



faith FORMATION

ST. JUDE CATHOLIC CHURCH // VOLUME 1 // ISSUE 20 // JAN. 26, 2023

4th
Sunday in
Ordinary Time

In the Beginning...

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February 2 is the Feast of the Presentation (of the Lord in the Temple). There's more about this Feast in the "Did You Know?" section. But you might recall back around the Epiphany that my family and I follow Mexican tradition by celebrating Three Kings Day, which means we got to enjoy a Rosca de Reyes while either looking for or trying to avoid finding Jesus. You might also recall that I tend to try to avoid finding Jesus, but this year I took another approach. I was going to try to find Jesus. Well, I did. 2023 marks the year I found Jesus!

There are lots of consequences to finding Jesus. It can change your life. Or at least it should. In this case, I'm supposed to throw a party and make tamales on February 2. I'm really no good at either.

If I had to make tamales by myself, I don't think the party would last very long, if anyone showed up to begin with. It's not one of my strengths. Fortunately, there are others with better tamal-making skills that I can rely on. So as with many other things, I'm going to have to rely on my wife for help.

The trick is, though, that the Rosca usually has at least 3 figurines of Jesus hidden inside. That usually means more than one person finds Jesus. So it becomes a community effort to make tamales and have a big party.

And that's how it should be when we find Jesus. Finding Jesus isn't really meant to be a personal, private thing. It's supposed to be a community thing. We are all called to be drawn into the body of Christ, which here on Earth, is the Church. It's a time for celebration and joy. Our journey of faith is best bolstered by finding support and encouragement from others as we make our sojourn.

Remember when the prodigal son returned home? His father didn't bring his son into the living room and have a nice private conversation with him. Instead, his father threw a big party. And I suspect there might have been tamales.

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Confession

Saturday: 3:00 - 3:45PM
Also, by appointment

Daily Mass

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Weekend Mass

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FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & RECONCILIATION PREP

This week Matt talks about free will and making the right decisions.

Check it out:

[You Are Forgiven: Episode 5](#)

We have our schedule for parent meetings and other events leading up to First Holy Communion. Please see below.

The parent meetings will include a screening of the series "Presence: The Mystery of the Eucharist," discussion, tips for preparing your children at home, Q&A and community fellowship.



SAINT JUDE

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION / RECONCILIATION DATES TO REMEMBER

PARENT MEETINGS

Sunday, January 15, 2023 5:30- 7 PM

Sunday, February 19, 2023 5:30 - 7PM

Sunday, March 19, 2023 5:30 - 7 PM

FAMILY MASS & BREAKFAST

Sunday, April 16, 10:30AM Mass

Breakfast after Mass

Student decorate Communion Plates

RECONCILIATION

REVIEW & CHURCH TOUR

Students only

Sunday April 23, 2023 5:30 - 6:30 PM

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Thursday April 27, 2023 6:30 PM

FIRST COMMUNION PRACTICE

Thursday May 4, 2023 6:30PM

First Holy Communion Mass

Sunday May 7, 2023 10:30AM

Previous Signs of Grace

Episodes of

"You Are Loved"

(about the Eucharist)

[Episode 1](#)

[Episode 2](#)

[Episode 3](#)

[Episode 4](#)

[Episode 5](#)

[Episode 6](#)

[Episode 7](#)

Previous Signs of Grace

Episodes of

"You Are Forgiven"

(about Reconciliation)

[Episode 1](#)

[Episode 2](#)

[Episode 3](#)

[Episode 4](#)

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute" (CCC 2221).

Although the parish helps to form our children in the faith, no one can take the place of the parents' role in forming holy individuals. As parents, we should be well equipped to answer questions and to act, not only as the first teachers, but as the first witnesses of faith. This page is intended to help you in the journey as we work together to prepare your children for this special moment in their lives!

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

By Scott Hahn

Readings:

[Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13](#)

[Psalm 146:6-10](#)

[1 Corinthians 1:26-31](#)

[Matthew 5:1-12](#)

[LISTEN HERE](#)



In the readings since Christmas, Jesus has been revealed as the new royal son of David and Son of God. He is sent to lead a new exodus that brings Israel out of captivity to the nations and brings all the nations to God.

As Moses led Israel from Egypt through the sea to give them God's law on Mount Sinai, Jesus too has passed through the waters in baptism. Now, in today's Gospel, He goes to the mountain to proclaim a new law—the law of His Kingdom.

The Beatitudes mark the fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham—that through his descendants all the nations of the world would receive God's blessings (see Genesis 12:3; 22:18).

Jesus is the son of Abraham (see Matthew 1:1). And through the wisdom He speaks today, He bestows the Father's blessings upon "the poor in spirit."

God has chosen to bless the weak and lowly, those foolish and despised in the eyes of the world, Paul says in today's Epistle. The poor in spirit are those who know that nothing they do can merit God's mercy and grace. These are the humble remnant in today's First Reading, taught to seek refuge in the name of the Lord.

The Beatitudes reveal the divine path and purpose for our lives. All our striving should be for these virtues—to be poor in spirit; meek and clean of heart; merciful and makers of peace; seekers of the righteousness that comes from living by the law of Kingdom.

The path the Lord sets before us today is one of trials and persecution. But He promises comfort in our mourning and a great reward.

The Kingdom we have inherited is no earthly territory but the promised land of heaven. It is Zion where the Lord reigns forever. And, as we sing in today's Psalm, its blessings are for those whose hope is in the Lord.

*"Seeing the crowds,
he went up on the
mountain, and
when he sat down
his disciples came
to him. And he
opened his mouth
and taught them,
saying:*

*"Blessed are the
poor in spirit, for
theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.*

*"Blessed are those
who mourn, for
they shall be
comforted.*

*"Blessed are the
meek, for they shall
inherit the earth.*

*"Blessed are those
who hunger and
thirst for
righteousness, for
they shall be
satisfied.*

*"Blessed are the
merciful, for they
shall obtain*

mercy."
MATTHEW 5:1-7

Source: [St. Paul Center](#)

The Gospel at Home

4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 5:1-12a

Jesus teaches what it means to be happy.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today's reading is the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which is found in Matthew's Gospel. The form of the Beatitudes found here is not unique to Jesus. Beatitudes are found in the Old Testament, in the psalms, and in wisdom literature, for example. They are a way to teach about who will find favor with God.

We quickly note in this reading that the people whom Jesus calls "blessed" and "happy" are not people we think of as blessed or happy . . . the poor in spirit, the meek, the persecuted. This Gospel is one of reversals. Jesus' blueprint for happiness reflects little of what the world might call happiness.

"Blessed" is sometimes translated as happy, fortunate, or favored. In other words, Jesus is saying that divine favor is upon those who are poor, those who mourn, those who are persecuted. This news might have been welcome—and surprising—to the crowds who heard Jesus that day.

The Beatitudes can be understood as a framework for Christian living. Our vocation as Christians is not to be first in this world, but rather to be first in the eyes of God. By referring to the good things that the faithful will experience, Matthew reminds us that those who act in the manner described in the Beatitudes will find their reward with God.

Family Connection

Today's Gospel offers a contrast to many of the messages we hear in our society today. If we were to accept uncritically the "get ahead" messages of our culture, we would think that happiness means having money, being successful, having many possessions, and so on. When we think this way, we are not unlike the people who heard Jesus teach on the day that he taught the Beatitudes. The crowd that day also associated happiness with material possessions and status.

Talk as a family about what it means to be happy or to be blessed. Make a list of traits that you would associate with a happy person. Then read together today's Gospel, Matthew 5:1-12a. Reflect on Jesus' description of happiness. Think about what each of the Beatitudes might have in common and write a family summary of the Beatitudes. Post the summary in a special place as a reminder of what your family will consider "true happiness."

Conclude by praying together prayers of petition based on the Beatitudes, e.g., "We pray that we will be peacemakers who seek to get along with other people even when this is difficult. We pray to the Lord." All respond: "Lord, hear our prayer."

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.”
MATTHEW 5:8-12

Did You Know?

February 2 is the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, aka known as Candlemas

This feast day celebrates both the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, as well as the Purification of Mary, which was required by the Mosaic Law forty days after the birth of a child.

The Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2, also called Candlemas for the custom of using lighted candles. In the early Church it was often celebrated on February 14th, 40 days after the Epiphany, in keeping with the practice of celebrating Christmas on that date in the East. Among the Orthodox it is known as the Hypapante (“Meeting” of the Lord with Simeon).

Why is the Presentation of Jesus important?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (paragraph 529) teaches,

The presentation of Jesus in the temple shows him to be the firstborn Son who belongs to the Lord. With Simeon and Anna, all Israel awaits its encounter with the Savior—the name given to this event in the Byzantine tradition. Jesus is recognized as the long-expected Messiah, the “light to the nations” and the “glory of Israel,” but also “a sign that is spoken against.” The sword of sorrow predicted for Mary announces Christ's perfect and unique oblation on the cross that will impart the salvation God had “prepared in the presence of all peoples.”

It is also important to note that, as a poor family, the Holy Family gave an offering of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. However, the Lamb whom they brought to the Temple was the Lamb of God.

Pope St. John Paul II said: “In the mysterious encounter between Simeon and Mary, the Old and New Testaments are joined. Together the aging prophet and the young mother give thanks for this Light which has kept the darkness from prevailing. It is the Light which shines in the heart of human life: Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, ‘a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory of his people Israel.’”

And according to Pope Benedict XVI: “In the encounter between the old man Simeon and Mary, a young mother, the Old and New Testaments come together in a wondrous way in giving thanks for the gift of the light that shone in the darkness and has prevented it from prevailing: Christ the Lord.”

It's still Christmas!*

In the Ordinary Form of the Latin Rite, the liturgical forms and calendar as revised after the Second Vatican Council, the last day of the Christmas Season is the Baptism of Our Lord, when His hidden life ended and His public ministry began.

*However, the Church maintains an Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite which utilizes the forms and calendar in use prior to the Council. In this usage, the Christmas Season continues until the Feast of the Presentation. Many Catholics, therefore, maintain their Christmas decorations through Candlemas.

Why is it called Candlemas Day? This is the day when candles are blessed in the Church and traditionally have been lit in celebration of the feast. Pope St. John Paul II said, “Christian traditions of the East and West have been interwoven, enriching the liturgy of this feast with a special procession in which the light of candles both large and small is a symbol of Christ, the true Light who came to illumine his people and all peoples.”

Source: [EWTN](https://www.ewtn.com/)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Opportunities to Grow in Faith

Sunday, January 29:

10:30am - Children's Liturgy of the Word during the 10:30am Mass.

11:30am - RCIA after the 10:30am Mass.

5:30pm - Religious Education classes.

Monday, January 30:

7:00pm - Women's Bible Study in the Thaddeus Center. The Monday Night Ladies Bible Study will be starting up again on January 16 at 7:00pm in the Thaddeus Center. The topic for our winter session is a 10-part DVD series on Divine Mercy called "The Second Greatest Story Ever Told" by Fr. Michael Gaitley. It is an excellent series and will be finished right before we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday on April 16th. We would love to have you join us. If interested, please call Peg Manuszak at 616-361-5836.

7:00pm - Rosary Scripture Study in the Kelly Conference Room. Join us in person for our Formed.org based study on the Joyful Mysteries with Dr. Ben Akers and professors from the Augustine Institute Graduate School as they walk through the Biblical mysteries and seek to grow in understanding and love for Christ through them. We'll meet in person to watch the presentation, then discuss and pray afterwards. Contact Marty Smith for more details at msmith@stjudes.net.

Tuesday, January 31:

7:00pm - Men of Emmaus in the Millennium Conference Room.

7:30pm - Book Club. "The Great Divorce" by CS Lewis - Chapters 7 & 8. Join us for weekly discussions on some of C.S. Lewis's greatest works. We begin with "The Great Divorce", which examines the choice for Heaven over Hell in a narrative of one man's bus ride from Purgatory into Heaven. After this, we will read the short book "Abolition of Man", full of fascinating philosophical arguments for the importance of objective values, the necessity of natural law, and an objection against scientism in education. [More info here!](#)

Wednesday, February 1:

8:30am - Senior Men's Group in the Thaddeus Center. Do you like to play cards? We are a group of senior men who play cards at St. Jude in the Thaddeus Center. We meet every Wednesday at 8:30am. If you are interested or have any questions, call Denny Biggins at 616-365-1371.

Thursday, February 2:

7:00pm - The Sacraments with Marie Cirenza. This week's Sacrament is Holy Matrimony. Have you ever wondered what the sacraments are all about and why we have them? Do you know the basics about the sacraments and would like to know more? Come join us in the Kelly Conference Room to discover why the sacraments are an essential part of the Catholic faith!

"Jesus replied, 'The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'"

MARK 12:29-30

Confession

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How to be Happy!

In today's Gospel Jesus teaches the eight beatitudes.

Beatitude means happiness.

Here are some ideas on how to live the beatitudes:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. If you share your nice things and don't let your stuff be the most important thing in your life then you will be happy.
2. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. If you are sad now, remember that in Heaven there will be no more suffering.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Don't be selfish or pushy about things. God will make sure you get everything you need!
4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. If you try to do what is right then God will make the right things happen.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. If you forgive other people when they hurt you, then God will forgive you when you are sorry for your sins against Him.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. If God is the center of your life, then your heart is pure and ready to see Him in Heaven when you die.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

The Kids' Bulletin

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 29th, 2023



