

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)

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.



AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

PASTORAL STAFF

Fr. Luis A Vera, O.S.A.

Pastor

pastor@stnicholasoftolentinebronx.org

Fr. Joseph Tran- *Associate*

Fr. Carlos Urbina, O.S.A –*Associate*

Fr. Joseph Murray, O.S.A

In Residence

Fr. William Wallace, O.S.A.

In Residence

Br. Bienvenido Rodriguez

In Residence

CATHOLIC FAITH
FORMATION
Jesus DeLaRosa

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr. Daniel Kirk-Foster

Mr. Dang Vu

ACCOUNTING

Ms. Shelly Parkin

PLANT MANAGER

Mr. Jesus Liriano

917-579-6720

RECEPTIONIST

Ms. Lucy Maldonado



FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



THE PEOPLE OF GOD'S KINGDOM

In our Gospel reading from Matthew, we hear the Beatitudes, the stirring opening to the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is proclaiming the coming of the kingdom of God, and begins by considering what kind of people will enter and participate in this kingdom. They are the poor in spirit, the meek, the clean of heart, the peacemakers. We hear both Zephaniah and Paul echo this, as God specifically chooses the weak and the lowly to be God's agents in ushering in the reign of God. By living with humility and integrity, their hearts are open to being transformed by the grace of God. We too are called to live in this way. Jesus invites us to be people with open hearts, to receive God's blessing. And working through us, God may bless all of creation.

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Our readings this week all speak of the distinctive characteristics of the people God gathers to achieve God's purposes. The deep communion of love that God envisions requires a community that is humble and lowly, as Zephaniah describes. God chooses the weak and foolish to reveal God's strength and wisdom, as Paul says. And in the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches that a people who know their weakness and vulnerability can most fully place their trust in God and work for a just world. As Christians, we believe God will fully heal our world when Christ returns. But Christ also invites us to experience a foretaste of this future right now, through our life in Christian community, and in our work of peacemaking and justice-seeking in the world. Our poverty in spirit can enable us to be both recipients and instruments of the "kingdom of heaven" here and now.

THE BLESSED COMMUNITY

We turn to the first action of Jesus' public ministry described by Matthew—Jesus preaching to the crowds in what we call the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon begins with today's Gospel passage, the Beatitudes. Having just called his first disciples to form a community, Jesus begins to spell out what this community is all about. The Beatitudes lay the foundation, describing the primary values and practices, and the core identity of this community.

Jesus tells his followers, first and foremost, that they are blessed by God. The community will reveal its blessed character through its humility, meekness, and hunger for justice. Knowing they are loved as God's children, they will have open and pure hearts, free to be merciful, and they will be able to endure suffering gracefully. Listening anew to the Beatitudes, we remember how far we fall short of Jesus' vision. But we know God has gathered us, and continues to transform us, to receive the fullness of blessing.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — You humble of the land, seek justice and humility, and the Lord will be your protection (Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13).

Psalm — The Lord blesses the humble and gives them the heavenly kingdom (Psalm 146).

Second Reading — God chose the weak of the world, those who count for nothing, so that whoever boasts should boast in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Gospel — Jesus taught from the mountain: Blessed are the poor in spirit (Matthew 5:1-12a).

WHOM GOD HONORS

In Jesus' time, honor and shame were key markers for who is up and who is down in their society. Typically, those with wealth and power over others were to be honored. And in our own time, often we find ourselves drawn strongly toward having more abundance, control, and options to choose from. We avoid vulnerability and limitations. But Jesus says in the Beatitudes that the poor and meek are truly blessed, that is, honorable and privileged by God. How can this be?

Perhaps Jesus is first exposing the opposites to the poor and meek, the "rich in spirit." These develop such confidence in themselves, based on achievement or inherited privilege, that they isolate themselves from God, and either ignore or exploit others. Jesus also knew that the humble in heart realize that they cannot build an illusory self-affirmation, so they can be most open to God's affirmation of them. They can then become more deeply empowered to participate in God's work. God blesses and honors the open-hearted.

Send in the Clones?

In St. Paul's time, the church was so new that everyone remembered how they came to the faith. That's not a bad thing. Even today, in helping with the RCIA, I like to hear how the new converts were drawn to the Lord. But it seems that some people in Paul's time actually boasted about who baptized them. They acted as if they were better Christians because of the person whose preaching first attracted them.

Paul, of course, would have no part in those rivalries. In fact, you can almost hear Paul laughing when he talks about people who consider Christ as just another leader of one of the factions. Christ should be the sign of unity for all Christians, not just one congregation. It may be even more difficult to seek unity today, with so many Christian churches and a modern view of diversity as somehow better than unity. While no one says they want to divide the body of Christ, I'm sure you know someone who thinks the only way to have a unified Church is for everyone to pray the same way they do.

Yet even Paul did not expect all believers to be clones of one another. He frequently wrote about people having many different gifts, yet all working to build up the Body of Christ. He doesn't mean that those gifts are divisive or that the Church survives in spite of them. Those differences are necessary; we need all the gifts that the Spirit gives us. So what can we do to help unify the Church?

First, do what Jesus himself did—pray for unity in the Church (John 17:20–21). Pray that you come to know what your own gifts are, have the courage to use them for the Church, and appreciate the gifts of others. Second, Paul was very aware of his own weaknesses. That's what he is talking about in the last line of the reading. Jesus had to die before he could rise from the dead. Without the cross, we would have never heard of the Resurrection. So also, without weakness, how can we experience God's strength? Instead of looking down on those with whom we disagree, look up to see what God may be revealing to you through that person's differences.

Tom Schmidt, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Healing After Abortion: Do you know someone who is carrying the grief of a past abortion? There is always hope. The pain and sorrow of abortion does not need to endure for a lifetime. A "Day of Prayer and Healing" offers the opportunity to experience the love and mercy of God and to respond to His invitation to begin the journey of healing the wound of abortion. Upcoming dates in the NYC area are: Jan.14, Feb. 4, March 11, and May 20 in English, and May 6 in Spanish. For more dates, locations, and confidential registration, or just to talk to a Sister, please call the Sisters of Life at (866) 575-0075 (toll free) or reach us by email at hopeandhealing@sistersoflife.org.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

JANUARY 30, 2023

Monday: Heb 11:32-40; Ps 31:20-24; Mk 5:1-20
 Tuesday: Heb 12:1-4; Ps 22:26b-28, 30-32; Mk 5:21-43
 Wednesday: Heb 12:4-7, 11-15; Ps 103:1-2, 13-14, 17-18a; Mk 6:1-6
 Thursday: Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 [22-32]
 Friday: Heb 13:1-8; Ps 27:1, 3, 5, 8b-9; Mk 6:14-29
 Saturday: Heb 13:15-17, 20-21; Ps 23:1-6; Mk 6:30-34
 Sunday: Is 58:7-10; Ps 112:4-9; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 5:13-16

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

JANUARY 30, 2023

Monday
 8:30am
 12:00pm Clifford Denziel Seale, Aboah Miller, Albertine Louise Seale (D), Felicia Seale Miller, Joseph Ofosu Miller (L)

Tuesday
 8:30am
 12:00pm Boris Beltran (D)

Wednesday
 8:30am
 12:00pm Luz Pelaez, Teofilo Pelaez, Elvira Arichabala (D)

Thursday
 8:30am
 12:00pm
 7:00pm

Friday
 8:30am
 12:00pm Vidal De Jesus Guzman Francisco (D)

Saturday
 7:45am
 7:00pm Maria Lai T Huong (D)

Sunday
 8:00am
 9:30am People of SNT; Almighty God Cruz Maria Bautista Yia (D); Jose Hernandez (D)
 11:30am Lawrence & Rita Simpson (D)
 1:30pm Phero Thong & Magarita Han (D)

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

JANUARY 15, 2023

Tithing: \$6,425.64
 Children: \$0.00
 Total: \$6,425.64

We pray for the People of St. Nicholas of Tolentine.

We pray for the sick: Miguel Angel Cuevas

We pray for the dead: Floyd McDonald



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