



faith FORMATION

ST. JUDE CATHOLIC CHURCH // VOLUME 1 // ISSUE 15 // DEC. 22, 2022

The Nativity
of the Lord
(Christmas)

In the Beginning...

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Advent is nearly over and the Christmas season is just around the corner. While the rest of the world will stop celebrating Christmas on December 26, the Catholic world will just begin. As Mary pondered many things in her heart, I think this transition is a good time for us to ponder many things as well.

The secular world is ready to move on to the next big thing: the New Year. Should we move on as well? Advent prepares us for Christ's arrival. How can we move on from that? Should we? God became man and dwelt among us. Let's ponder that as often as we can.

With Snowmageddon/Snowpocalypse/The Great Blizzard of 2202, it may be easy to skip church this Christmas. Mary and Joseph traveled a great distance in less than an ideal situation. The wisemen did as well. Let's ponder their journeys, their ordeals and their trials and make every effort to get to church for Christ's Mass.

I've mentioned this before, but it's worth repeating. Bethlehem means "house of bread" and Jesus was placed in a manger (a feeding trough). The Nativity contains glimpses of the Eucharist. Perhaps it's a good time to read John 6 again. Let's ponder the ways we might "murmur." Are we like the disciples who left? Or more like the ones who stayed and believed (though they may not have understood)?

Finally, pondering can be linked closely with prayer. To ponder means to go deeper in thought. As you ponder these things, begin with prayer. Open the Bible and pre-read the Christmas readings. Then ponder these things in your heart and mind in the company of God's Word. Have a pen and paper nearby to record any "feedback" you may receive.

I hope everyone has had a wonderful Advent and may you all have a blessed Christmas season ahead! Check out the last few pages of this newsletter for some Christmas extras!

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Confession

Saturday: 2:00 - 3:30PM
Also, by appointment

Daily Mass

Tuesday: 8:30AM

Thursday: 8:30AM

Friday: 8:30AM

Weekend Mass

Saturday: 4:00PM
Sunday: 8:30AM, 10:30AM

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & RECONCILIATION PREP

May explains how stories are amazing, especially the those we find in the Bible!

Check it out:

[You Are Loved: Episode 7](#)

If you haven't signed up for [Formed.org](#) yet, what are you waiting for??? Click the link, Search "49525" and click on St. Jude then follow the sign up instructions. It's FREE!

We have our schedule for parent meetings and other events leading up to First Holy Communion. Please see below. You can reach out to Janet and Marty with any questions:

Janet DeBoe: jdeboe@stjudes.net

Marty Smith: msmith@stjudes.net

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](#)

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:

[Isaiah 52:7-10](#)

[Psalms 98:1-6](#)

[Hebrews 1:1-6](#)

[John 1:1-18](#)

[LISTEN HERE](#)



The Church's Liturgy rings in Christmas with a joyful noise. We hear today of uplifted voices, trumpets and horns, and melodies of praise.

In the First Reading, Isaiah foretells Israel's liberation from captivity and exile in Babylon. He envisions a triumphant homecoming to Zion marked by joyful singing. The new song in today's Psalm is a victory hymn to the marvelous deeds done by our God and King.

Both the prophet and psalmist sing of God's power and salvation. God has shown the might of His holy arm, they say. This language recalls the Exodus, where the people first sang of God's powerful arm that shattered Israel's enemy, Egypt (see Exodus 15:1, 6, 16).

The coming of the Christ child into the world fulfills all that the Exodus and the return from exile prefigured.

In Jesus, all nations to the ends of the earth will see the victory of God over the forces of sin and death.

Jesus is the new king. He is the royal firstborn son and Son of God promised to David, as we hear in today's Epistle (see Psalms 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:14).

And as our Gospel reveals, He is the Word of God, the one through whom the universe was created, the one through whom the universe is sustained.

In speaking to us through His Son, God has unveiled a new age, the last days. The new age is a new creation. In the beginning, God spoke His Word and light shone in the darkness. Now, in this new age, He sends us the true light to scatter the darkness of a world that has exiled itself from God.

He is the one Isaiah foretold—who brings good tidings of peace and salvation, who announces to the world that God has come to dwell and to reign (see Revelation 21:3-4).

So we sing a new song on Christmas. It is the song of those who have believed in the Christ child and have been born again—who have by grace been given the power to become children of God.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

JOHN 1:1-5

The Gospel at Home

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS) MASS DURING THE DAY

Gospel Reading:

John 1:1-18 (or shorter form, John 1:1-5, 9-14)

John announces that in Jesus, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Background on the Gospel Reading

There are four Masses that are celebrated for the Feast of Christmas and each is given its own set of readings to help us contemplate Christ's birth. The Gospel for the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve is taken from the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. The Mass at midnight proclaims the birth of Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. The Mass at dawn on Christmas morning continues the story of the birth of Jesus as found in Luke's Gospel, ending with the shepherds' visit to the infant Jesus. In each of these Gospel readings, we hear portions of the infancy narratives with which we are familiar.

The Gospel for the Christmas Mass during the day is taken from the beginning of John's Gospel, but this part of John's Gospel is not an infancy narrative like those found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Instead, John's Gospel starts at the very beginning and presents the Creation story as the framework for announcing the Incarnation. John's opening words echo the first verse in the Book of Genesis. This framework invites us to view Jesus' birth from God's perspective. Each of the Gospels makes clear that Jesus' birth was the result of God's initiative. John's Gospel, however, emphasizes that Jesus' birth was the divine intention from the moment of Creation.

As we observe in today's reading, the Gospel of John includes highly philosophical and theological language. One example that particularly stands out in this Gospel is John's repeated references to "the Word" in the opening verse. This expression (logos in the Greek) borrows from a concept found in both Jewish and Greek thought. Jews used this phrase to describe God's action in the Creation story, for example, and in the Wisdom literature. In Greek thought, the logos was understood as an intermediary between God and humanity. John and others in the early Church adopted this language to describe God's incarnation in Jesus. As the term was used to express the Trinitarian faith of Christians, the Word came to be equated with the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this prologue to the Gospel of John, we also hear the main themes that will be developed in his Gospel. These are often presented as dualities: light and dark, truth and falsehood, life and death, and belief and unbelief. We also hear in this prologue a unique aspect of John's Gospel, the theme of testimony. John the Baptist was sent by God to testify to Jesus, the light. Others in this Gospel will also offer testimony about Jesus. The reader is invited to accept this testimony, which bears witnesses to Jesus, the Son of God. But even more directly, Jesus' action and words will testify to Jesus' identity as God's Incarnate Word.

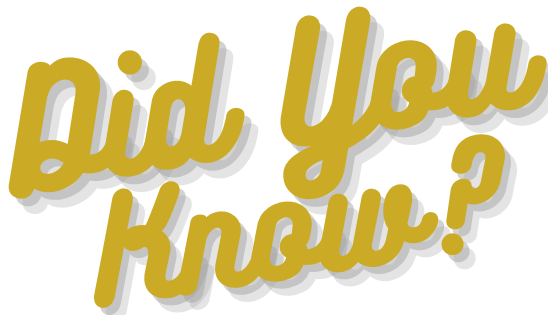
Thinking about Jesus' birth in these theological and cosmological terms is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the Feast of Christmas in the darkness of winter. At this time, nature itself seems to remind us of the darkness of sin. Into this darkness, in the midst of our sinfulness, God comes to dwell among us. John's Gospel reminds us that through the Incarnation, God saves us from the darkness of sin and makes us his children.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace."

JOHN 1:14-16

Family Connection

Gather as a family around your Nativity set. Keep this image before you and talk about how familiar we are with this scene. Invite members of the family to recall the details of Jesus' birth that we hear in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Observe that the Gospel of John invites us to consider Jesus' birth from a different perspective. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:1-14.



The 12 Days of Christmas start on Christmas day.

What are the 12 Days of Christmas?

by Bryan Cones

As we're reminded every Advent, our Catholic Christmas customs are somewhat at odds with the secular "holiday season," which starts before Thanksgiving and goes on until the last college bowl game. But even though we Catholics wait a bit to get going, we have a similarly long season of celebration, of which the "12 days," made famous by a certain 12-verse carol, are but a piece.

The 12 days themselves are simply the time between the two major Christmas feasts: the Nativity of the Lord on December 25 and Epiphany on January 6. Since Christmas was the major "birth" feast in the ancient Western churches and Epiphany was the biggie for the Eastern churches, the days between them inevitably gained significance. The exact origins of particular observances and festivals, though, are a little harder to nail down.

Like many Christian festivals, the roots of the Christmas season can be found in pre-Christian religions and folk customs. The date of Christmas, for example, is likely connected to an ancient multi-day Roman feast related to the winter solstice. The "12 days" are probably an adaptation of the pre-Christian winter festivals of northern Europe, "Yule" among them. These celebrations helped ancient Europeans get through the longest nights of winter.

Ancient Christians found a happy coincidence between these festivals that sought the sun's return and the birth of the "Light of the world." Pagan festivals became Christian festivals, with many traditions remaining intact. Yule logs and lighted trees, holding off the seemingly endless night, are examples of such adaptations. Sometimes, though, to tone down the partying, some local bishops tried to institute fast days, especially just after the New Year, to stamp out pagan practice.

The Christmas carol comes from 16th-century Europe. But the 12 days are really only part of our Christmas observance, which also includes important feast days in honor of Stephen, the first martyr (December 26); John the evangelist (December 27); and the Holy Innocents, the infants slain by King Herod (December 28, Matt. 2:16-18). These are known as the *comites Christi*, "companions of Christ," because their lives gave unique witness to Jesus through martyrdom (Stephen and the Innocents) and the written word (John). [Continue reading...](#)

The Twelve Days of Christmas

A partridge in a pear tree.
Truth: There is One God: Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God (Matthew 12:29).

Two turtle doves.
Second truth: There are two natures in Christ, Divine and Human.

Three French Hens
Third truth: There are three Persons in God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Four calling birds
Fourth truth: There are four Gospels.

Five golden rings
Fifth truth: There are five books of Moses

Six geese a-laying
Sixth truth: There are six days of Creation

Seven swans a-swimming
Seventh truth: There are seven sacraments.

Eight maids a-milking
Eighth truth: There are Eight Beatitudes

Nine ladies dancing
Ninth truth: There are nine choir of angels.

Ten lords a-leaping
Tenth truth: There are Ten Commandments

Eleven pipers piping
Eleventh truth: There were eleven faithful Apostles. Judas was replaced by Saint Matthias to restore the number to twelve.

Twelve drummers drumming
Twelfth truth: There are twelve tribes of Israel, twelve Apostles, twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost, and twelve articles in the Apostles Creed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Opportunities to Grow in Faith

Saturday, December 24: Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord (Merry Christmas!)

4:00pm - Mass. Glory Group. Prelude music with Christmas Choristers (children's choir) begins at 3:30pm.

6:30pm - Mass. Cantor. Caroling begins at 6:15pm.

10:00pm - Mass. Adult Choir and String Quartet. Prelude music begins at 9:30pm.

Sunday, December 25: The Nativity of the Lord (Merry Christmas!)

10:00am - Mass.

Tuesday, December 27:

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

Wednesday, December 28:

8:30am - Senior Men's Group in the Thaddeus Center.

12:00pm - 2022 Encounter Conference Day 1. The Encounter conference is the flagship event for Encounter Ministries where we seek to gather leaders of revival in the Church to encounter God's refreshment, encouragement and impartation of greater anointing for ministry.

[More info here.](#)

Thursday, December 29:

8:00am - 2022 Encounter Conference Day 2. [More info here.](#)

12:00pm - Lectio Divina (Online every Thursday). Lectio Divina (literally divine or sacred reading) is a prayerful practice that allows us to become personally immersed in the Scriptures so that the Word of God may penetrate our hearts.

[More info here.](#)

Friday, December 30:

8:00am - 2022 Encounter Conference Day 3. [More info here.](#)

"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

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— *From St. Jude Religious Ed* —

M E R R Y C H R I S T M A S

Here's a glimpse of our Christmas gathering. Thank you to everyone who attended. It was great having you there. Thanks also to the parent volunteers and to Fred's Italian Restaurant for donating the pizza!



A Little Story for Christmas



Before Emmanuel was born, his brother and sister felt that they were enough - and they certainly kept things busy at home. There was a lot of noise in the house after school when they were fighting for the couch, the TV, or the favorite snack. One time, even as

Christmas drew near, there were a lot of loud temper tantrums: she had ruined his video game and he had thrown her doll and taken her favorite snack. For these two, it was almost like Emmanuel would never come.

They weren't really expecting him, but Mom and Dad knew that he would arrive. They tried to remind the kids but it wasn't easy. However, on December 25th, all was quiet in the house. And that was the day Emmanuel came too, very quietly. He could have been the centre of attention, but he was the kind of baby that could not be heard unless you were very quiet. His brother and sister began to understand that. Actually it was like that even when he was older. It was because you didn't expect him, they said.



Emmanuel was Jesus, and we are his brothers and sisters. A little noisy at times, a little selfish, and sometimes we just don't expect him. We feel that we are enough. Even today, unless we stop to visit him, and come up quietly to the crib to talk to him in our hearts, we might never realize that God has come.



Answer to Word-find: Jesus was born!

www.thekidsbulletin.com

The Kids' Bulletin

Christmas Day
December 25, 2022



*Help the shepherds find their way to
Bethlehem to see Baby Jesus.*

The First Christmas

AT THAT TIME THE ROMAN EMPEROR, WHO WAS THE RULER OF ALL THAT AREA, MADE EVERYONE REGISTER IN THEIR HOME-TOWNS.

The emperor declares that everyone must register in their home town!

MARY AND JOSEPH WENT TO BETHLEHEM. MARY WAS GOING TO HAVE A BABY VERY SOON.

I'm sorry this is such a long journey for you!

BECAUSE NOBODY HAD ROOM FOR THEM THEY FOUND A STABLE FOR SHELTER.

I guess this will have to do.

THAT NIGHT BABY JESUS WAS BORN.

SUDDENLY ANGELS APPEARED TO THE SHEPHERDS OUT IN THE FIELDS.

Today a Saviour is born...

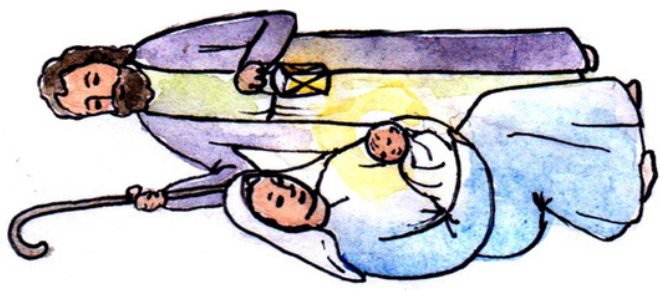
THE SHEPHERDS CAME TO SEE AND WORSHIP THE NEWBORN SAVIOUR.

EVERYONE WAS AMAZED AT WHAT THE SHEPHERDS SAID. MARY KEPT ALL THESE THINGS IN HER HEART AND ALWAYS REMEMBERED THEM.

There was a whole army of angels!

WHY DO YOU THINK GOD CAME INTO THE WORLD AS A POOR AND TINY BABY WHEN HE COULD HAVE COME AS A POWERFUL KING? JESUS BECAME LITTLE SO THAT HE COULD SUFFER WITH US AND SO WE COULD LOVE HIM AS SOMEONE LIKE OURSELVES. HOW CAN YOU SHOW YOU LOVE JESUS TODAY ON HIS BIRTHDAY?

Christmas Word-Find



B E T H L E H E M D
M N J E S P O O R O
O I M C J E S U S N
T G A H O X E N T K
H H N R S C U M A E
E T G I E O B A B Y
R S E S P L D R L W
B I R N A Z A R E T H
O N S T A Y K S B O
N W R A P P E D R N

BABY	DONKEY	NAZARETH
BETHLEHEM	INN	NIGHT
BIRTHDAY	JESUS	OXEN
BORN	JOSEPH	POOR
CHRIST	MANGER	STABLE
COLD	MARY	STAY
DARK	MOTHER	WRAPPED

Why is Christmas so special? Because



_____!