



HOLY FAMILY
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Small Christian Community Gatherings in Grace

*1st Sunday of Advent
November 27, 2022*

through

*7th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 19, 2023*

*“For where
two or three
have gathered
together
in my name,
I am there
in their midst”*

Father Terry Keehan, Pastor
Holy Family Catholic Community
2515 West Palatine Road
Inverness, IL 60067
847.359.0042
www.holyfamilyparish.org

(Matthew 18:20)

COVENANT PRAYER

*Loving God, we are thankful for this Small Christian Community, Gathered in Grace,
to hear your Word and share Your Good News
for the salvation of the world.*

*We believe Jesus is present and continues
to break open the Word and speak to our hearts
as once He did for His disciples.*

*Open our minds, our hearts and our lips
so that what we hear we will understand,
what we understand we will share.*

*Remind us of the needs of our community, our church
and our world as we strive to know your Word.*

*Give us the strength to be present to one another
and while in this community may we always
be respectful of each other and honor a spirit
of confidentiality and trust.*

*Temper our differences with love and understanding,
and call us all to mutual respect and compassion.*

*May this community and the covenant we share,
be a reflection of the covenant you made with our ancestors,
a bond that is only strengthened and deepened each time
we gather to know, love and serve You.*

*When our time of prayer and reflection is complete,
may your Spirit be with us as we,
together with our larger community of faith,
live the Word in our world.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

GRACE MOMENTS

Share your experience of one of the following Adventures in Grace spiritual exercises since you last met:

1. Grace is God's Presence and Gift of Self. When, where, and/or how did I experience Grace?
2. Baptism is being drenched in the mysterious Love of God. How did I experience myself as baptized?
3. What gift was I able to affirm, call forth, give thanks for?
4. How did I mediate the Grace of Mercy to someone or in some situation.
5. How was I fed/nourished spiritually?

LECTIO DIVINA (Sacred Reading)

Settle into silence for a moment. Remember that God is always present. Allow silence to take root for several long moments.

Someone volunteers to read the First Reading. Invite the group to open their hearts to the passage, be curious, and listen as if they are hearing it for the first time. Listen for a word, phrase, thought, or image that speaks to them today. The text is then read slowly and meditatively. After a moment of silence, continue with the discussion questions for the reading.

Repeat this format for the Second Reading.

Repeat this format for the Gospel, but after the reading and moment of silence, invite group members to speak their word, phrase, thought, or image aloud with no elaboration or discussion. They may also "pass." When all who wish to speak have done so, silently meditate on what has been shared for a few moments, then continue with the discussion questions for the Gospel.

At the end of the discussion, invite everyone to offer prayers of petition. Conclude with:

"For these prayers that we speak, and for those we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray together in the words that Jesus taught us, 'Our Father, ...' Amen."

Small Christian Community Guide

The First Sunday in Advent through the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

<p>1st Sunday of Advent. 5 November 27, 2022</p> <p>2nd Sunday of Advent 7 December 4, 2022</p> <p>3rd Sunday of Advent. 9 December 11, 2022</p> <p>4th Sunday of Advent 11 December 18, 2022</p> <p>The Nativity of the Lord. 13 December 25, 2022</p> <p>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God . . . 15 January 1, 2023</p> <p>The Epiphany of the Lord. 17 January 8, 2023</p>	<p>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time 19 January 15, 2023</p> <p>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 21 January 22, 2023</p> <p>4th Sunday in Ordinary Time 23 January 29, 2023</p> <p>5th Sunday in Ordinary Time 25 February 5, 2023</p> <p>6th Sunday in Ordinary Time 27 February 12, 2023</p> <p>7th Sunday in Ordinary Time 30 February 19, 2023</p>
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First Sunday of Advent November 27, 2022

FIRST READING

Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz,
saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
In days to come,
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest mountain
and raised above the hills.
All nations shall stream toward it;
many peoples shall come and say:
"Come, let us climb the LORD's mountain,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may instruct us in his ways,
and we may walk in his paths."
For from Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and impose terms on many peoples.
They shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
one nation shall not raise the sword against
another,
nor shall they train for war again.
O house of Jacob, come,
Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

SECOND READING

Romans 13:11-14

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:
You know the time;
it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.
For our salvation is nearer now than when we
first believed;
the night is advanced, the day is at hand.
Let us then throw off the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light;
let us conduct ourselves properly as in the day,
not in orgies and drunkenness,
not in promiscuity and lust,
not in rivalry and jealousy.
But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
And make no provision for the desires of the
flesh.

GOSPEL

Matthew 24:37-44

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"As it was in the days of Noah,
so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

In those days before the flood,
they were eating and drinking,
marrying and giving in marriage,
up to the day that Noah entered the ark.

They did not know until the flood came and
carried them all away.

So it will be with the coming of the Son of Man.

Two men will be out in the field;
one will be taken, and one will be left.

Therefore, stay awake!

For you do not know on which day your Lord will
come.

Be sure of this: if the master of the house had
known the hour of night when the thief was
coming, he would have stayed awake
and not let his house be broken into.

So too, you also must be prepared,
for at the hour you do not expect, the Son of Man
will come."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. How do *you* make peace out of a troubled situation?

SECOND READING

2. What does Paul mean when he says to "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ"?
How can we demonstrate this in our lives, in our community?

GOSPEL

3. What does it mean to you to be ready for the arrival of the Son of Man?
4. How does Jesus' coming like a thief in the night challenge our need to be always in control?
5. How can we foster a confident sense of anticipation of Jesus's return without being complacent or fearful?

2nd Sunday of Advent December 4, 2022

FIRST READING

Isaiah 11:1-10

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD, and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD. Not by appearance shall he judge, Nor by hearsay shall he decide, But he shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted. He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Justice shall be the band around his waist, and faithfulness a belt upon his hips. Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. The cow and the bear shall be neighbors, Together their young shall rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox. The baby shall play by the cobra's den, and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair. There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the LORD, as water covers the sea. On that day, the root of Jesse, set up as a signal for the nations, the Gentiles shall seek out, for his dwelling shall be glorious.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-9

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters; Whatever was written previously was written for our instruction, that by endurance and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I say that Christ became a minister of the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, to confirm the promises of the patriarchs, but so that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written: *Therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing praises to your name.*

GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert,
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist.

His food was locusts and wild honey.

At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.

And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’

For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees.

Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I.

I am not worthy to carry his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

His winnowing fan is in his hand.

He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. Isaiah talks about providing justice for the poor and afflicted. In what ways can we provide support for those in need that extends past the holiday season.
2. What needs to change in our world to achieve what Isaiah describes? How can we personally affect this change?

SECOND READING

3. Paul urges us “to think in harmony with one another.” With all the conflict in our country and world today, what can we do as a Christian community to promote this harmony?

GOSPEL

4. The depiction of John the Baptist is not what we might expect God’s powerful messenger to look like. Are there ways in which appearances influence how open you are to receiving God’s messages in your life?
5. John the Baptist was a radical and controversial figure. What controversial figure from history or current times do you admire, and why?

3rd Sunday of Advent December 11, 2022

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah

The desert and the parched land will exult;
the steppe will rejoice and bloom.
They will bloom with abundant flowers,
and rejoice with joyful song.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to them,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the LORD,
the splendor of our God.
Strengthen the hands that are feeble,
make firm the knees that are weak,
say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong! Fear not!
Here is your God,
he comes with vindication;
with divine recompense
he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the mute will sing.

Those whom the LORD has ransomed will
return and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy;
they will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee.

SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

A reading from the Letter of James

Be patient, brothers and sisters,
until the coming of the Lord.
See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit
of the earth, being patient with it
until it receives the early and the late rains.
You too must be patient.
Make your hearts firm,
because the coming of the Lord is at hand.
Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one
another, that you may not be judged.
Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates.
Take as an example of hardship and patience,
brothers and sisters,
the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question,

“Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?”

Jesus said to them in reply,

“Go and tell John what you hear and see:

the blind will regain their sight,

the lame will walk,

lepers are cleansed,

the deaf hear,

the dead are raised,

and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.

And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.”

As they were going off,

Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John,

“What did you go out to the desert to see?

A reed swayed by the wind?

Then what did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in fine clothing?

Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces.

Then why did you go out? To see a prophet?

Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

This is the one about whom it is written:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.

Amen, I say to you,

among those born of women

there has been none greater than John the

Baptist;

yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. When was there a time in your life that you felt you were too weak or weary to move forward? What and/or who inspired you to continue moving again?

SECOND READING

2. The season of Advent invites us to introspection and hopeful waiting. James describes a need for *patience, a firm heart, and consideration for each other*. Which of these is most challenging for you personally?

GOSPEL

3. As a Christian community, how are you called to be messengers of God?
4. How has your understanding of God changed over the years?
5. What do you hope for – especially at this time of year?

4th Sunday of Advent December 18, 2022

First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-14

**A reading from the book of the prophet
Isaiah.**

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying:
Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God;
let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the
sky!

But Ahaz answered,

"I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!"

Then Isaiah said:

Listen, O house of David!

Is it not enough for you to weary people,
must you also weary my God?

Therefore the Lord himself will give you this
sign:

the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
and shall name him Emmanuel.

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

**A reading from the Letter of Paul to the
Romans**

Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus,
called to be an apostle and set apart for the
gospel of God,
which he promised previously through his
prophets in the holy Scriptures,
the gospel about his Son, descended from David
according to the flesh,
but established as Son of God in power
according to the Spirit of holiness
through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Through him we have received the grace of
apostleship,
to bring about the obedience of faith,
for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles,
among whom are you also, who are called to
belong to Jesus Christ;
to all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be
holy.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4th Sunday of Advent • December 18, 2022

GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-24

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.

For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. How would you define "sign from God"?
2. Have you ever asked for a sign from God? Did God offer it? What was it like?

SECOND READING

3. Paul blesses his followers with grace and peace. How have you been blessed with grace in your life?

GOSPEL

4. The angel of the Lord comes to Joseph in his dream. In doing so, the angel reassures him about the identity of this unborn child. Joseph, upon awakening, has a change of heart. Have you ever had a dramatic turnabout in point of view due to a dream, prayer, or reflective moment?
5. As we approach the celebration of Jesus's birth, what do you need to turn away from to welcome Jesus more fully?

The Nativity of the Lord – Mass at Dawn December 25, 2022

FIRST READING

Isaiah 62:11-12

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

See, the LORD proclaims
 To the ends of the earth:
 say to your daughter Zion,
 your savior comes!
 Here is his reward with him,
 His recompense before him.
 They shall be called the holy people,
 The redeemed of the LORD,
 and you shall be called “Frequented,”
 a city that is not forsaken. Here is his
 reward with him,

SECOND READING

Titus 3:4-7

A reading from the Letter to Titus

Beloved:
 When the kindness and generous love
 of God our savior appeared,
 not because of any righteous deeds we had
 done but because of his mercy,
 He saved us through the bath of rebirth
 and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
 whom he richly poured out on us
 through Jesus Christ our savior,
 so that we might be justified by his grace
 and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:15-20

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”

So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child.

All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds.

And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. The psalm in today’s liturgy says, “Sing to the Lord a new song,” evoking an image of the entire earth singing to the Lord. When have you felt like you were part of a great, joyful chorus of voices singing to the Lord?

SECOND READING

2. How does this reading reflect the work of the Trinity in the birth of Jesus? How do you recognize God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit working in your life?

GOSPEL

3. What was the significance of Jesus being born in a manger? How was this reflected throughout his life?
4. What life experiences have you had that caused you to reflect on them in your heart like Mary?
5. What traditions do you practice during Christmas that honor your Christian faith?

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God January 1, 2023

FIRST READING

Numbers 6:22-27

A reading from the book of Numbers.

The LORD said to Moses:

“Speak to Aaron and his sons and tell them:

This is how you shall bless the Israelites.

Say to them:

The LORD bless you and keep you!

The LORD let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you!

The LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace!

So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them.”

SECOND READING

Galatians 4:4-7

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Galatians.

Brothers and sisters:

When the fullness of time had come,
God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under
the law to ransom those under the law,
so that we might receive adoption as sons.

As proof that you are sons,
God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
crying out, “Abba, Father!”

So you are no longer a slave but a son,
And if a son then also an heir, through God.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God • January 1, 2023

Gospel

Luke 2:16-21

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds.

And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. In the past month, have you experienced God looking upon you kindly and giving you peace? What were the circumstances?

SECOND QUESTION

2. Have you ever thought of your faith as having an inheritance?

GOSPEL

3. Who are unlikely “shepherds” in our lives who are announcing the surprising actions of God?
4. What is an event in your life that changed everything? Was it for the better or worse? As you look back, do you perceive the presence of God in the situation?

The Epiphany of the Lord January 8, 2023

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem!
Your light has come,
the glory of the Lord shines upon you.
See, darkness covers the earth,
and thick clouds cover the peoples;
but upon you the LORD shines,
and over you appears his glory.
Nations shall walk by your light
and kings by your shining radiance.
Raise your eyes and look about;
they all gather and come to you:
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters in the arms of their nurses.

Then you shall be radiant at what you see,
your heart shall throb and overflow,
for the riches of the sea shall be emptied
before you,
the wealth of nations shall be brought to you.
Caravans of camels shall fill you,
Dromedaries from Midian and Ephah;
all from Sheba shall come
bearing gold and frankincense,
and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

Second Reading

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:
You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace
that was given to me for your benefit,
Namely, that the mystery was made known to me
by revelation.
It was not made known to people in other
generations as it has now been revealed to his holy
apostles and prophets by the Spirit:
that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same
body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus
through the gospel.

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the
days of King Herod,
behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,
saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?
We saw his star at its rising and have come to do
him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was greatly
troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of
the people, he inquired of them where the Christ
was to be born.

They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus
it has been written through the prophet:

*And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah are by no
means least among the rulers of Judah;
since from you shall come a ruler, who is to
shepherd my people to Israel."*

Then Herod called the magi secretly and
ascertained from them the time of the star's
appearance.

The Epiphany of the Lord • January 8, 2023

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.”

After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. In our first reading from Isaiah we hear: *“Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you.”* What does the light mean to you? How are you personally drawn to the light?

SECOND READING

2. Have you ever been moved to action by a star, a dream, a hunch, a vision or an impulse? What was the result?

GOSPEL

3. When have you seen God present in ordinary events and people in your life?
4. Who are the Magi of our time?
5. When the Magi found Jesus, they opened their treasures. How can you use your “treasures” of time and talent to help our parish community or those in need in 2023? Where do you see the need for help?

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 15, 2023

First Reading

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The LORD said to me: You are my servant, Israel,
through whom I show my glory.

Now the LORD has spoken

who formed me as his servant from the womb,

that Jacob may be brought back to him

and Israel gathered to him;

and I am made glorious in the sight of the LORD,

and my God is now my strength!

It is too little, the LORD says, for you to be my

servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob,

and restore the survivors of Israel;

I will make you a light to the nations,

That my salvation may reach to the ends of the
earth.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

**A reading from Paul's First Letter to the
Corinthians**

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the
will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

to the church of God that is in Corinth,

to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus,

called to be holy,

with all those everywhere who call upon the name

of our Lord Jesus Christ,

their Lord and ours.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and

the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

John 1:29-34

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said,
"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

He is the one of whom I said,
'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'

I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel."

John testified further, saying,
"I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him.

I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me,

'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. The Servant declares in the first reading that "*God is now my strength!*" When has God been the greatest strength for you?
2. The Servant is challenged in the first reading to be "*a light to the nations*". In what way can you be a light to your community?

SECOND READING

3. How does God speak to you? When was there a time that you heard him and recognized that it was the voice of God?

GOSPEL

4. What does it mean that Jesus baptizes "with the Holy Spirit"? How do you feel the Holy Spirit working in your life?
5. What does it mean for you to live as a Blessed Child of God?

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 22, 2023

First Reading

Isaiah 8:23-9:3

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

First the Lord degraded the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali;
but in the end he has glorified the seaward road,
the land west of the Jordan, the District of the Gentiles.

Anguish has taken wing, dispelled is darkness:
for there is no gloom where but now there was distress. The people who walked in great darkness have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.

You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils.

For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17

A reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose.

For it has been reported to me about you, my brothers and sisters, by Chloe's people, that there are rivalries among you.

I mean that each of you is saying, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas" or "I belong to Christ."

Is Christ divided?

Was Paul crucified for you?

Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with the wisdom of human eloquence, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its meaning.

Gospel

Matthew 4:12-23

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled:

*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles,
the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light,
on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen.*

From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen.

He said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John.

They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.

He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. How has your faith sustained and supported you in tough times?
2. How have the things in your life that bring you abundant joy changed over time? What experiences drove the change?

SECOND READING

3. How do we stay “united with the same mind and in the same purpose” as a faith community when controversial issues within our Church or society?

GOSPEL

4. How do you interpret the phrase “Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand”? How does this affect the way you live your life today?
5. The disciples each had to leave something behind to follow Jesus. What do we need to “leave behind” to be a better follower of Christ?

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time January 29, 2023

First Reading

Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the earth,
 who have observed his law;
 seek justice, seek humility;
 perhaps you may be sheltered
 on the day of the LORD's anger.

But I will leave as a remnant in your midst
 a people humble and lowly,
 who shall take refuge in the name of the LORD:
 the remnant of Israel.
 They shall do no wrong
 and speak no lies;
 nor shall there be found in their mouths
 a deceitful tongue;
 they shall pasture and couch their flocks
 with none to disturb them.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters.
 Not many of you were wise by human standards,
 not many were powerful,
 not many were of noble birth.
 Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to
 shame the wise,
 and God chose the weak of the world to shame
 the strong,
 and God chose the lowly and despised of the
 world,
 those who count for nothing,
 to reduce to nothing those who are something,
 so that no human being might boast before God.
 It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus,
 who became for us wisdom from God,
 as well as righteousness, sanctification, and
 redemption,
 so that, as it is written,
 "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord."

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him.

He began to teach them, saying:

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

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. In the first reading Zephaniah speaks of seeking justice and humility. How is this reflected in your personal life?

SECOND READING

2. How have you experienced your weaknesses as places where Christ can enter more fully into your life? How has it changed you?

GOSPEL

3. Which beatitude do you most identify with. Why?
4. How can the beatitudes impact our lives to help us think about our Christian faith as related to the needs of others and not just a matter of personal salvation. What are we doing today? What more can we do individually, as a Small Christian Community, within our larger church community?

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 5, 2023

First Reading

Isaiah 58:7-10

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the LORD:

Share your bread with the hungry,
shelter the oppressed and the homeless;
clothe the naked when you see them,
and do not turn your back on your own.
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your wound shall quickly be healed;
your vindication shall go before you,
and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear
guard.
Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer,
you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I
am!
If you remove from your midst
oppression, false accusation and malicious
speech;
if you bestow your bread on the hungry
and satisfy the afflicted;
then light shall rise for you in the darkness,
and the gloom shall become for you like midday.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

When I came to you, brothers and sisters,
proclaiming the mystery of God,
I did not come with sublimity of words or of
wisdom.
For I resolved to know nothing while I was with
you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
I came to you in weakness and fear and much
trembling, and my message and my
proclamation were not with persuasive words of
wisdom, but with a demonstration of Spirit and
power, so that your faith might rest not on
human wisdom but on the power of God.

Gospel

Matthew 5:13-16

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"You are the salt of the earth.

But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned?

It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world.

A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.

Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket;

it is set on a lampstand,

where it gives light to all in the house.

Just so, your light must shine before others,

that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. When was there a time of serious need in your life when you've prayed and clearly heard the Lord say to you: "*Here I am!*"

SECOND READING

2. Paul makes clear that God's grace prevails over human wisdom and action. How were the seeds sewn in the development of your own faith?

GOSPEL

3. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth." What does this mean to you?
4. Who are the people in your life who have been the salt and the light? How have they affected you?
5. How have you demonstrated Jesus's challenge to let your light shine? What kind of response did you receive?

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 12, 2023

First Reading

Sirach 15:15-20

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

If you choose you can keep the commandments,
they will save you;
if you trust in God, you too shall live;
he has set before you fire and water
to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand.
Before man are life and death, good and evil,
whichever he chooses shall be given him.
Immense is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is mighty in power, and all-seeing.
The eyes of God are on those who fear him;
he understands man's every deed.
No one does he command to act unjustly,
to none does he give license to sin.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 2:6-10

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:
We speak a wisdom to those who are mature,
not a wisdom of this age,
nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away.
Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden,
which God predetermined before the ages for our
glory,
and which none of the rulers of this age knew;
for, if they had known it,
they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
But as it is written:
*What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,
and what has not entered the human heart,
what God has prepared for those who love him,
this God has revealed to us through the Spirit.*

For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths
of God.

Gospel

Matthew 5:17-37

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter

will pass from the law,

until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments

and teaches others to do so

will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses

that of the scribes and Pharisees,

you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

"You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.*

But I say to you,

whoever is angry with his brother

will be liable to judgment;

and whoever says to his brother, 'Raqa,'

will be answerable to the Sanhedrin;

and whoever says, 'You fool,'

will be liable to fiery Gehenna.

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar,

and there recall that your brother

has anything against you,

leave your gift there at the altar,

go first and be reconciled with your brother,

and then come and offer your gift.

Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way

to court. Otherwise the opponent will hand you over to

the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard,

and you will be thrown into prison.

for you cannot make a single hair white or black.

Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'

Anything more is from the evil one."

Amen, I say to you,

you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.

"You have heard that it was said,

You shall not commit adultery.

But I say to you,

everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.

It is better for you to lose one of your members

than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.

And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away.

It is better for you to lose one of your members

than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.

"It was also said,

Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.

But I say to you,

whoever divorces his wife - unless the marriage is unlawful -

causes her to commit adultery,

and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

"Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors,

Do not take a false oath,

but make good to the Lord all that you vow.

But I say to you, do not swear at all;

not by heaven, for it is God's throne;

nor by earth, for it is his footstool;

nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

Do not swear by your head,

for you cannot make a single hair white or

black. Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your

'No' mean 'No.'

Anything more is from the evil one."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. Sirach also says: “*The eyes of God are on those who fear him.*” Is that statement true for you today? How do you define fear?

SECOND READING

2. The second reading states: “*God has revealed to us through the Spirit*”. When have you felt the Spirit working through you?

GOSPEL

3. In a number of stories, teachings, and parables in the Gospels, Jesus speaks of the least becoming the greatest. What is your reaction to this? In what ways is this countercultural in our times?
4. In Matthew, Jesus provides a deeper understanding for some of the commandments. How do we reconcile the disparity between what Jesus is saying and the world we live in today?

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 19, 2023

FIRST READING

Leviticus 19:1-2,17-18

A reading from the Book of Leviticus

The LORD said to Moses,
"Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them:

Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.

"You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart.

Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen,

do not incur sin because of him.

Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the LORD."

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 3:16-23

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.

Let no one deceive himself.

If anyone among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool, so as to become wise.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God, for it is written:

God catches the wise in their own ruses,

and again:
The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

So let no one boast about human beings, for everything belongs to you, Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or the present or the future: all belong to you, and you to Christ, and Christ to God.

Gospel

Matthew 5:38-48

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"You have heard that it was said,
An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil.

When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well.

If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand over your cloak as well.

Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles.

Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.

"You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?

Do not the tax collectors do the same?

And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that?

Do not the pagans do the same?

So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect."

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

1. In Leviticus, the Lord said to Moses: "*Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.*" What does this mean to you? How does one achieve holiness?

SECOND READING

2. Paul tells us that "*the Spirit of God dwells in you.*" What does this look and feel like to you?

GOSPEL

3. Jesus instructs us that "*When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well*". What challenges have you had in following this commandment in your life?
4. How do you respond to Jesus's command of "*be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" Keep in mind that God's perfection means being complete through love.
5. In a few days, we begin the holiest period of the year. What are your thoughts about preparing for Lent? How can you use Lent as an opportunity for personal improvement and transformation?