



AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

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In Residence

Br. Bienvenido Rodriguez
In Residence

CATHOLIC FAITH
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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)

Weekdays

8:30 a.m. **Spanish** (Mon-Fri.)

12:00 p.m. **English** (Mon-Fri)

7:45 a.m. **Vietnamese** (Thu & 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. - 5:00 p.m. open

MONDAY - THURSDAY 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.



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GOD WANTS TO BE ONE WITH US



What great lengths God will go to in loving and saving us! Think of the most outlandish circumstance you might conceive. That seems to be what the Lord is saying to Ahaz in today's first reading. "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel." Not only is the idea of a virgin conceiving beyond comprehension in Ahaz's time, so would the concept of God wanting to be with us be, as the name Emmanuel indicates. And yet, this is what we celebrate in the Incarnation—God wants so completely to be one with us that God came to be with us in a son born to a virgin, the Blessed Virgin Mary. There is more to this story than even these amazing and outlandish occurrences, however. God wants to be one with us so deeply that God partners with us to make God's presence known.

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Advent's four Sundays each have their own focus: "Stay awake!" (First); John the Baptist (Second); Rejoice! (Third); Joseph/Mary (Fourth). We might need to have a little pity on the Fourth Sunday, however, since the hectic realities of the secular calendar can overwhelm it, particularly in those years when there are only one or two (or zero!) days before Christmas. This year we have the luxury of a whole week! What shall we do with this gift from God? Perhaps a bit more charity or social action on behalf of God's poorest. Maybe take some time to listen for the voice of God in our dreams, as Joseph did. Attend daily Mass, Advent reconciliation, or pray the "O" antiphons (which began this Saturday evening). As with every gift, we show true gratitude by using it. Let us do so, as Paul tells us in Romans, for the sake of the name of Jesus, whose coming we await.

WHOSE HOUSE?

Interest in genealogy is much, much older than current fascination with using DNA analysis to trace our heritage. Matthew's Gospel opens with the genealogy of Jesus, going all the way back to Abraham, Israel's father in faith. This is what immediately precedes today's Gospel reading, and is crucial to how we hear the opening sentence: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about." It's not so much as a starting point, but a pivot point that places Jesus firmly in the "house of David" through Joseph (in first-century Judaism, lineage and heritage was traced solely through males). An essential understanding of the Messiah was that he would come from the house and lineage of King David. For those of us who follow Jesus in faith, it's important to recall that it was through Joseph that Jesus both came from the house of David and was made a son of the covenant of Moses.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — You will be given this sign: the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:10-14).

Psalm — The king of glory shall come in (Psalm 24).

Second Reading — God has called us to belong to Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-7).

Gospel — The son born of Mary shall be called Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. He shall be Emmanuel, "God is with us" (Matthew 1:18-24).

WHOSE HOME?

Matthew's Gospel also contains an angelic annunciation scene; we hear from it today. Another pivot point is presented, when the angel says "Do not be afraid to take Mary into your home." As with most angelic appearances in scripture, the angel provides an instruction not to fear. More importantly, Joseph is instructed by God's messenger to take Mary into his home. When Joseph and Mary were betrothed, they were officially constituted as husband and wife; the next step—approved by an angel—would have been for Joseph to take Mary into his home. So he provided a safe place for a young woman in a troubled pregnancy, and offered her child a home, a heritage, and a lineage. This rather difficult and risky move on Joseph's part might inspire us in this season to seek out and help out in those places where people are longing to have a house and—more importantly—a home.

Emmanuel

On this last Sunday before Christmas, we see that Jesus' birth is the fulfillment of the promise of Emmanuel, "God is with us" (Matthew 1:23). The Gospel refers to the first reading from Isaiah. There we see the king of Judah, Ahaz, under attack by the kings of Aram and Israel. He wants to ask the Assyrians for help instead of relying on God. That's why he says, "I will not tempt the Lord" (Isaiah 7:12). He is afraid to admit his lack of faith. So the weakness of Ahaz gives us the wonderful prophecy of the birth of Jesus. Ahaz, of course, did not understand the full meaning of that prophecy. For him, the prophecy meant the destruction of Judah.

In the Gospel, Joseph also does not understand how Mary came to be pregnant. But unlike Ahaz, Joseph did have faith in God and the message of the angel. He took Mary as his wife and helped her through her pregnancy and in raising Jesus afterwards. His faith in God kept Jesus from being murdered by Herod after the magi's visit.

So now we have to choose whom to rely on. Do I act like Ahaz, relying on worldly powers, or like Joseph, who trusted the Lord? I would like to say that I trust in the Lord only. But if I look at my actions and priorities, I might be more like Ahaz than I want to admit.

How much time do I spend watching television (especially now that it's in HD) compared to time in prayer? How much time do I spend reading the scriptures compared to the newspaper or magazines? How much do I spend on Christmas decorations or gifts for my family, compared to what I give to the Church? If I really believe that "God is with us," which is what Christmas is all about, how much of God can people see in my actions?

Maybe if we kept in mind that promise that God *is* with us—in the baptism we received and the sacraments of the Church, and in the love of our spouse or parents—we could see how close God really is, and let others see in our actions that Jesus is Emmanuel.

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READINGS FOR THE WEEK
DECEMBER 19, 2022

- Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
- Tuesday: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-4ab, 5-6; Lk 1:26-38
- Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
- Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8abcd; Lk 1:46-56
- Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-34; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66
- Saturday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
- Sunday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25] Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK
DECEMBER 19, 2022

- Monday**
8:30am A. Maldonado (L) - cumpleaños
12:00pm Julia Guasp (D)
- Tuesday**
8:30am Angel Dariel Rodriguez Hernandez (D); Pura Cruz (D); Altigracia Felix (D)
- 12:00pm
- Wednesday**
8:30am
- 12:00pm
- Thursday**
8:30am Carlos Cabrera, Manuel Pelaez (D)
12:00pm Rafaela Rodriguez Guzman. Chanelle Berroa (D)
- Friday**
8:30am
- 12:00pm
- Saturday**
7:45am Mata Ty & Phero Trang (D)
8:00pm Tomasina Guzman (D) - 3 años; Jorge Reyes Ortiz; Jose Filion (D)
- Sunday**
8:00am People of SNT
9:30am Juana Isabel Morel Alvarado (D); Laura Muñoz (D); Cirino Zamora, Maria Flores, Francisco Zamora (D)
- 11:30am
- 1:30pm Phêro Kinh (D)

OFFERTORY COLLECTION
DECEMBER 4, 2022

Tithing: \$8,437.07
Children: \$0.00
Total: \$8,437.07

We pray for the People of St. Nicholas of Tolentine.
We pray for the sick:
We pray for the dead:



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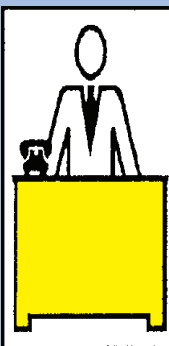
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