

Saint Francis Xavier Parish

The Baptism of The Lord

January 12, 2020



St. Francis Xavier Church

151 Bridge St., Narrowsburg

Masses

Saturday	4:30pm
Sunday	8:30am
	11:00am
Daily (Tuesday-Friday)	8:30am
Holydays of Obligation	As announced

Confessions

Saturday	4:00pm
	Or by appointment

Religious Education

Sunday	9:45-11:00am
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*Our Lady of the Lake Church
is closed for the winter season*

REV. DENNIS M. DINAN, PASTOR

ABBY RODDEN, PARISH SECRETARY

**OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY-FRIDAY 10:00AM-3:00PM
OR BY APPOINTMENT**

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Dear Parish Family,

Even if less than three weeks ago, Christmas seems long past. For many, the “tree” is gone; the many decorations as well, already packed away. Resolutions, may be already failing. The pattern of our life, fairly “interrupted” once again by the Advent and Christmas Seasons is now regaining strength with the temptation to give in. After Evening Prayer tonight, the Church too leaves Christmas Season behind for Ordinary Time. Yes, the lure to return just to the “ordinary” time of our past can be appealing. It almost seems to be the thing most compatible to do with everything happening around us.

First, let’s ask “What, if anything, happened to us these past weeks?”. Our First Reading tells us, through the prophet Isaiah, that the Lord Jesus came to us as “*a covenant of the people, a light for the nations ... to those who live in darkness.*” He was to “*open the eyes of the blind.*” How did we fare in this? Are we living “The Covenant?” For weeks, we heard of angels bringing Good News of great joy for all people. We have a claim to this joy and the peace that Christ came to bring to the world. Did we claim any of this? As Christmas rang out “joy to the world,” did we make any of this our joy? Does none of this flow in us? Do we know how to hold onto this joy and make it our own personally?

People advanced in the spiritual life experience this joy with not much effort. Described in *The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila*, the saint from personal experience explains this in her illustration of the “Four Degrees of Prayer.” Using a garden as an analogy, she portrays our soul and the watering is the sure way to bring about its growth. The water we need for this is “*living water*” that only God gives. She then shows how water can be obtained for our garden in four ways: 1) go to the well and lower the bucket; 2) build a device that will pump the water; 3) develop a method to provide automatic irrigation; and 4) the simplest and easiest, it can rain!

Where are we in this? Are we making the effort? Using Saint Teresa’s example, it is obvious that we must do our part. While we have a claim to this “living water,” we must claim it, daily—before it can become our own—before it can “quench our thirst” for the spiritual! Even if sounding farfetched, we can die of “spiritual” thirst even though Jesus has promised this “living water” in abundance. The least Saint Teresa says we must be willing to do is to go to the well and draw the water. And we should, daily! It already belongs to us. As Doctor of the Church, she is universally proclaiming the necessity we all have to pray and to grow in prayer and so receive this water in the better and easier ways. God can “rain it down!” It is no wonder that Saint Alphonsus Ligouri, in his book *Prayer*, can begin in the very first sentence, “Those who pray will definitely be saved.” We know then: the risk of not praying is frightening!

Amazingly easy it is, going back to the “daily grind” and Christmas and New Years affecting our daily lives very little. With scant awareness, it is dreadfully easier to “slip” in the Spiritual Life. Maybe we made some progress during the last six weeks or longer. Yet, retrogression, or “falling off,” is always possible—in prayer—in the Spiritual Life itself. In *Fire Within*, Father Thomas Dubay insists, “Just like an acorn growing into an oak tree can at any point fall into decline, disease and even death, so a person who has begun well in the life of prayer can come to a point of laxity that begets stagnation and possibly even death.” He says,

The dangers of retrogression do not appear out of the blue like a flash of lightning. [Saint Teresa of Avila maintains that] God gives the prayerful person “a thousand inner warnings” of the danger. The saint does not specify what these warnings are, but we may suggest a few of them: loss of peace at prayer ... pricks of conscience at small omissions and clings ... minor returns to worldiness such as undue time spent on mass-media entertainment and slight excesses in regard to clothing and food ... corner-cutting in conformance to regulations ... idle chatter.

Like so many things in life, progress is not made in a vacuum. Nor, does it occur arbitrarily. Just as the resolutions we make need a commitment of our time, resources and a certain determination, so also, Father Dubay contends, “Growth is determined by readiness and generosity.” He quotes Saint Teresa that, “in the measure [the Lord] sees that [we] receive him, so he gives and is given.”

Thus, we need a strategy. The start of Ordinary Time never lasts very long, with the Lenten Season very soon upon us. Ash Wednesday arrives in just over six weeks, February 26th. There need not be idle time in between. This is never healthy in our prayer life, which, as a facet of our Spiritual Life, should be growing with it to maturity. Why not use these weeks as a spiritual preparation for Lent? This would make sense.

Let’s neither be confused by ideas of longevity or rank. It is erroneous to conclude that “rank has its privileges” or “putting in our time” can, by itself, win us a place within earshot of God. We don’t “earn” God! Quoting Saint Teresa, Dubay explains,

“We wrongly suppose that,”

we must measure our progress by the years in which we have practiced prayer and, it even seems, put a measure on Him who gives His gifts without any measure, when He so desires. He can give more to one in half a year than to another in many years! This is something I have seen so clearly in many persons that I’m amazed how we can even stop to consider it.

Also, let’s not overlook our efforts. Father Dubay points out that “Faintheartedness was not one of [Saint Teresa’s] traits, and it may not be a trait of anyone who embarks on a contemplative life with the all-holy God.” Her advice to set out on a life of serious prayer (*emphasis is Dubay’s*):

It is most important—all-important, indeed—that they should begin well by making an earnest and most determined resolve not to halt until they reach their goal, whatever may come, whatever may happen to them, however hard they may have to labour, whoever may complain of them, whether they reach their goal or die on the road or have no heart to confront the trials which they meet, whether the very world dissolves before them.

Before writing off the above as unrealistic, recall the words of Jesus, “*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few*” (Mt 7:13-14). We can find the same sort of instruction in Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Not Taken*. (see next page)

As we celebrate today’s feast, let’s recall what happened at our own Baptism, for what we said above is really just a living out of our Baptismal Promises. Equally, Baptism is not just something we received in our past. In Baptism we were given and God entrusted us with “a Life,” a new one! The prophet Ezekiel in acting for God promised, “*I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities ... I will put my spirit within you*” (Ezek 36:25, 27). This became a reality. God literally poured his Spirit into us. The *Rite of Baptism* explained that, “we have put on Christ.” To be clothed in our white garment was to be clothed in Christ himself, representing our new dignity! We are in him. He is in us. Hence the admonition, “With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into everlasting life.” Our parents were also told to, “See that the divine life which God [gave us] is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in [our] hearts.” Keeping this life alive, and “growing” it like a “garden” as Saint Teresa suggests, is truly living the Spiritual Life. This is living the “covenant!”—and how God bestows true “joy to the world!”



God's Peace 
Father Dennis Dinan

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The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

We apologize for not having a full list for the flower offerings in the Christmas bulletin, as some of the envelopes were misplaced. Please find the full list below. Thank you.

Do you use a cleaning service or snow plow service that you like or do you have one you would recommend? Please call the rectory and let us know. We are in need of both services immediately.

Christmas Flower Donations



Donated by	In Honor/Memory of	Donated by	In Honor/Memory of
Dorothy Schultz	Edward Schultz Clarence & Marie Schultz Walter & Florence Hubert William Kohler Schick & Gunther Family Hubert Family James Heneke All Deceased	Michael & Judith D'Ottavio	D'Ottavio Family Sorrentino Family Helene & Alexander Luning Sal Indelicato Mary & Ludovico Indelicato
Lisa Lander	Florence Billard	Feagles Family	Al Luning Smith Family Feagles Family DeanEdward Dean Jr Ruth & Harry Dean Grandma James Lingle Howard & Evelyn VanJones
Ronald & Grace Dollard	Dollard Family Foley Family	Edward & Rosemary	Frank & Gladys Smith Josephine Kelly
Elizabeth Barenklau	Charles F Davies Marie E Davies Joseph Manley Barbara Walter Todd Panich George & Elizabeth Walter Merlin & Ester Stephens	Pat Galligan Patricia Lingle Virginia Ferranti	
George Walter	George & Elizabeth Walter Merlin & Ester Stephens	Clifford Kelly	
Peter & Joanne Rebhandl	Edward Dean Agnes & Santo DiBello Dolores Manaseri Christopher Manaseri		
Manaseri-Barile Family	Dolores Manaseri Christopher Manaseri		
Regina Moran	Walter & Florence Hubert Pete Moran Elliott & Marion Moran Thomas & Hermina Schick		
Helen Barr	Fred Barr Reith Children Winum Family		
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Wendell & Lillian Putz	Putz & Connolly Families Jean Kerrigan Tom Hennessy Our Families		
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Donations

Clifford & Maureen Kelly
Adele Shapiro
Padraic & Melissa McCarthy
James & Patricia Meyers
Peter & Patricia Russo
Ed Holmes
Angelo & Donna Parisi
Anthony & Cheryl Macaluso

A note from Paddy McCarthy- Religious Ed Coordinator

Recently, there was some discussion with Father about moving the 8:30 Mass to 9 AM for a more convenient mass time. While Father may have made an announcement today, we spoke this evening and that is not possible. The mass time was first moved to 8:30 to accommodate people traveling from Lake Huntington to Narrowsburg for Religious Education classes starting at 9:45 and ending at 11. The Archdiocese of NY and specifically the Religious Education Center in Liberty, NY headed by Sr. Kevin John calls for 30 classes of 90 minutes each. Thankfully, Sr. Kevin recognizes our circumstances and understands our 75 minutes of class (9:45-11). Consequently, if the mass time was moved to 9 AM, there would be absolutely no chance that Religious Education could start before 10 AM - further eroding the precious little time we have. Furthermore, the 8:30 Mass allows Religious Education teachers who attend early mass time to get set up and prepare for the classes. Thus, after reflecting on this and speaking with Father, we both agree that the mass time will remain at 8:30 AM for the duration of the Religious Education Calendar. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me by email or phone (315) 663-7520. Thank you for your understanding in this matter. We apologize for the miscommunication. Sincerely, Paddy McCarthy



Mass Intentions

Saturday, January 11th

SFX 4:30pm - Our Parish Family

Sunday, January 12th

(NO MASS at OLL)

SFX 8:30am - Our Parish Family

SFX 11:00am - George Ritz

Requested by Janice Hauser

Monday, January 13th

NO MASS

Tuesday, January 14th

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

Wednesday, January 15th

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

Thursday, January 16th

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

Friday, January 17th

SFX 8:30am - Chris Grosser

Requested by Peter & Elsa Grosser

Saturday, January 18th

SFX 4:30pm - Clarence & Marie Schultz

Requested by Dorothy Schultz

Sunday, January 19th

(NO MASS at OLL)

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

SFX 11:00am - Available or Our Parish Family

Collection

January 4/5, 2020

First Collection

St. Francis Xavier \$1,037.00

Second Collection (R&M)

St. Francis Xavier \$323.00

Other (Heat)

St. Francis Xavier \$100.00

Total

\$1,460.00

Thank you!

Collection

Christmas Offering & Christmas Flowers 2019

Christmas

St. Francis Xavier \$6,053.00

Christmas Flowers

St. Francis Xavier \$702.00

Thank you!

Readings



Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Acts 10:34-38

Matthew 3:13-17

Please Pray for our Parish Family

This list will be cleared at the end of January. Please see the new 2020 lists at the back of the church.

For the Sick: Christina Hubert, Lydia Newton, Jane Cutita, Bonnie Feeler, Judy Tufo, Connie Moser, Elizabeth Stoddard, Pam Kocher, Vincent Gentile, Peter O'Leary Jr., Jessica Hartley, Dorothy Schlegel, Henrietta Pierce, Ella Dorothy Neidert, Ed Coates, Howard Van Jones, Dolores Nelson, Emerson "Bucky" Misner

For the Deceased: Mary Weiden, Muriel Maers, Stan Rembish, Eugene Harrison, Terry McCarthy, John Werner, Lillian Yacino, James Lingle, Patricia Lyons, Peggy Lee Romano, Emory Robert Kaub, Muriel F. Edwards, Andrew Casimir, Barbara Walter, John Hartley, Eileen Dempsey, Christopher Kells, Rita & Arthur Holmes, Kathleen Jamieson, Stanley Javitz

For those Serving in the Military: Justin Warnick, Joseph A. Choffo IV, Carmen Hamstrom, Joseph R. Gonzalez