, December 31 for New Year's Day.

## — In Christ We Live Forever —

Please remember in your prayers...

Leon E. Kabes

who was recently buried from our church. We extend our sincere sympathy to his family and friends, and pray for his soul's eternal peace.

## — REGIONAL SCHOOL NEWS —

**Honor Roll for Trimester 1**

We want to congratulate all of our middle school students who made the first trimester honor roll. We are so proud of you all. Keep up the good work!

**'A' Honor Roll Students:**

Nahom Daniel, Henry Harthorn, Thomas Harthorn, John Omoyeni, Trenton Patzwald, Alexander Rojas, Abigail Rockenback, and Joanna Velez

**'A/B' Honor Roll Students:**

Lukas Amde, Andrea Araujo, Ehizode Busayo, Erick Casanova-Garcia, Juan Pablo Cervantes, Christian Colunga, Brayden Conway, Nicholas Crist, Jemie Cruz Moran, Christopher Dominguez-Cruz, Lilibeth Dominguez-Cruz, Gavriella DuPree, Connor Florek, Yonel Garcia, McKenzie Henery, William Oliver, Sophia Paramo, Alexander Peeler, Adrianna Pinotti, Meredith Ryther, Jackson Schweitzer, and Lydia Pearl Taylor

**Volunteer Opportunity*****Livestream Camera Operators Needed***

St. Pascal's is looking for people who would be interested in this fun and important ministry for the 4:30 PM Mass on Saturdays and occasional special events. A short training session will be provided. The more people we can get to help with this important ministry, the better. Contact Fr. John or call the parish office at 651.774.1585.

**Act of Christmas Kindness*****Remember Our Senior Friends at Cerenity-Marian Center St. Paul***

Anyone who would like to send a card or note to those at Marian...they are always welcomed! Send to:

Marian of Saint Paul  
"Share Some Love"  
200 Earl Street  
St. Paul, MN 55106

*May you give and receive many blessings, much happiness and even more love this blessed season of Christmas and beyond.*

**Parish 75th Anniversary Celebration—AKA St. Pascal's Friends and Family Save the Date: April 23, 2022**

Please be sure to mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend. We will be celebrating St. Pascal's 75th Anniversary with a night of fun and games (new ones as well as returning favorites) and a fantastic catered dinner from Tinnucci's.

Do you have St. Pascal's memorabilia? We are planning to create a display from our archives and parishioners! Further details about the event will be announced in February.

## — FAITH FORMATION —

**Seeking Dismissal Leaders for RCIA**

This year we have a person preparing to celebrate baptism, Eucharist, and confirmation at the Easter Vigil. Beginning sometime in January and up through Holy Thursday, we need dismissal leaders at various Masses. Following the homily, the dismissal leader and our catechumen (person to be baptized) will be dismissed and go to reflect on the Scripture readings of the day.

If you are able to help with this important ministry or would like more information, contact Kim Roering in the parish office at kim.roering@stpascals.org or 651.432.4958.

**Canned Goods Needed**

Canned FRUITS AND VEGETABLES are needed by the Fishes and Loaves food pantry staffed by parishioners of St. Pascal's and Progressive Baptist Church. The pantry is supplied in part by food from Second Harvest which is facing the same supply challenges all of us are facing as we shop. There is a noticeable shortage of healthy canned fruits and vegetables. Place your donation in the container in the coat room at any time before New Year's. Any amount helps. For questions contact Ann Karner at akarner24@gmail.com or 651.330.0024.

**Ramsey Family Service**

Grace Lutheran and St. Pascal's share a ministry of service at the Ramsey Family Service Center by Aldrich Arena. If you would like to help with dinner or lunch service on occasion or regularly, sign up at [saintpascalandgracelutheran.cctwincities.volunteerhub.com](http://saintpascalandgracelutheran.cctwincities.volunteerhub.com).

Our immediate need is for 1 DINNER server (5:15-6:45 PM) on the 4th Monday of the even months (next December 27).

For more info, contact John Gambino (Catholic Charities) at 612.204.8485 or john.gambino@cctwincities.org or Toni Baker at 651.731.7763 or toni@bakers.us.

John can help volunteers find dates other than the present need listed above.

## CONTACT US

**Parish Office**

Phone 651.774.1585  
Email church@stpascals.org

*For after-hours pastoral emergency (death, dying or anointing), call 651.774.1585 and dial 1.*

**Parish Office Hours**

Mon-Fri 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
*Holidays as announced*

**St. Pascal Regional Catholic School**

Phone 651.776.0092  
Email icollierpaske@stpascalschool.org

**School Office Hours**

Mon-Fri 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**Parish Councils****Parish Pastoral Council**

Meetings 1st Tuesday at 6:30 PM  
*Mary Weyandt, Chair*

**Parish Finance Council**

Meetings 4th Thursday at 6:30 PM  
*Mike Aeling, Chair*

**Sacramental Information****Reconciliation**

Saturday from 4:00-4:25 PM  
or contact Fr. John in the parish office  
*Communal celebrations as announced*

**Baptism**

Pre-baptismal classes are required.  
To register for classes or to schedule a celebration, call the parish office.

**Marriage**

Arrangements must be made with the pastor at least six months in advance of the desired date.

**Parish Prayer Line**

8:00 - 10:00 AM 651.735.0004  
Mary Butler-Levine

4:00 - 6:00 PM 651.774.3248  
Pat Kackman

**Parish Communication****Bulletin Notices**

Due 3:00 PM Monday  
thea.munoz@stpascals.org

**Mass Announcements**

Due 3:00 PM Tuesday  
john.mitchell@stpascals.org

Like, follow & share us on Facebook:  
*St. Pascal Baylon Catholic Church*

## Mass Times & Intentions

## Readings December 19, 2021

**Tuesday, December 21**  
8:00 AM Robert Cowden

**Wednesday, December 22**  
8:00 AM + Caleb Herrera Shanley

**Thursday, December 23**  
8:00 AM + Clem Kachelmyer

**Friday, December 24**  
*Christmas Eve*  
4:00 PM The people of the parish  
10:00 PM The people of the parish

**Saturday, December 25**  
*Christmas Day*  
4:30 PM The people of the parish

**Sunday, December 26**  
*Holy Family*  
8:45 AM The people of the parish  
10:30 AM + Bob & Lorraine Winkel

### Heart Questions

#### Obedience to God's Will

Elizabeth said, "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Luke 1:45

**Adults:** When was it hardest for you to trust in God's plan for you, as Mary did? What can help you at such times?

**Kids:** When is it hardest for you to obey a parent or teacher? What can help you obey with more trust?

### Weekly Rosary

You are most welcome to join us every Wednesday at 11:15 AM in the church to pray the rosary together.

### Year-End Financial Gifts

As this calendar year quickly comes to a close, consider a special year-end financial gift to the parish in support of our many ministries and/or to support our mortgage reduction efforts. Last year, we received many special year-end gifts of cash or stock. These gifts are greatly appreciated and certainly encouraged! Remember, all gifts must be received or postmarked by December 31 to be considered for the 2021 tax year. Stock transfers and sales do take some time so please take that into consideration as you consider a gift to St. Pascal's.

*Thank you for your generous consideration.*

**Sunday:**  
Mi 5:1-4a  
Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19  
Heb 10:5-10  
Lk 1:39-45

**Monday:**  
Is 7:10-14  
Ps 24:1-4b, 5-6  
Lk 1:26-38

**Tuesday:**  
Sg 2:8-14  
Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21  
Lk 1:39-45

**Wednesday:**  
1 Sm 1:24-28  
(Ps) 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8d  
Lk 1:46-56

**Thursday:**  
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24  
Ps 25:4-5b, 8-10, 14  
Lk 1:57-66

**Friday:**  
*Christmas Eve*  
(No 8:00 AM Mass)

4:00 & 10:00 PM  
Is 9:1-6  
Ps 96:1-3, 11-13  
Ti 2:11-14  
Lk 2:1-14

**Saturday**  
*Christmas Day*  
10:00 AM  
Is 9:1-6  
Ps 96:1-3, 11-13  
Ti 2:11-14  
Lk 2:1-14

**Next Sunday:**  
*Holy Family*  
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14  
Ps 128:1-5  
Col 3:12-21  
Lk 2:41-52

## THE WEEK AHEAD

### Sunday, December 19—Advent 4

After Masses Fellowship: Brioschi Hall

### Monday, December 20

7:00pm Boy Scouts: Brioschi Hall

### Tuesday, December 21

11:30am Parish office closed (staff event)

### Wednesday, December 22

11:15am Rosary: Church  
6:30pm Finance Council: Zoom  
6:30pm Choir: Church

### Thursday, December 23

9:00am A&E Christmas Decorating: Church

### Friday, December 24—Christmas Eve

Parish office closed  
4:00pm Mass  
10:00pm Mass

### Saturday, December 25—Christmas Day

10:00am Mass  
NO 4:30 PM Mass for the Holy Family

### Sunday, December 26—Feast of the Holy Family

Regular Sunday Mass times  
No scheduled events

*The celebration of Christmas is not merely a sentimental waiting for a baby to be born. It is much more an asking for history to be born! - - The Christ we are asking and waiting for includes our own full birth and the further birth of history and creation. It is to this adult and Cosmic Christ that we can say, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20) with a whole new understanding and a deliberate passion. This makes our entire lives, and the life of the church, one huge "advent."*

—Richard Rohr, *Daily Meditations*

### Last Week to Donate to our Christmas Environment!

#### REMEMBER SOMEONE IN A SPECIAL WAY THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

Make a donation (any amount) in memory of (or in honor of) a family member, loved one or someone who is ill or homebound. Please complete the form below and return it to the parish office or place it in the collection basket at Mass on or before December 20. Suggested donation is \$10. *Memorials fund flowers & worship space needs.*

*I would like to make a donation (circle one)*

In Honor of / In Memory of

From:

*Thank you for your generosity and care!*

*Please note: Memorials/Honorariums received after December 20 will not appear on the Christmas Flowers bulletin insert on December 26 (Holy Family).*



# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## Keeper of Promises

Father,  
you keep your promises  
to Sarah, to Hannah,  
to Elizabeth, to Mary,  
to your people Israel.  
You have promised to heal the world

and to fill it with your love  
like water fills the sea.  
Help us to wait in hope.  
Give us food for the journey  
that our eyes might see your salvation.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Sunday, December 19, 2021 Blessed Are You Who Believed



*Today's readings: Micah 5:1–4a; Psalm 80:2–3, 15–16, 18–19; Hebrews 10:5–10; Luke 1:39–45.* In the season of Advent, we look to those who watched and waited for Jesus when he first came into the world. The people of Israel, who first heard the words of the prophets, were waiting. The prophets spoke God's Word to them and gave them hope. They described the one who would come and the kingdom he would bring. Micah says his greatness extends to the ends of the earth.

Mary waited for the messiah throughout her early life. But she waited for Jesus in a way unique to her. When she was invited to be part of this completely new thing God was doing, she said yes with her whole heart. And then she set out.

Elizabeth's words to Mary communicate something important. "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." Mary is blessed because she knew that God was a keeper of promises. As we wait in hope, we can meditate on this truth. Take some time to think about what we hope for. We often worry about the conditions of the world. The weight of its brokenness can be hard to bear. But God keeps promises. In the words of the prophets and in the life of Jesus, a new possibility is revealed. Take some time today to meditate on the possibility of a world filled with God's love, governed by justice and peace to the ends of the earth.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, December 20

#### Nothing Impossible

“Nothing will be impossible for God.” It is easy to be discouraged when confronting a struggle. People have cried out to God throughout salvation history, longing to heal the brokenness in their lives and in the world. God’s solution came in a way beyond their comprehension: God coming to experience human life and thereby redeem it. Consider illustrating this Gospel passage or copying the Scripture. While you are reflecting, meditate on these words: “Nothing will be impossible for God.” What are the seeming impossibilities in your life? Where might God provide solutions beyond your imagination? *Today’s readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4ab, 5–6; Luke 1:26–38.*

### Tuesday, December 21

#### The Visitation

Imagine yourself alongside the newly pregnant Mary as she goes “in haste” across eighty miles of rough terrain, seeking out someone also experiencing a miraculous pregnancy. What did she see, hear, and think about as she was walking? We know that John the Baptist leapt for joy within his mother at the sound of Mary’s voice. What do you think Elizabeth felt when John leapt for joy? *Today’s readings: Song of Songs 2:8–14 or Zephaniah 3:14–18a; Psalm 33:2–3, 11–12, 20–21; Luke 1:39–45.*

### Wednesday, December 22

#### He Has Lifted Up the Lowly

Mary proclaims the Magnificat, her song of praise to God, in Luke 1:46–56. Copy the Scripture. Which words particularly speak to you? While reading the Scriptures, we see how God has acted in history. This can help us to see what God is doing today. How do you see God acting as Mary proclaims? *Today’s readings: 1 Samuel 1:24–28; 1 Samuel 2:1, 4–8; Luke 1:46–56.*

### Thursday, December 23

#### Great Mercy

In today’s Gospel, the birth of John is described as “the Lord had shown his great mercy toward” Elizabeth. When have you experienced God’s mercy? God kept the promise to Elizabeth, and in doing so, kept the promise of the prophets of old, that one would come who would prepare the way of the Lord. *Today’s readings: Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 8–9, 10, 14; Luke 1:57–66.*

### Friday, December 24

#### Nativity Scene

Laying out a Nativity can be a contemplative experience. If you have already set up a Nativity, spend some time sitting before it in silent prayer. What do you notice? Did you know that St. Francis of Assisi put together the first Nativity? Nativities have helped Christians to pray about the incarnation for hundreds of years. *Today’s readings: Morning: 2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16; Psalm 89:2–3, 4–5, 27, 29; Luke 1:67–79.*

### Saturday, December 25

#### Joy to the World!

Today we celebrate the incarnation, God becoming human that we might share in God’s divine life. We might wonder why God would choose to become something so vulnerable as a new baby. Why would God want to enter into the human condition, with all its limitations? Why would God enter into a world with sadness and suffering, and death? He came to open the way to a new possibility: a kingdom marked by justice, peace, and life. God’s love is more than anything we can imagine, and God’s will is for us to live in that love. *Today’s readings: Night: Isaiah 9:1–6; Psalm 96:1–2, 2–3, 11–12, 13; Titus 2:11–14; Luke 2:1–14; Dawn: Isaiah 62:11–12; Psalm 97:1, 6, 11–12; Titus 3:4–7; Luke 2:15–20; Day: Isaiah 52:7–10; Psalm 89:2–3, 4–5, 27, 29; Hebrews 1:1–6; John 1:1–18 or 1:1–5, 9–14.*





# FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



## Help Us to Grow

Father,  
through the holy family,  
you have made all families holy.  
You have given them as a model for us  
as we walk through life together.  
Help us to be ever more merciful.

Help us to forgive one another and  
to do small things with great love.  
Help us to grow together in holiness.  
Give us the wisdom to imitate Mary,  
holding all great mysteries in our hearts.  
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## Sunday, December 26, 2021 All Families Are Made Holy



*Today's readings: Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14; Psalm 128: 1–2, 3, 4–5; Colossians 3:12–21 or 3:12–17; Luke 2:41–52 or 1 Samuel 1:20–22, 24–28; Psalm 84:2–3, 5–6, 9–10; 1 John 3:1–2, 21–24; Luke 2:41–52.* Little is known about the life Jesus, Mary, and Joseph lived in Nazareth. From the time they returned from Egypt until the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, the only story that appears in Scripture about the family is the founding of Jesus in the temple. A close reading of this text shows that they were observant Jews and they went to Jerusalem each year for Passover. It also can be seen that they traveled with their extended family, so they had other significant relationships in their lives. They had regular family struggles. Mary asks, "Why have you done this to us?" She sounds like many mothers who are

raising adolescents. Their family life is a model for ours, but it must have been very ordinary indeed.

Imagine what that can mean for us.

Jesus knows our hearts and our struggles because he lived them too. God entered into a family and set the family apart as a place of sanctification. The holy family makes all families holy. The family is an ordinary place filled with ordinary love, peace, mercy, justice, and forgiveness. It is a place to grow in holiness. This week, as you go about your routine, imagine how you are connected to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, across time and space, to their home in Nazareth. If you are preparing a meal or folding the laundry, you are doing holy work, just as they did.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, December 27

#### St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist. He and his brother were early disciples of Jesus and witnesses to the resurrection. He traveled to Ephesus, where he composed his Gospel and letters, and later wrote the Book of Revelation from the island of Patmos. It is traditional to bless wine and cider on the Feast of St. John. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:1–4; Psalm 97:1–2, 5–6, 11–12; John 20:1a, 2–8.*

### Tuesday, December 28

#### The Holy Innocents

When Herod massacred all baby boys under two years of age, he sought to eliminate the threat the messiah posed to his power. His horrific, violent act epitomizes a truth we know even today: those who benefit most from the world's brokenness and injustice will always oppose the transformation God has promised. The infant Jesus needed protection, protection God provided in the person of St. Joseph. The deaths of the children were profound violations of the law of God. God is the God of life. God raised the infants to be saints, that the profound injustice of their deaths might be transformed: from death to life, that is the way of our God. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:5–2:2; Psalm 124:2–3, 4–5, 7b–8; Matthew 2:13–18.*

### Wednesday, December 29

#### Simeon: Waiting in Hope

God had promised Simeon that he would not see death until he had seen the salvation of Israel. The child Jesus, not yet six weeks old, is brought to the temple to be dedicated to the Lord. What must it have been like for him to feel the fulfillment of the promise? What desires of your heart are you awaiting God to fulfill? *Today's readings: 1 John 2:3–11; Psalm 96:1–2a, 2b–3, 5b–6; Luke 2:22–35.*

### Thursday, December 30

#### Anna the Prophetess

Anna the prophetess “spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Israel.” The hope that she has held onto has been realized before her eyes, and she cannot keep it to herself. She goes out into the world to be the bringer of the Good News, to bring hope. When we celebrate Christmas, we are making present the incarnation through which God continues to bring about a renewed world. Christians are to testify about our hope, just as Anna did. How can you share your hope today? *Today's readings: 1 John 2:12–17; Psalm 96:7–8a, 8b–9, 10; Luke 2:36–40.*

### Friday, December 31

#### Word Made Flesh

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” The evangelist John tells us the cosmic significance of the birth of Jesus. Because John uses the language of philosophy and poetry, it can be hard to grasp what he means. But because he uses these elevated ways of speaking, it is possible to approach the inexplicable mystery that is contained in the incarnation. Read today's Gospel. What word or phrase sticks out to you most? Copy it and meditate on it as you pray this week. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:18–21; Psalm 96:1–2, 11–12, 13; John 1:1–18.*

### Saturday, January 1

#### Mary, the Holy Mother of God

“Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” Mary's central place in this great mystery of God dwelling among us led her to a place of contemplation. Though she was the one chosen to bring Jesus into the world, she did not have all the answers. Praying the Rosary, we have the opportunity to contemplate like Mary, deepening our reflection while our words proclaim the memorized prayers. Pray the Rosary today and ask Mary to help you to hold all these things in your heart. *Today's readings: Numbers 6:22–27; Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 6, 8; Galatians 4: 4–7; Luke 2:16–21.*

