

# Dear Padre,

*Was Jesus born in a stable or a cave? The Christmas scene in our church has Jesus born in a little shed, but in my friend's church it looks more like a cave. The Bible says Jesus was born in a manger, so just where was Jesus born?*

The Christmas scenes, sometimes called Nativity scenes or crèches, vary from church to church. In Scripture, we find more details about the Nativity in Luke's Gospel, but even he simply says that Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because the inn was full (Luke 2:7). In none of the Scriptures do we have any details about what the place looked like, but since a manger is a place where caregivers feed livestock, we can assume that Jesus was born in a stable of some kind. At that time, small caves sometimes were used as stables.

Nativity scenes, though, are not an attempt to present a historically accurate picture of where Jesus was born. Rather, scenes of the birth of Jesus remind us of the special love that God shows for us in sending the Son to us. We do not care so much about creating an exact picture of what took place as we do of beholding the beauty and wonder of God born among us. ●



THE OFFICE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, ATTRIBUTED TO JACOBUS COEN

*The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org*



## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*The Baptist is a model for those in the Church who are called to proclaim Christ to others: they are able to do so only by detaching from themselves and from worldliness, by not attracting people to themselves but directing them toward Jesus. This is joy: directing toward Jesus. And joy must be the characteristic of our faith.*

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 13, 2020

**MONDAY**  
December 18  
*Advent Weekday*  
Jer 23:5–8  
Mt 1:18–25

**TUESDAY**  
December 19  
*Advent Weekday*  
Jgs 13:2–7, 24–25a  
Lk 1:5–25

**WEDNESDAY**  
December 20  
*Advent Weekday*  
Is 7:10–14  
Lk 1:26–38

**THURSDAY**  
December 21  
*Advent Weekday*  
Sg 2:8–14 or Zep 3:14–18a  
Lk 1:39–45

**FRIDAY**  
December 22  
*Advent Weekday*  
1 Sm 1:24–28  
Lk 1:46–56

**SATURDAY**  
December 23  
*Advent Weekday*  
Mal 3:1–4, 23–24  
Lk 1:57–66

**SUNDAY**  
December 24  
*Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
2 Sm 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16  
Rom 16:25–27 Lk 1:26–38

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# Our Parish COMMUNITY

December 17, 2023  
**Third Sunday of Advent (B)**  
Isaiah 61:1–2a, 10–11 / 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24 / John 1:6–8, 19–28



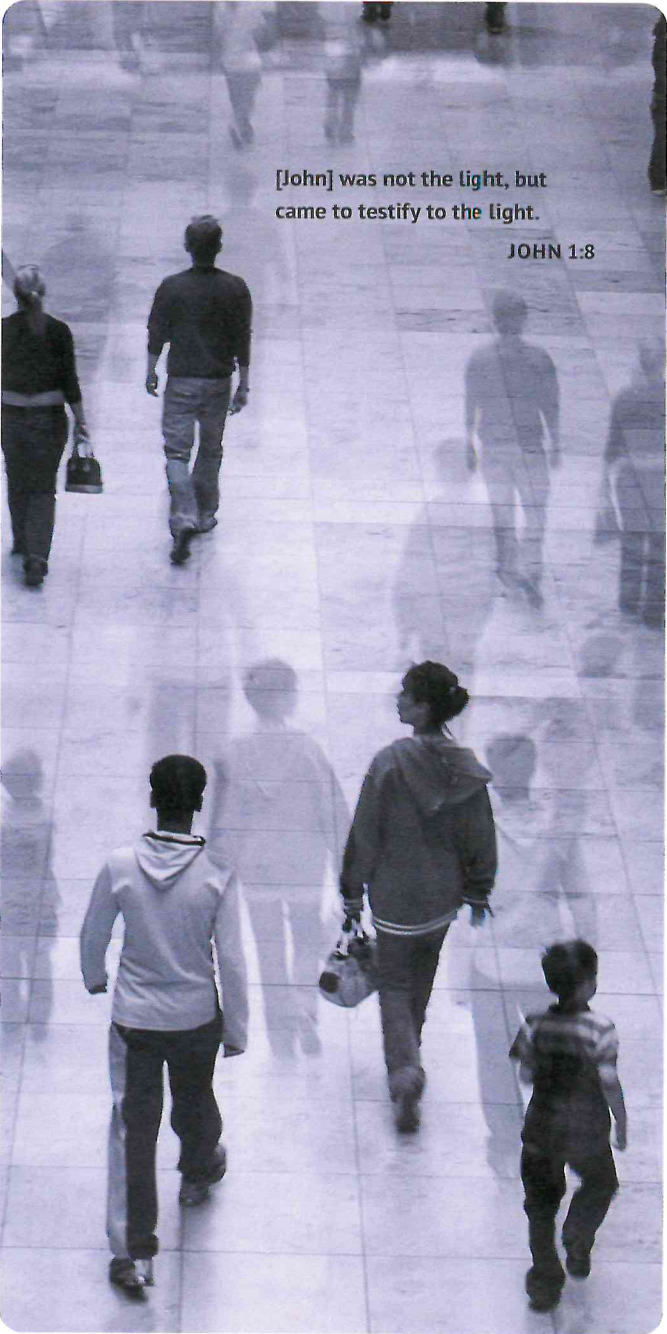
## Making Room for God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**T**he story of John the Baptist is the story of taking a back seat to Jesus, of fading into the background so that Jesus might be the light. Fading out of the picture is something we may find ourselves doing more than once in our lives. Sometimes it's also a choice we have to make, even when it's painful.

Actor Nick Nolte talked about what it was like for him when he turned seventy; how his body would hurt and how painful it was to get out of bed some mornings. He told of how he cried when a longtime friend passed away and of the sadness death brings. But the worst part, he said, is coming to the realization that your children have grown up, are on their own, and don't need you the way they once did. His son has a family, and for him the family comes first, as it should be. That's the painful part, Nolte says, the letting go of your children because they are no longer yours; in reality, they never were.

From the perspective of faith, why do we need to fade into the background? To leave room for the hand of God in life, that's why. So that God can do what God does best, and so that we don't get in the way of it all. That is a task not only at the end of life but for all of life. ●



[John] was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

JOHN 1:8

### Reflect

*When has it been difficult for you to fade into the background?*



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Sunday, December 17, 2023—Third Sunday of Advent

ST. JUDE PARISH BULLETIN

Sunday Mass at 9:30 a.m.

Confessions by appointment or after Mass on Thursday

Weekly Thursday Mass – 10:30 a.m., Adoration at 9:00 a.m.

Website: [www.stjudeparishgobles.com](http://www.stjudeparishgobles.com) Office: (269) 628-2219

Pastor: Fr. Alan Jorgensen Office: (269) 657-4459

Parochial Vicar: Fr. John Tran  
Email: [tuyen4peace@gmail.com](mailto:tuyen4peace@gmail.com)

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P.O. Box 102, 13809 M-40 Cell: (269) 655-6510  
Gobles, MI 49055  
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*For pastoral emergencies, contact Deacon Jim on his cell phone.*

St. Jude Parish Office Hours:

Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Office Email: [st.judeparishgobles@gmail.com](mailto:st.judeparishgobles@gmail.com)

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Choir Director: Laura Woods (269) 628-4866  
Religious Ed Coordinator: Jennifer Price (269) 377-6734  
Safe Environment Coordinator: Jennifer Rossell (269) 744-2582

*Mass Intention for today: Dec. 17, 2023: Ken Rogan by Claire Miller*

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023

READER: Tony Karsen

ALTAR SERVERS: Rocky, Alexa, Daisy, Bella

Mass intention for Thurs., Dec. 21, 2023: Marie Heber by Dawn Smith

Mass intention for Sunday, Dec. 24, 2023: Alice Burza by Deacon & Mrs. Jim Bauer

Weekly Collection Information

| Collections:   | Target       | Received     | Over-(under) | Attendance |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Dec. 10, 2023: | \$ 1800.00   | \$ 2465.00   | \$665.00     | 97         |
| Year to Date:  | \$ 42,100.00 | \$ 42,545.81 | \$445.81     | 2680       |

We Rejoice Always Because in Christ, We Have Good News!

Today, we lit the pink candle of joy for Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday of rejoicing. *I say again, Rejoice Always; we heard Paul say this to the people of Thessalonian.* Paul uses the word *Always*, he says. Today we may do so because Christmas is almost here, but rejoice *Always*? Is this even possible? It is!

Isaiah is overjoyed because the Spirit of the Lord is upon him and sends him to do good works such as healing, proclaiming liberty, and bringing the news of God's vindication to his people. Isaiah knows the Lord is with him and gives him great work to do.

In our responsorial psalm today, where the verses are actually from the Gospel of Luke, not the Psalms themselves, Mary is full of joy because the Lord has looked upon her lowliness and done great things for her. She will be the mother of Christ; all generations will call her and give her great meaning and purpose.

John seems to delight in his mission and purpose as he cries out: *Make straight the way of the Lord.* In dark days for his people, John testifies to Christ, the light, so that others may have hope and believe through him. Again, John lives out the purpose given to him and knows the Lord is at hand.

Isaiah, Mary, John, and Paul, because they know the Lord is with them and working through them, that they have the Good News and they glory in sharing it. What is our Good News to share? *Perhaps, like Isaiah, we have the good news about the meaningful work or service we have been called to. Perhaps, like Mary, we have good news about the family or friends we have been blessed with. Or maybe times are currently dark, but like John, we have good news about a future filled with hope in Christ.*

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and in all circumstances, give thanks. Paul teaches us! We do not do this because our unceasing prayers are always answered, or because we are thankful for circumstances that are always in our favor. We do so because, in Christ, we always have Good News to share. It may not be as dramatic as the news we heard in today's readings, but it is personal and meaningful because we know how the Lord has blessed us and given our lives meaning and purpose.

In the darkness of Advent, we always look to the light of Christ and rejoice in the Good News we have in him. In our rejoicing, we come to the Lord unceasingly with our needs, as we did in our petitions today. *We must always rejoice and give thanks, as we did in the Eucharistic celebration at mass today, for the times when things are not well when things are going well, but most of all, we need to praise and thank God for the gift of his Son, Our Lord, Our Redeemer but more importantly, His LOVE!*

## CHRISTMAS & ADVENT SCHEDULE

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent (Christmas Eve)

St. Jude at 9 a.m.  
St. Mary's at 11 a.m.

### Christmas Eve Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass: 5 p.m. at St. Mary's \*\*  
With a Musical Prelude at 4:30 p.m.

### Christmas Mass During the Day, Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>

St. Jude at 9 a.m.  
St. Mary's at 11 a.m.

### Penance Services in Our Area

St. Basil, South Haven, Sun., 12/17, 5 p.m.

**\*\*There is no Midnight Mass in our Collaborative this year**

***The St. Jude Parish office will be closed Friday., 12/22/2023 through Weds., Jan 3, 2024.***

### FROM OUR DRE:

Please pray for Emma Klein, Shane Percival, Elise Peterson, and Hazel Secondi as they make their First Reconciliation on Wednesday, December 20th.  
No CCD December 24th and 31st.

**PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL:** Garry Adams, Joan Rumery, David Vana, Phil Boyer, Margie Burris, Lillian B. Wheeler, Frances Parsons, Sonny and Mary Laughlin, Donna Murphy, Jack Secondi, Mary Heinz, David Vana, Vicki Clark, Paul & Encarna DeRyke, and all those on our Prayer Chain.

**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** on Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, starting at 10 a.m., we will need and invite all of you to assist us in decorating our parish for the Christmas season. There will be light refreshments available.

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR DECEMBER** – shampoo, sanitary pads, cleaning supplies, deodorant, toilet paper, cold/flu products.

*The Sanctuary Candle is lit this week in memory of **SOPHIE LIETNER**  
By request of Marie Keller*

**A BIG THANK YOU** to all who helped with the Funeral Mass & Luncheon for Marietta Bailey (Diane Hanchak's sister). As the saying goes, "it takes a village," or in this case, a Parish!

**A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE** - Today's gospel reports "there is one among you whom you do not recognize." It is hard to believe Christ is present in a family with crazy schedules, suppers that start too late and end too early, cars that don't start, misunderstandings, frustrations, piles of laundry, unmatched socks and stretched food budgets. The list is endless. The words spoken at mass, "The Lord is with you," are not a hope, they are a fact.

**A NEW WAY TO REMEMBER A LOVED ONE** – Here at St. Jude, you can sign up to have a loved one remembered by having the Sanctuary Candle lit for one week in their name (which will be announced in the bulletin). Donations are \$10.00. If you are interested, please call the office at 269-628-2219.

### FROM THE DIOCESE

**THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO WILL BE HOSTING THE ANNUAL MEN'S CURSILLO WEEKEND** - February 22-25, 2023, at the beautiful Amigo Center in Sturgis Michigan. This is a great opportunity for all of us Catholics to Spiritually Renew our Faith. The weekend is geared to those over 18 years of age. Come, and encounter Christ! Please visit <https://kalamazoocursillo.com/womens-weekend> for more information. Please feel free to contact Angela Martin, 269-208-5192 with any questions regarding the weekend or Cursillo.

**AQUINAS COLLEGES AND THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO** offer three opportunities for post-traditional learners to access a 50% tuition reduction in any course of study. Learn more at [diokzoo.org/bulletin-announcements](http://diokzoo.org/bulletin-announcements).

**THE CATHOLIC BISHOP ABUSE REPORTING SERVICE (CBAR)** has been established to receive reports of sexual abuse and related misconduct by bishops and to relay those reports to proper Church authorities for investigation. To make a report, visit [ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://ReportBishopAbuse.org) or phone (800) 276-1562. When a report includes a crime, such as the sexual abuse of a minor, it will also be reported to civil authorities. Otherwise, reports will be kept confidential.