



AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

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Fr. Joseph Murray, O.S.A.
In Residence

Fr. William Wallace, O.S.A.
In Residence

Br. Bienvenido Rodriguez, O.S.A.
In Residence

CATHOLIC FAITH
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ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE CHURCH

2345 UNIVERSITY AVENUE BRONX, NY 10468

TEL. (718) 295-6800 www.stnicholasoftolentinebronx.org FAX (718) 367-7411

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil

7:00 p.m. **Spanish** (piano & cantor)

Sunday

8:00 a.m. **English** (organ & cantor)

9:30 a.m. **Spanish** (piano & choir/cantor)

11:30 a.m. **English** (organ & choir/cantor)

1:30 p.m. **Vietnamese** (keyboard & choir)

3:30 p.m. **Spanish** (piano & cantor)

Weekdays	8:30 a.m. Spanish (Mon-Fri.)
	7:45 a.m. Vietnamese (Sat)

CATHOLIC FAITH FORMATION

All those who are called to follow Jesus in the Catholic faith along with Catholics already baptized (adults, youth & children) who desire to celebrate the sacraments of First Confession, First Communion and Confirmation can make contact with the coordinator of this area for information about the various programs available. Registration for these programs are announced in the bulletin during various times of the year. Also appointments can be made in the parish office at anytime.

Parents wishing to baptize their children (ages 1-5) are invited to make an appointment in the parish office to speak with a staff member in order to make arrangements for participating in the Baptismal Program.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSIONS)

At the parish office by appointment.

MARRIAGE

Couples planning to be married should call for an appointment six months in advance of the wedding.

VISITS TO THE SICK

In emergency, call the parish office at any hour. Please inform the office of sick or homebound who desire the sacraments.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Welcome to all parishioners.

We encourage all parishioners to register at our parish office. We invite new parishioners to make an appointment to meet a member of the parish staff.

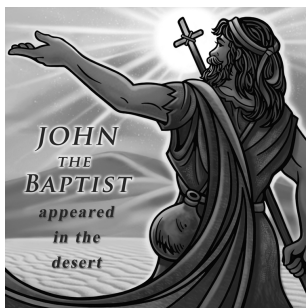
PARISH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00 a.m. - 12 Noon open (12 pm - 1 pm closed)
1:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. open (5 p.m. - 6 p.m. closed) 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. open
SATURDAY 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
SUNDAY 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GOD'S DELAY



In times of great difficulties scoffers taunt us, “Where is God? Why hasn’t your Lord come to save you now?”

And we of faith respond much in the same way as Peter did in today’s second reading: the “delay” of the Lord’s second coming is not any type of punishment or failure to keep the divine promise, but a loving sign of God’s patience. God is giving *everyone* the chance to seek repentance.

God does not make life more difficult. Rather, God lessens our burdens as once before for the Jewish exiles returning home to Judea after captivity in Babylon. It was God who personally led them, making a “straight highway” for them across the desert.

We join with our ancestors of faith, who hoped that they might see God’s Chosen One before them and who eventually realized that the Lord was also walking with them side by side.

First Reading — The rugged land shall be made a plain; the rough country, a broad valley (Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11).

Psalm — Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation (Psalm 85).

Second Reading — Conduct yourselves in holiness, hastening the coming of the day of God (2 Peter 3:8-14).

Gospel — I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:1-8).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from the *Lectionary for Mass* © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

In 2020, we heard plenty of voices speaking out and sharing their opinions, but many of those words were not comforting or hope-filled. Sometimes, it was hard to know which expert or “instant expert” to listen to, and it is still difficult to hope as we struggle to regain our balance as a nation and as a Church. The Word of God offers us peace this day. All our readings remind us of a faithful God who always keeps the promises made. Isaiah prophesied about the end of Jerusalem’s time away from God, and the Psalm speaks of “seeing God’s kindness and hearing what God proclaims.” Second Peter explains that God’s timing may not be the same as ours, but good things await those who are alert. In the Gospel, John the Baptist reiterates and completes the prophecy of Isaiah by laying the groundwork and preparing the way for those who await the coming of the Messiah.

DON'T SHOOT THE MESSENGER

While proclaiming the coming Christ is a thing of joy, John’s words are also harsh, reminding us to repent and prepare. People were threatened by them two thousand years ago, and some still are today. People can hear them and be turned off by “fire and brimstone,” and none of us like to be told what to do. But think about it. This year, we have all engaged in social distancing and endured hardships to protect our families and others.

Similarly, when you have company coming, you do house cleaning, meal prep, and lots of things to make the place ready for the arrival of your guests—necessary preparation. So we as individuals must make ourselves ready for the coming Christ to reside in us. This may mean repenting for sins, seeking the sacrament of penance, or taking time with a spiritual director. Perhaps it means carving out more times and places for Christ to be born in our hearts or taking on another spiritual practice. Maybe it means simply doing what the psalm asked and using our eyes and ears and mind and heart to seek Christ.

THE BEGINNING

With COVID-19, much time is spent wondering “where did it start?” or “who passed it on to whom?” Though science can tell us much there are many unanswered questions. Today’s Gospel is about as concrete as sacred scripture gets. We know this is the beginning of the Gospel of Mark, which was the first Gospel to be written down in about 70 AD. Unlike Luke and John, Mark does not begin with an infancy narrative of Jesus. He starts by proclaiming the prophecy of Isaiah. This section was written six hundred years before Christ, in another time of great upheaval, as the Israelites were displaced from their homeland during the Babylonian Exile. The first words of Isaiah 40 are “Comfort, comfort, my people.” John the Baptist starts by explaining he is the go-between, sent to “Prepare the way.”

Please visit our website for all the latest information and special Prayer Services, at: stnicholasoftolentinebronx.org and join us on Facebook, St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Saint Peter shows us a characteristic of God that we normally do not think about. He tells us that for God, "a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day" (1 Peter 3:8). Somehow, God is not restricted by time as we are. Taken literally, that seems to violate the laws of physics. Of course, God made those laws, so if anyone can ignore them, God certainly could. More likely, because early Christians sometimes complained that Jesus' second coming had been delayed, Peter is trying to tell us that what seems like a long time to us is nothing to God.

Like the early Christians, we may wonder how long it will take for God to answer our prayers. We may be praying for someone who is looking for a job, a sick relative, an end to abortion, or world peace. Some prayers just take time to be answered, especially if a large number of people need to change their hearts to make it happen. Some prayers require us to change, and we may not be ready.

What Peter means is that a thousand years is not too long for God if someone needs that long to repent. God is far more patient than we are. If someone had been fighting me for months or years, I would probably give up on them. But God can wait till we are mature enough to face our sins and be sorry for them. In the same way, God has been "waiting" over two thousand years for us to preach the gospel to all nations. God has been waiting for millennia for people to give up war as a means for solving our problems. God has been waiting since the beginning of the human race for us to learn how to love our neighbor.

We might not be as patient as God but we can help. Saint Peter says that we are not just waiting for the Lord's return, we are hastening it. When we make a choice that is based on faith rather than selfishness, we make it a little easier for people to believe in God. Jesus is the light of the world; he asks us to let our light shine, so that people can see Jesus in us. May our light "prepare the way of the Lord" (Mark 1:3).

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Confessions are by appointment only. Please call 718-295-6800 for an appointment time.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK
DECEMBER 7, 2020

Monday: Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9ab, 10-14; Lk 5:17-26
 Tuesday: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38
 Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30
 Thursday: Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9, 10-13ab; Mt 11:11-15
 Friday: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4; Mt 11:16-19
 Saturday: 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, or any readings from the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nos. 707-712
 Sunday: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; Lk 1:46-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK
DECEMBER 7, 2020

Monday 8:30am Maria Xuan (D); Hotoniel Cruz Dominguez, Felix Cruz Ramirez (L)
Tuesday 8:30am Maria Thuan (D); Hotoniel Cruz Ramirez, Marisol Ramirez (L)
Wednesday 8:30am Ana Tho (D); Maria Rosa Marmol (L), Almas del purgatorio, Hotoniel Cruz Ramirez (L), Liberación Familia Cruz Ramirez
Thursday 8:30am Maria (D); Vicente Nhi (D); Hotoniel Cruz Ramirez (L), Liberación Familia Cruz Ramirez
Friday 8:30am Peace (family)
Saturday 7:45am 7:00pm Ana Thy Nguyen (D); Maria Nguyet (D) Acción de gracias por todo lo recibido en el año; Clara Emilia Hernandez (D)
Sunday 8:00am Felix Antonio Hernandez (D); John & Eileen Grant - 50th Wedding Anniversary
9:30am Dominga Rojas
11:30am Mary Velez, Hector Serrano, Alfredo Serrano (D)
1:30pm Phero Phach (D)
3:30pm All Souls

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