



HOLY FAMILY
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Small Christian Communities Gatherings in Grace

*First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2023*

through

*5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 4, 2024*

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

(Matthew 18:20)

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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 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

<p>1st Sunday of Advent. 5 December 3, 2023</p> <p>2nd Sunday of Advent 7 December 10, 2023</p> <p>3rd Sunday of Advent. 10 December 17, 2023</p> <p>4th Sunday of Advent 13 December 24, 2023</p> <p>Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph 16 December 31, 2023</p> <p>The Epiphany of the Lord 19 January 7, 2024</p> <p>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time 20 January 14, 2024</p>	<p>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 23 January 21, 2024</p> <p>4th Sunday in Ordinary Time 25 January 28, 2024</p> <p>5th Sunday in Ordinary Time 27 February 4, 2024</p>
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1st Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:16B-17,19B; 64:2-7

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

You, LORD, are our father,
our redeemer you are named forever.
Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your
ways,
and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?
Return for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your heritage.
Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come
down,
with the mountains quaking before you,
while you wrought awesome deeds we could not
hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old.
No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God
but you doing such deeds for those who wait for
him.
Would that you might meet us doing right,
that we were mindful of you in our ways!
Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful;
all of us have become like unclean people,
all our good deeds are like polluted rags;
we have all withered like leaves,
and our guilt carries us away like the wind.
There is none who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to cling to you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have delivered us up to our guilt.
Yet, O LORD, you are our father;
we are the clay and you the potter:
we are all the work of your hands.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

**A reading from the first letter of Paul to the
Corinthians.**

Brothers and sisters:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.
I give thanks to my God always on your account
for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ
Jesus,
that in him you were enriched in every way,
with all discourse and all knowledge,
as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among
you,
so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift
as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus
Christ.
He will keep you firm to the end,
irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus
Christ.
God is faithful,
and by him you were called to fellowship with his
Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL

Mark 13:33-37

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Be watchful! Be alert!

You do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man traveling abroad.

He leaves home and places his servants in charge,
each with his own work,

and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

Watch, therefore;

you do not know when the lord of the house is
coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight,
or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- Our reading contains a tension between Israel’s sense of separation from God and ultimate trust in God’s presence. When have you experienced this tension in your own faith life?
- In what ways do you allow God to shape your life? How does this drive your day-to-day actions?

SECOND READING

- In the reading, Paul gives thanks to God for the grace bestowed in Jesus Christ. How has your life been enriched through the grace of God?

GOSPEL

- In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus gives a sense of urgency to being “alert.” Advent is a time for us to “prepare, and be alert.” What are we preparing and being alert for? Why is there an urgency?
- What actions can we take personally, as a community, and as a society to BE MORE...alert?

2nd Sunday of Advent December 10, 2023

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, give comfort to my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her
that her service is at an end,
her guilt is expiated;
indeed, she has received from the hand of the
LORD
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
In the desert prepare the way of the LORD!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our
God!
Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill shall be made low;
the rugged land shall be made a plain,
the rough country, a broad valley.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together;
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Go up on to a high mountain,
Zion, herald of glad tidings;
cry out at the top of your voice,
Jerusalem, herald of good news!
Fear not to cry out
and say to the cities of Judah:
Here is your God!
Here comes with power
the Lord GOD,
who rules by his strong arm;
here is his reward with him,
his recompense before him.
Like a shepherd he feeds his flock;
in his arms he gathers the lambs,
carrying them in his bosom,
and leading the ewes with care.

SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of Peter

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved,
that with the Lord one day is like a thousand
years and a thousand years like one day.
The Lord does not delay his promise, as some
regard “delay,”
but he is patient with you,
not wishing that any should perish
but that all should come to repentance.
But the day of the Lord will come like a thief,
and then the heavens will pass away with a
mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved
by fire, and the earth and everything done on it
will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way,
what sort of persons ought you to be,
conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion,
waiting for and hastening the coming of the day
of God, because of which the heavens will be
dissolved in flames and the elements melted by
fire.

But according to his promise
we await new heavens and a new earth
in which righteousness dwells.
Therefore, beloved, since you await these
things, be eager to be found without spot or
blemish before him, at peace.

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

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

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist.

He fed on locusts and wild honey.

And this is what he proclaimed:

“One mightier than I is coming after me.

I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- There are two different images of God given in this reading from Isaiah; The strong God that comes with power and might, and the shepherd God who tenderly cares for the flock. Which image of God most closely resonates with you? Why?

SECOND READING

- In this reading by Peter, God promises that on the day of the Lord, “we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” What does that look like to you?

GOSPEL

- In this Gospel, John the Baptist is described as clothed in camel’s hair and feeding on locusts and wild honey. What is the significance of a person, not fitting the social norm, announcing the coming of Jesus?
- Why do you believe that people were drawn to John the Baptist and believed his message?

3rd Sunday of Advent December 17, 2023

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-2A, 10-11

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor,
to heal the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
to announce a year of favor from the LORD
and a day of vindication by our God.

I rejoice heartily in the LORD,
in my God is the joy of my soul;
for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation
and wrapped me in a mantle of justice,
like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem,
like a bride bedecked with her jewels.
As the earth brings forth its plants,
and a garden makes its growth spring up,
so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise
spring up before all the nations.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.
In all circumstances give thanks,
for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.
Do not quench the Spirit.
Do not despise prophetic utterances.
Test everything; retain what is good.
Refrain from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy
and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body,
be preserved blameless for the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ.
The one who calls you is faithful,
and he will also accomplish it.

GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

A reading from the holy gospel according to John

A man named John was sent from God.
He came for testimony, to testify to the light,
so that all might believe through him.
He was not the light,
but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John.
When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests
and Levites to him
to ask him, "Who are you?"
He admitted and did not deny it,
but admitted, "I am not the Christ."
So they asked him,
"What are you then? Are you Elijah?"
And he said, "I am not."
"Are you the Prophet?"
He answered, "No."
So they said to him,
"Who are you, so we can give an answer to
those who sent us?
What do you have to say for yourself?"
He said:
"I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert,*
'make straight the way of the Lord,'"
as Isaiah the prophet said."
Some Pharisees were also sent.
They asked him,
"Why then do you baptize
if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the
Prophet?"
John answered them,
"I baptize with water;
but there is one among you whom you do not
recognize, the one who is coming after me,
whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."
This happened in Bethany across the Jordan,
where John was baptizing.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- The first reading from Isaiah is a reading of rejoicing. As you move through the Advent season, what in your life gives you reason to BE MORE...joyful?
- Who are the brokenhearted and poor in our society? During these challenging times, what additional actions can you and Holy Family community take to help them not only during the holiday season, but throughout the year?

SECOND READING

- This reading instructs us to give thanks in all circumstances. How do you find the will to BE MORE...thankful when you are going through a personal crisis?
- Paul reminds us not to "quench the Spirit." What actions do you take to BE MORE...alive in the Spirit?

GOSPEL

- How can we live as John lives, preparing the way for others to experience God's transforming love?
- John alludes to the fact that the Messiah is coming, leaving us with anticipation for the coming of the Lord. In these final days before Christmas, how do you personally embrace the anticipation of the Lord's coming? Are there family traditions that help you to do so?

4th Sunday of Advent December 24, 2023

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8b-12,14a, 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

When King David was settled in his palace,
and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies
on every side,
he said to Nathan the prophet,
"Here I am living in a house of cedar,
while the ark of God dwells in a tent!"
Nathan answered the king,
"Go, do whatever you have in mind,
for the LORD is with you."
But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan and said:
"Go, tell my servant David, "Thus says the LORD:
Should you build me a house to dwell in?"

"It was I who took you from the pasture
and from the care of the flock
to be commander of my people Israel.
I have been with you wherever you went,
and I have destroyed all your enemies before you.
And I will make you famous like the great ones of
the earth.
I will fix a place for my people Israel;
I will plant them so that they may dwell in their
place without further disturbance.
Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as
they did of old, since the time I first appointed
judges over my people Israel.
I will give you rest from all your enemies.
The LORD also reveals to you
that he will establish a house for you.
And when your time comes and you rest with your
ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung
from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm.
I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.
Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever
before me; your throne shall stand firm forever."

SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:
To him who can strengthen you,
according to my gospel and the proclamation
of Jesus Christ,
according to the revelation of the mystery kept
secret for long ages
but now manifested through the prophetic
writings and,
according to the command of the eternal God,
made known to all nations to bring about the
obedience of faith,
to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ
be glory forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?"

And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

Then the angel departed from her.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- Like David, the first reading reminds us that everything we have or have achieved comes through God. What are some ways that you are reminded of this in your life?
- Is there an instance in your past where you felt God moving through you to accomplish something?

SECOND READING

- How do you find strength in God? When in your life have you had to dig deep to do so?

GOSPEL

- When in your life was there a time that you felt that you were called to do something and said "yes" to God?
- Where are you personally and spiritually on the eve of the celebration of Christ's birth?

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph December 31, 2023

FIRST READING

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

A reading from the book of Sirach.

God sets a father in honor over his children;
a mother's authority he confirms over her sons.

Whoever honors his father atones for sins,
and preserves himself from them.

When he prays, he is heard;
he stores up riches who reveres his mother.

Whoever honors his father is gladdened by children,
and, when he prays, is heard.

Whoever reveres his father will live a long life;
he who obeys his father brings comfort to his mother.

My son, take care of your father when he is old;
grieve him not as long as he lives.

Even if his mind fail, be considerate of him;
revile him not all the days of his life;
kindness to a father will not be forgotten,
firmly planted against the debt of your sins
—a house raised in justice to you.

SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-21

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

And over all these put on love,
that is, the bond of perfection.

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
the peace into which you were also called in one body.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, be subordinate to your husbands,
as is proper in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives,
and avoid any bitterness toward them.

Children, obey your parents in everything,
for this is pleasing to the Lord.

Fathers, do not provoke your children,
so they may not become discouraged.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, They took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,* and to offer the sacrifice of *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,* in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.

This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, He took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted – and you yourself a sword will pierce – so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.

Feast of the Holy Family• December 31. 2023

She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.

She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.

And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- What does it look like to honor your parents? As a child? As an adult? In their twilight years?
- What might this reading say to those who did not experience healthy relationships?

SECOND READING

- God asks each of us to “put on” heartfelt *compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience*. Which of these are the most challenging for you?
- How has your practice of these changed over time? What events in your life enabled the change?

GOSPEL

- In the reading during the discussion with Mary, Simeon foretold that Jesus “is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be contradicted...so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” What does this statement mean to you?

The Epiphany of the Lord January 7, 2024

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

- The first reading reminds us of God's light, even in darkness. Where do you see God's light shining today?
- How can you BE MORE...of a radiant light for others?

SECOND READING

- Epiphany sees one universal church that excludes no one. How can the universal Catholic Church be more inclusive? Holy Family?

GOSPEL

- Explain a situation where you prayed to God to give you a sign. How were your prayers answered?
- What signs do you encounter that cause you to BE MORE...aware of God's presence in your life?

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 14, 2024

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the LORD

where the ark of God was.

The LORD called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am." Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me." "I did not call you," Eli said. "Go back to sleep." So he went back to sleep.

Again the LORD called Samuel, who rose and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "You called me." But Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep."

At that time Samuel was not familiar with the LORD, because the LORD had not revealed anything to him as yet.

The LORD called Samuel again, for the third time. Getting up and going to Eli, he said, "Here I am. You called me." Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the youth. So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."

When Samuel went to sleep in his place, the LORD came and revealed his presence, Samuel answered, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

Samuel grew up, and the LORD was with him, not permitting any word of his to be without effect.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:6:13c-15a, 17-20

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:

The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body;

God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him. Avoid immorality.

Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

For you have been purchased at a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body.

GOSPEL

John 1:35-42

A reading from the holy gospel according to John

John was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God.”

The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus.

Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, “What are you looking for?”

They said to him, “Rabbi” – which translated means Teacher – “Where are you staying?”

He said to them, “Come, and you will see.”

So they went where Jesus was staying and they stayed with him that day.

It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed him,

“We have found the Messiah” – which is translated Christ - .

Then he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas” – which is translated Peter.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- Today’s reading presents the call narrative from Samuel. Have you heard or felt God’s call? What was it? Did you recognize it initially?

SECOND READING

- The second reading states that “your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.” What does that mean to you? How do you “glorify God in your body?”
- Given that, what does that mean for your treatment toward others?

GOSPEL

- Our readings call for an intimacy with God. How would you respond if Jesus asked you, “What are you looking for?”
- In what ways have you, like John the Baptist, pointed out Christ to others?

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time January 21, 2024

FIRST READING

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

A reading from the Prophet Jonah.

The word of the LORD came to Jonah, saying: “Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and announce to it the message that I will tell you.”

So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh, according to the LORD’S bidding.

Now Nineveh was an enormously large city; it took three days to go through it.

Jonah began his journey through the city, and had gone but a single day’s walk announcing, “Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed,” when the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out.

From now on, let those having wives act as not having them,

those weeping as not weeping,

those rejoicing as not rejoicing,

those buying as not owning,

those using the world as not using it fully.

For the world in its present form is passing away.

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time • January 21, 2024

GOSPEL

Mark 1:14-20

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

After John had been arrested,
Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel
of God:

“This is the time of fulfillment.
The kingdom of God is at hand.
Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

As he passed by the Sea of Galilee,
he saw Simon and his brother Andrew
casting their nets into the sea;
they were fishermen.

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

Then they abandoned their nets and followed
him.

He walked along a little farther
and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his
brother John. They too were in a boat
mending their nets. Then he called them.
So they left their father Zebedee in the boat
along with the hired men and followed him.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- Why do you think it took a threat from God for the people of Nineveh to change their ways?
- In your lifetime, what shaped the way you view God? How has your perspective of God changed over time?

SECOND READING

- How do you interpret Paul’s instructions in this reading?

GOSPEL

- As described in the Gospel, the first apostles were fisherman and not necessarily spiritually inclined. What does this say about Jesus that he chose ordinary men as apostles?
- Are there things in your life that you abandoned to follow Christ?

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time January 28, 2024

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Moses spoke to all the people, saying:

“A prophet like me will the LORD, your God, raise up for you from among your own kin; to him you shall listen.

This is exactly what you requested of the LORD, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said,

“Let us not again hear the voice of the LORD, our God, nor see this great fire any more, lest we die.”

And the LORD said to me; This was well said.

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him.

Whoever will not listen to my words which he speaks in my name, I myself will make him answer for it.

But if a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die.”

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:

I should like you to be free of anxieties.

An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided.

An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit.

A married woman, on the other hand, is anxious about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

I am telling you this for your own benefit, not to impose a restraint upon you, but for the sake of propriety and adherence to the Lord without distraction.

GOSPEL

Mark 1:21-28

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

Then they came to Capernaum,
and on the sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue
and taught.

The people were astonished at his teaching,
for he taught them as one having authority and
not as the scribes.

In their synagogue was a man with an unclean
spirit;

he cried out, “What have you to do with us,
Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

Jesus rebuked him and said,

“Quiet! Come out of him!”

The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a
loud cry came out of him.

All were amazed and asked one another,
“What is this?

A new teaching with authority.

He commands even the unclean spirits and they
obey him.”

His fame spread everywhere throughout the
whole region of Galilee.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- Moses speaks of God’s communication to his people through a prophet. Have you experienced God through the words of a prophet?
- Is there a particular time in your life when you felt God’s direct, burning love?

SECOND READING

- Catholic priests and nuns are not allowed to marry. Do you feel that celibacy is necessary to fully serve the Lord?

GOSPEL

- Why do you think people were astonished with Jesus’ teachings and the things they witnessed that day?
- What do you take from Jesus’ interaction with the man with the unclean spirit?

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time February 4, 2024

FIRST READING

Job 7:1-4, 6-7

A reading from the book of Job.

Job spoke, saying:

Is not man's life on earth a drudgery?
Are not his days those of hirelings?
He is a slave who longs for the shade,
a hireling who waits for his wages.
So I have been assigned months of misery,
and troubled nights have been allotted to me.
If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?"
then the night drags on;
I am filled with restlessness until the dawn.
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle;
they come to an end without hope.
Remember that my life is like the wind;
I shall not see happiness again.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:

If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it!
If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some.
All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

GOSPEL

Mark 1:29-39

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

On leaving the synagogue

Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John.

Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever.

They immediately told him about her.

He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up.

Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

When it was evening, after sunset,

they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons.

The whole town was gathered at the door.

He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him.

Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed.

Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you."

He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also.

For this purpose have I come."

So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS

FIRST READING

- The first reading reflects Job's human suffering and separation from God. Have you ever felt the lack of God's presence in your life? What did it feel like? How was it resolved?
- What do you do to sustain your ongoing connection to God?

SECOND READING

- In the second reading, Paul gives himself completely to preaching the Good News. As members of the Holy Family community, what actions can we take collectively to spread the Good News?

GOSPEL

- Why do you think Jesus kept the "demons" from revealing his true identity?
- Jesus often goes to a "deserted place" to pray. How can you BE MORE...prayerful?

