



Holy Cross Catholic Church

1010 Jefferson Street
Mendota, IL 61342
Phone: 815-538-6151
Fax: 815-539-5014
www.mendotacatholic.org

Mailing Address
1010 Jefferson Street
Mendota, IL 61342

Mass Schedule - Check inside cover

Confessions - Wednesdays 12pm - 1pm, Thursdays 5pm - 6pm
and Saturdays 2:30pm - 3:30pm

Adoration Chapel - Monday-Friday 9am - 10pm



Ss. Peter & Paul Catholic Church

3888 First Road
Mendota, IL 60342
Phone: 815-538-6151
Fax: 815-539-5014
www.mendotacatholic.org

Mailing Address
1010 Jefferson Street
Mendota, IL 61342

Mass Schedule - Check inside cover

Confessions - Sunday 8:20am - 8:50am



St. Theresa Catholic Church

221 W. Union Street
Earlville, IL 60518
Phone: 815-538-6151
Fax: 815-539-5014
www.mendotacatholic.org

Mailing Address
1010 Jefferson Street
Mendota, IL 61342

Mass Schedule - Check inside cover

Confessions - Saturday 4:00pm - 4:45pm

Adoration - 1st Friday of each month

Homebound and Hospital Visits:

Please call the office and visits will be arranged.

Cemetery lot purchase:

Please call

Steve Schmitt at
Mendota Monument Company 815-538-5276

Our Parish Mission Statement: *To help all persons live out and understand the relevance and priority of Jesus Christ and His Gospel in the Catholic Faith.*

Pastor: Fr. Peter A. Pilon

Parochial

Vicar: Fr. Jeff Windy

Deacons: Deacon Ray Fischer
Deacon Jose Lopez
Deacon Hector Diaz

Music Director: Roy VanOpdorp

Director of Religious Education
Brian R. Corrigan

Business Manager
Lorraine Walter

Administrative Assistant
Mary Lou Flahive

Ready, Set, Grow Extended Care

† Julie Winner - 815-538-7604

† Offers Day Care for 3 year old to 12 year old.

Learning Lambs Pre-School

† 815-539-7003

† 3 yr old and 4 yr old sessions



Holy Cross School

1008 Jefferson St. Mendota, IL 61342

815-539-7003

Principal - Michael Struna

Baptisms: Pre-Baptismal instruction is required.
Call the Parish office for information and scheduling.

Weddings: Before any other arrangements are made, contact the parish priest 6 to 8 months in advance.



Sunday, Dec 18th 4th Sunday of Advent
6:30 a.m. Parishioners
8:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Bob Rave by Helen Rave
9:00 a.m. @Ss. Peter & Paul: +Rick Wujek by Family
10:30 a.m. +Don Full by Frank & Anita Kobilsek
12:00 p.m. Mass in Spanish - +La Familia de Roy Díaz
Monday, Dec 19th Late Advent Weekday
8:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +In Memory of Linda Bouche
by Mike & Debbie Kent
7:00 p.m. +Jerry Simkins by Mike & Kathy Pierce
Tuesday, Dec 20th Late Advent Weekday
7:00 a.m. +Rufus & Erma Joerger by Bruce & Jan Full
8:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Michael Corrigan
by Tim & Cindy Cook
11:30 a.m. Mass at OSF St. Paul: Special Intention
Wednesday, Dec 21st Saint Peter Canisius
7:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Dorothy Wiley
by Dick & Mary McConville
8:00 a.m. +Ron Suetz by Deane & Phyllis Vogel
12 p.m.—1 p.m. — Confessions
Thursday, Dec 22nd Late Advent Weekday
7:00 a.m. +Don Mellott
8:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Magdalena Rients
by Cathy Schwingle
5 p.m.—6 p.m. — Confessions
Friday, Dec 23rd Saint John of Kanty
7:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Patty Cook
by Tim & Cindy Cook
8:00 a.m. +Don Whitmore
Saturday, Dec 24th Christmas Eve
2:30 p.m. Confessions
4:00 p.m. +Katherine Funfsinn by Roberta Lauer
4:00 p.m. @St. Theresa: +Ken Stillwell
by Wilma Stillwell
5:30 p.m. @Ss. Peter & Paul: +Art Sondgeroth
by Family
5:45 p.m. +Irene Larson by Scott & Brenda Grobe
Sunday, Dec 25th The Nativity of the Lord
12:00 a.m. +Captain Thomas Heitmann
by Tom & Mary Heitmann and Family
6:30 a.m. +Joseph McNally by Family
8:00 a.m. @St. Theresa: +Mario & Elise Donato,
Emmett McConville and Rose McConville
by Dan & Joanna McConville
9:00 a.m. @Ss. Peter & Paul: +Jane Kuczek
by John & Pat Sondgeroth
11:00 a.m. Mass in Spanish - Por La Familia
de Cristina Nañez

PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM!

The weekend Mass schedule:

At Holy Cross Saturday Vigil—4 p.m.
At St. Theresa Saturday Vigil—5 p.m.
At Holy Cross—6:30 a.m.
At St. Theresa—8 a.m.
At Ss. Peter & Paul—9 a.m.
At Holy Cross—10:30 a.m.
Sunday Mass in Spanish—12 p.m.



Fr. Pilon's Masses will continue to be live streamed via the Zoom connection we have been using.

Here is the link for the Zoom site:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9138050856?pwd=RzZtRi8xNjltNHg4dnhNb2MzNzBEUT09>

Meeting ID: 913 805 0856

Password: 811195

Please help spread the word so all of our parishioners are aware of this new development. The link, ID, and Password are the same for all of the Masses. If there are any questions, Fr. Pilon may be reached by email at: frppilon@holycrossmendota.com



LECTOR'S SCHEDULE

4:00 p.m. Saturday, Dec 24..... C. Fischer
5:45 a.m. Saturday, Dec 24..... B. Corrigan
12:00 a.m. Sunday, Dec 25..... Volunteer
6:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec 25..... R. Bergmark

**Please call the rectory @ 815-538-6151
to volunteer**

SOWING SEEDS OF FAITH...
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR PARISH
IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING.
MAY THE LORD BLESS
YOUR GENEROSITY!



STS. PETER AND PAUL PARISH, PETERSTOWN
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA
DECEMBER 18, 2022

Fr. Peter Pilon,
Pastor
Fr. Jeff Windy,
Parochial Vicar

SUNDAY MASS AT STS. PETER & PAUL:
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

CONFESSIONS AT STS. PETER & PAUL:
8:30 a.m. Sunday



Mass Intentions

Sun. Dec 18 **Fourth Sunday in Advent**
9:00 a.m. **+Rick Wujek by Family**

Sat. Dec 24 **Christmas Eve**
5:30 p.m. **+Art Sondgeroth by Family**

Sun. Dec 25 **The Nativity of the Lord**
9:00 a.m. **+Jane Kuczek**
 by John & Pat Sondgeroth

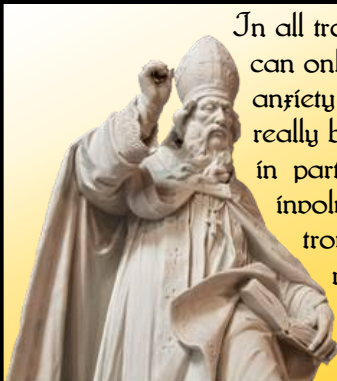
LITURGICAL MINISTER SCHEDULE

Lector

Sat. Dec 24
Sun. Dec 25 **Pam Schmidt**

Collection for December 11th, 2022

Sunday Collection:	\$1,860.00
Fuel Collection:	200.00
Immaculate Conception:	120.00
Religious Retirement:	280.00
Food Pantry:	10.00
Christmas:	5.00
Total:	\$2,475.00



In all trouble, you should seek God. . . God can only relieve your troubles if you in your anxiety cling to Him. Trouble should not really be thought of as this incident or that, in particular, for our whole life on earth involves trouble; and it is through the troubles of our earthly pilgrimage that we find God.

~ Saint Augustine

\$\$\$ DAILY DOLLAR WINNERS \$\$\$

Sat. Dec	10	2819	50.00	Gerald & Susan Zolper
Sun. Dec	11	2691	50.00	Maya Bauer
Mon. Dec	12	1290	100.00	Myron Leffelman
Tue. Dec	13	1276	50.00	Melissa & Mitch Melau
Wed. Dec	14	2224	50.00	Katherine Judkins
Thur. Dec	15	0619	50.00	Jordan Knaak
Fri. Dec	16	1363	50.00	Marty Leonard



2023 Holy Cross Daily Dollars are here! If you need more, they are available in the church's vestibule, or in the parish office. Please return your sold (and any unsold) tickets. Thank you for supporting Holy Cross School!

DISCIPLESHIP CORNER:

"Sharing your faith should be like changing a flat tire; when the situation presents itself, you know exactly what to do."

*~Ryan O'Hara;
 Everyday Apostles*

ADVENT ADULT FAITH 'REJOICE' SERIES continues
 Monday Nights during Advent in the Holy Cross School Basement, and will go from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.



ST THERESA, EARLVILLE
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA
DECEMBER 18, 2022

Fr. Peter Pilon,
Pastor

Fr. Jeff Windy,
Parochial Vicar

Masses at St Theresa
Saturday: 5:00 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am
Weekday Masses
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday : 8:00 am
Wednesday & Friday: 7:00 am
Confessions: 4:00 to 4:45 on Saturday



Mass Intentions

Sun. Dec 18 8:00 a.m.	Fourth Sunday of Advent +Bob Rave by Helen Rave
Mon. Dec 19 8:00 a.m.	Late Advent Weekday +In Memory of Linda Bouche by Mike & Debbie Kent
Tues. Dec 20 8:00 a.m.	Late Advent Weekday Michael Corrigan by Tim & Cindy Cook
Wed. Dec 21 7:00 a.m.	Saint Peter Canisius +Dorothy Wiley by Dick & Mary McConville
Thur. Dec 22 8:00 a.m.	Late Advent Weekday +Magdalena Rients by Cathy Schwingle
Fri. Dec 23 7:00 a.m.	Saint John of Kanty +Patty Cook by Tim & Cindy Cook
Sat. Dec 24 4:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve +Ken Stillwell by Wilma Stillwell
Sun. Dec 25 8:00 a.m.	The Nativity of the Lord +Mario & Elise Donato, Emmett McConville and Rose McConville by Dan & Joanna McConville



"May today there be peace within. May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith. May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content knowing you are a child of God. Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us."

~ Saint Teresa of Ávila



Collection for December 11th

Sunday Collection:	\$1,430.00
Christmas Flowers	35.00
Immaculate Conception:	148.00
Religious Retirement:	220.00
Food Pantry:	50.00
Christmas:	30.00
Altar & Rosary:	300.00
Total:	\$2,213.00

Cemetery: \$20.00

Lector & Extraordinary Minister
of Holy Communion Schedule

Saturday, Dec. 24th

Lector: Wally Cwikla
EMHC: 3 Volunteers

Sunday, Dec 25th

Lector: Volunteer
EMHC: 3 Volunteers

† St. Theresa is planning a Potluck & Bingo Night on Sunday, January 8, starting at 4:30. Please mark your calendar and join us.

Confession Schedule for Christmas
All Confessions will be at Holy Cross.

12pm - 1pm: 12pm - 1pm Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.
5pm - 6pm: Tues., Wed., Thur.
11am - 12pm on Saturday the 24th

No other Confessions will be scheduled.

ADVENT ADULT FAITH 'REJOICE' SERIES continues
Monday Nights during Advent in the Holy Cross
School Basement, and will go from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

ST THERESA, EARLVILLE
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA
DECEMBER 18, 2022



**STS. PETER AND PAUL PARISH,
PETERSTOWN**

**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA
DECEMBER 18, 2022**



DISCIPLESHIP CORNER:

*"Sharing your faith should be like changing a flat tire;
when the situation presents itself, you know exactly
what to do."*

*~Ryan O'Hara;
Everyday Apostles*

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Volunteers

Sts. Peter & Paul

Saturday, December 24th, 4:30 p.m.

Lector: 1 Volunteer
EMHC: 3 Volunteers
Servers: 4 Volunteers

Sunday, December 25th, 9:00 a.m.

Lector: Pam Schmidt
EMHC: 3 Volunteers
Servers: 4 Volunteers

The Holy Cross Parish Office
will be closed on
Friday, December 23rd &
Monday, December 26th.

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Volunteers St. Theresa

Saturday, December 24th, 4:00 p.m.

Lector: Wally Cwikla
EMHC: 3 Volunteers
Servers: 4 Volunteers

Sunday, December 25th, 8:00 a.m.

Lector: 1 Volunteer
EMHC: 3 Volunteers
Servers: 4 Volunteers

Christmas Mass Schedule

Saturday, December 24th

4:00pm - St Theresa
4:00pm - Holy Cross
5:30pm - Sts Peter & Paul
5:45pm - Holy Cross

Sunday, December 25th

12:00am — Holy Cross
6:30am — Holy Cross
8:00am — St Theresa
9:00am — Sts Peter & Paul
11:00am — Holy Cross Mass in Spanish



Iglesia de la Santa Cruz

Diócesis Católica de Peoria
1010 Jefferson Street
Mendota, Il. 61342
Tel. 815 538-6151 Fax: 815 539-5014

Párroco: Padre Pedro Pilon Diáconos: José López y Héctor Díaz
18 de Diciembre 2022
El Cuarto Domingo de Adviento



Bautismos, Bodas, o Quinceañeras

Llamar a la Oficina

Bodas antes de hacer preparaciones para una boda

Llame a la oficina 6 a 8 meses antes de la boda

Obligado a estar en casa si necesita que le llevemos la comunión porque este enfermo por favor llame a la oficina

Grupos de Oración:

+Renovación Carismática: jueves a las 6- 8 pm

Confesiones

Sábado – 2:30 pm—3:45 pm

Jueves de 5 pm a 6 pm confesiones en español

*Por eso el Señor mismo
os dará esta señal: la virgen
concebirá y dará a luz un
hijo, y le pondrás por
nombre Emanuel.*

~ Mateo 11:4 -

Horario de las misas

Domingo: 6:30 a.m. Holy Cross. /8am St. Teresa/
9am Ss. Peter and Paul. /10:30 a.m. Holy Cross/(inglés)

12 p.m. (español)

Lunes: 8 a.m. Earlville 7 p.m. Holy Cross

Martes: 7 a.m. Holy Cross/ 8 a.m. St. Teresa 8 a.m.

Miércoles 7 a.m. Earlville/ 8 a.m. Holy Cross

Jueves 7 a.m. Holy Cross / 8 a.m. St. Teresa

Viernes 7 a.m. Earlville /8 a.m. Holy Cross

Sábado 4 p.m. Holy Cross / 5 p.m. St. Teresa

Intenciones para Misa

12/25: 11 a.m. Por la Familia de Cristina Nañez

01/01: 11 a.m. +Alfredo y María Díaz por Familia

Lectores

12/25 Carlos Moreno y Ramona Escatel

01/01 Estela López y Norma Chicas

Ministros de Eucaristía

12/25: 12 p.m. Carolina Martínez y Carlos Moreno

01/01: 11 a.m. Lourdes Sánchez y Ramona Escatel

*‘José, hijo de David, no temas recibir en tu casa
a María tu mujer. Porque es por medio del
Espíritu Santo que este niño ha sido concebido
en ella. Ella dará a luz un hijo y le pondrás por
nombre Jesús, porque el salvara a su pueblo de
sus pecados’.*

~ Mateo 1:20-21





FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



BEST. LOVE STORY. EVER.

Our Lady of the Cenacle Chapel

“In beholding the Word made flesh, now sacramentally present in the Eucharist, the eyes of our bodies are united with the eyes of faith in gazing upon the presence ‘par excellence’ of Emmanuel ‘God with us’ until that day when the sacramental veil will be lifted in the Kingdom of heaven.”

~Pope St. John Paul II

Please call Karen Brandner,
Chapel Coordinator, at 815.915.6635
to sign up for *your* Holy Hour.

\$\$\$ DAILY DOLLAR WINNERS \$\$\$

Sat. Dec 10	2819	50.00	Gerald & Susan Zolper
Sun. Dec 11	2691	50.00	Maya Bauer
Mon. Dec 12	1290	100.00	Myron Leffelman
Tue. Dec 13	1276	50.00	Melissa & Mitch Melau
Wed. Dec 14	2224	50.00	Katherine Judkins
Thur. Dec 15	0619	50.00	Jordan Knaak
Fri. Dec 16	1363	50.00	Marty Leonard

SUPPORT YOUR GENEROUS ADVERTISERS!!!
They make our bulletin possible.



Robert W. Merritt
Brett W. Merritt

MERRITT
FUNERAL HOME

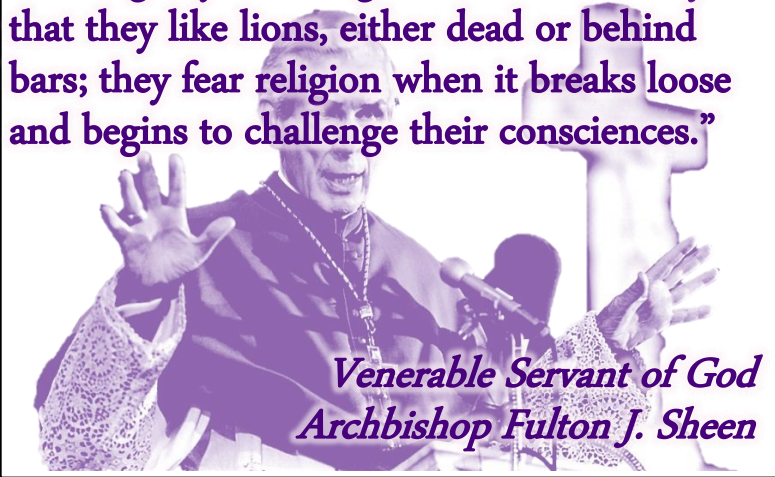
800 MONROE ST.
815-539-7211

THE SUNDAY COLLECTION

	For the Week of	
Sunday	12/11/22	\$7,021.25
School		177.00
Food Pantry		152.00
Youth Ministry		90.00
Flowers		311.00
Immaculate Conception		887.00
Religious Retirement		145.00
Christmas		70.00
Misc.		45.00
Total		\$8,898.25

Give God what is just, not just what is left!

“The wicked fear the good, because the good are a constant reproach to their consciences. The ungodly like religion in the same way that they like lions, either dead or behind bars; they fear religion when it breaks loose and begins to challenge their consciences.”

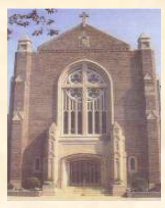


*Venerable Servant of God
Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen*

Check out our website!

We are now at: <https://mendotacatholic.org/>





GOD IS WITH US & HE SAVES!



THEREFORE THE LORD HIMSELF WILL GIVE YOU A SIGN; the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel. (Isaiah 7:14) Often times when writing this page I try to discern ways in which the readings can be applied to our daily lives. At other times, however, it is important to just give catechesis to help undergird the foundations of our faith. I think this is one of the *other* times. So let's begin...

What's in a name? We hear Isaiah prophesy in the first reading that a virgin shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel. Most of us already know that Emmanuel means *God is with us* or *with us is God*. This prophecy is set during the days of Isaiah, and the days when Ahaz was king of Judah. It was during these days that the northern ten tribes of Israel had joined forces with the pagan nation of Syria and were set to attack the kingdom of Judah. Ahaz, the king, was on edge about this development and Isaiah went to him to give him some good news. He told the king ask for any sign from the LORD; it could be as deep as Sheol (the realm of the dead), or as high as heaven (the realm of the Lord God).

Ahaz, showing a bit of false modesty says he will "not put the LORD to the test." It is this response that provokes the prophecy of the virgin birth from Isaiah. Dr. Brant Pitre points out the importance of understanding the language here; he says there is a long-time debate among scripture scholars whether the Hebrew word "almah" means virgin (as most of our English translations have the word rendered), or if it is more akin to a young woman. Dr. Pitre says the word actually is most closely translated as a maiden. That implies not only a young woman, but also a virgin. This is some of the underlying catechesis. And lest we get lost in a detour of words and definitions, let's regroup and focus on the real heart of the message: a human virgin will give birth to a human child—a natural impossibility!

Matthew's Gospel today tells us how this virgin birth happened. When Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant. Matthew reveals this came about by the Holy Spirit. The news of this pregnancy troubled Joseph, and being a just and righteous man, he was unwilling to put Mary through any shame, and he resolved to quietly divorce her.

It is in the midst of these deliberations and in the night's sleep that an angel came to Joseph and assured him that Mary's pregnancy by the Holy Spirit was true and Mary's virtue remained intact. In this passage, Joseph is instructed to name the child Jesus. The Hebrew version of Jesus is, of course, Yeshua. But what's in a name?

Our first reading dealt with the name Emmanuel. In the ancient world, any name with "-el" was a reference of some sort to God, who was known as El Shaddai (God Almighty). For example the names of the archangels Gabriel (God is my strength), Raphael (God heals), and Michael (Who is like God?) all show this relationship of the 'El' names to God.

Consider now the name Yeshua... and remember, the Hebrew language did not have any vowels, so reading and pronunciation was critical. The unutterable name of God is given to us in the form of a Tetragrammaton—YHWH. The name of Jesus (or more correctly, Yeshua) is then said to mean YHWH Saves.

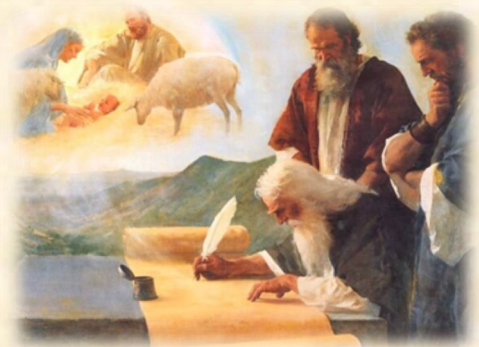
Jumping back to that natural impossibility of a virgin birth, we can see more clearly the implications it would evoke. If you are reading this page, you have the necessary intellect to understand the biology of creating new life. It is always, one-hundred percent of the time, necessary to bring new life into existence. Always, one-hundred percent of the time... except this once!

Of all the many great prophecies of the Old Testament, this one is the greatest! The Divine Son of God has taken on human flesh and blood, intellect and will and embodied the bridge that spans between humanity in its fallen nature, and Divinity, in its perfect nature. From the Virgin Mary of Nazareth, the Son of God has taken on His human body; He is one hundred percent human in his nature as a man, and one hundred percent Divine in His substantial connection to the Godhead.

From Noah and the flood foreshadowing baptism, to Abraham's sacrifice of his only son Isaac foreshadowing the Passion of Jesus; from Moses' law foreshadowing the distillation of that law in the commands of Christ, and from the prophecies of which Jesus explained himself to his disciples on the road to Emmaus, the virgin birth is the most wonderful and miraculous gift of the Father. The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. When your faith is challenged, and your belief in the virgin birth is mocked or belittled, remember that your faith is what leads to grace, and grace to salvation.



¡DIOS ESTÁ CON NOSOTROS Y ÉL SALVA!



POR LO TANTO EL SEÑOR MISMO OS DARÁ UNA SEÑAL; la virgen concebirá, y dará a luz un hijo, y llamará su nombre Emanuel. (Isaías 7:14) Muchas veces, cuando escribo esta página, trato de discernir formas en que las lecturas se pueden aplicar a nuestra vida diaria. En otras ocasiones, sin embargo, es importante simplemente dar catequesis para ayudar a apuntalar los cimientos de nuestra fe. Creo que esta es una de las otras veces. Vamos a empezar...

¿Lo que hay en un nombre? Escuchamos a Isaías profetizar en la primera lectura que una virgen dará a luz un hijo y lo llamará Emanuel. La mayoría de nosotros ya sabemos que Emmanuel significa que Dios está con nosotros o con nosotros es Dios. Esta profecía está ambientada durante los días de Isaías y los días en que Acáz era rey de Judá. Fue durante estos días que las diez tribus del norte de Israel unieron fuerzas con la nación pagana de Siria y se dispusieron a atacar el reino de Judá. Acáz, el rey, estaba nervioso por este desarrollo e Isaías fue a él para darle buenas noticias. Le dijo al rey que pidiera cualquier señal del SEÑOR; podría ser tan profundo como el Seol (el reino de los muertos), o tan alto como el cielo (el reino del Señor Dios).

Acáz, mostrando un poco de falsa modestia, dice que “no pondrá a prueba al Señor”. Es esta respuesta la que provoca la profecía del nacimiento virginal de Isaías. Dr. Brant Pitre señala la importancia de entender el idioma aquí; dice que existe un debate desde hace mucho tiempo entre los eruditos de las Escrituras sobre si la palabra hebrea 'almah' significa virgen (como la mayoría de nuestras traducciones al inglés traducen la palabra), o si se parece más a una mujer joven. El Dr. Pitre dice que la palabra en realidad se traduce más de cerca como una doncella. Eso implica no solo una mujer joven, sino también una virgen. Esta es parte de la catequesis subyacente. Y para que no nos perdamos en un desvío de palabras y definiciones, reagrupémonos y concentrémonos en el verdadero corazón del mensaje: una virgen humana dará a luz a un niño humano, ¡una imposibilidad natural!

El Evangelio de Mateo de hoy nos cuenta cómo sucedió este nacimiento virginal. Cuando María estaba comprometida con José, pero antes de que vivieran juntos, se descubrió que

estaba embarazada. Mateo revela que esto sucedió por el Espíritu Santo. La noticia de este embarazo preocupó a José, y siendo un hombre justo y recto, no estaba dispuesto a avergonzar a María, y resolvió divorciarse de ella tranquilamente.

Es en medio de estas deliberaciones y en el sueño de la noche que un ángel vino a José y le aseguró que el embarazo de María por obra del Espíritu Santo era verdadero y que la virtud de María permanecía intacta. En este pasaje, se instruye a José para que nombre al niño Jesús. La versión hebrea de Jesús es, por supuesto, Yeshua. Pero, ¿qué hay en un nombre?

Nuestra primera lectura trató sobre el nombre Emmanuel. En el mundo antiguo, cualquier nombre con “-el” era una referencia de algún tipo a Dios, quien era conocido como El Shaddai (Dios Todopoderoso). Por ejemplo, los nombres de los arcángeles Gabriel (Dios es mi fuerza), Rafael (Dios sana) y Miguel (¿Quién es como Dios?) Todos muestran esta relación de los nombres 'El' con Dios.

Considere ahora el nombre Yeshua... y recuerde, el idioma hebreo no tenía vocales, por lo que la lectura y la pronunciación eran críticas. El nombre inefable de Dios se nos da en forma de Tetragrámaton: YHWH. Entonces se dice que el nombre de Jesús (o más correctamente, Yeshua) significa YHWH Salva.

Volviendo a esa imposibilidad natural de un nacimiento virginal, podemos ver más claramente las implicaciones que evocaría. Si está leyendo esta página, tiene el intelecto necesario para comprender la biología de crear una nueva vida. Siempre es, el cien por ciento del tiempo, necesario para traer nueva vida a la existencia. Siempre, el cien por cien de las veces... ¡excepto esta vez!

De todas las muchas grandes profecías del Antiguo Testamento, ¡esta es la más grande! El Divino Hijo de Dios ha tomado carne y sangre humana, intelecto y voluntad y encarnó el puente que se extiende entre la humanidad en su naturaleza caída, y la Divinidad, en su naturaleza perfecta. De la Virgen María de Nazaret, el Hijo de Dios ha tomado su cuerpo humano; Él es cien por ciento humano en su naturaleza como hombre, y cien por ciento Divino en Su conexión sustancial con la Deidad.

Desde Noé y el diluvio presagiando el bautismo, hasta el sacrificio de Abraham de su único hijo Isaac presagiando la Pasión de Jesús; de la ley de Moisés que prefigura la destilación de esa ley en los mandamientos de Cristo, y de las profecías que Jesús mismo explicó a sus discípulos en el camino a Emaús, el nacimiento virginal es el don más maravilloso y milagroso del Padre. El Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo. Cuando su fe sea desafiada, y su creencia en el nacimiento virginal sea burlada o menospreciada, recuerde que su fe es lo que conduce a la gracia, y la gracia a la salvación.

In-Person Grief Groups

The grief groups will be held at two OSF Hospitals:

OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center, in Ottawa, IL, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. the first and third Tuesday of every month.

OSF Saint Paul Medical Center in Mendota, IL, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. the second and fourth Thursday of every month.



We will continue to maintain a safe 6' distance and masks will be required to enter the hospital.

Anyone is allowed to come to any or all meetings they would like to.

If you have questions, contact Kathy Steinz, OSF HealthCare, Bereavement Coordinator/Grief Group Support, (815) 343-5891

Kathleen.Stein@osfhealthcare.org

If you are interested in Serving for Mass, Reading at Mass, or volunteering as an Usher or Greeter for Mass, please drop a note in the collection with your name, telephone number, the ministry in which you would like to take part, and your Mass time preference(s). *Even if you volunteered before, please let us know if you wish to continue.*

Thank you and God bless.

Fr. Peter Pilon

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him who brings glad tidings. Announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, "Your God is King!"

Isaiah 52:7

WHAT DOES THE 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT REPRESENT?

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."



Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

~ Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata



SAINT WHO?

Saints Who Had Families

Saint Adelaide

Empress († 999)

Feast Day: December 16

Adelaide was a Burgundian princess. Born in 931, she was betrothed to the prince of a neighboring region as part of a peace treaty. She was two when the contract was made, and at sixteen she was married to Lothair, king of Italy. The couple had one daughter, but then Lothair died. His rival (and possibly murderer) tried to force Adelaide to wed his son, but she refused.

One account says that she escaped from prison but became entrapped in a bog. In a moment of despair, she encountered Otto the Great, king of Germany, who not only rescued her but fell in love with her at first sight. The two were married and had five children together. Otto became Holy Roman Emperor.

After twenty years of marriage, Otto died. Adelaide left the court, fleeing conflicts with her son and daughter in-law. However, with the help of wise counselors, she succeeded in being reconciled to them. Eventually she became a regent of the empire, which she ruled until her grandson came of age. Then Adelaide left to devote her time to the establishment of churches and religious houses. She died on December 16, 999, in a monastery she had helped establish. She is the patron saint of second marriages.

Loving Father, through the intercession and example of Saint Adelaide, help us to maintain hope and mercy in our relationships..

MAGNIFICAT MAGAZINE, December 2022 p. 262

SAINT WHO?

Saints Who Had Families

Richard the Pilgrim

Married layman († 722)

Feast Day: February 7

Richard lived in England in the late 600s and early 700s. He married Winna (a name meaning "joyful one"), a sister of Saint Boniface, the apostle of Germany. Richard and Winna had two boys, Willibald and Winnibald, and a girl, Walburga; Winna and the three children are also revered as saints.

It is said that when Willibald was three years old, he became so sick that his parents feared for his life. Richard and Winna promised that they would dedicate him to monastic life if he were spared. Willibald was restored and went to be educated by Benedictine monks.

Winna died, and some years later Richard set out on pilgrimage to Rome. Willibald and Winnibald accompanied him, but Walburga remained in her convent. Richard died en route to Rome, in the city of Lucca, and was soon revered as a saint. (In fact, his name, which was not recorded in the earliest histories, apparently came from the people of Lucca, who also seem to have originated the claim that he was a king.) His three children, following the lead of their uncle Boniface, became missionaries in Germany, helping to establish monastic communities there. The basilica at Notre Dame University is home to relics of Richard and his children.

MAGNIFICAT MAGAZINE, December 2022 p. 275



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



❖ Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord ❖

Every Sunday after the Noon Sunday Spanish Mass around 1:10pm we will begin Preparing Holy Cross Church for Christmas 2022. Starting Sunday, November 27th help is always needed and I will put you to work we like to be finished by 3-3:30pm each Sunday. Some exciting different changes we will make this year, consider coming and helping. Your always "welcome".



❖ **Sunday, December 18th** - Placement of large trees and figurines in new location.

❖ Wednesday, December 21st - Placement of fresh poinsettia plants in church and chapel

❖ December 24th & December 25th - A very Merry Christmas to all from:

Jerry & Holy Cross Decorating Team

** Tentative date for removal of all inside and outside decorations is Sunday, January 15th, 1pm.

GREAT CONVERSION STORIES

Malcom Muggeridge

John Janaro

Malcolm Muggeridge (1903–1990) was a prominent English journalist who saw some of the most dramatic events of the 20th century up close. He was baptized Anglican, but his childhood was shaped by the optimistic socialism of his father. Malcolm grew up thinking that an earthly "utopia" might be built by social engineering, but this idea never satisfied entirely the vast and seemingly contradictory longings of his heart. From an early age, Jesus attracted him with the promise of eternity. From Scripture, literature, and friendship with some devout Anglicans, he learned the ways of prayer, and would never entirely forget them. At the same time, his heart was pulled by pride, worldly ambitions, and selfish desires. His vivid consciousness of his own inner incoherence frustrated and afflicted him for many years.

He became a journalist and, in 1932, a Moscow correspondent for a British newspaper. Here, Malcolm's socialist dream shattered against the hard reality of Stalin's brutal reign of terror. Without authorization, he traveled to Ukraine and saw the horror and devastation of a politically engineered famine that killed millions of Ukrainians. He also came to a crowded Ukrainian church in Kyiv on a Sunday—crowded with hungry, desperate people singing the Liturgy, begging for the mercy of a God who had suffered on the Cross. In this church, Malcolm began to realize that suffering (only made horribly worse

by Communism, and in one way or another tragically unavoidable for all of us) didn't have to be the ultimate frustration of human existence. The God Malcolm sought had come to dwell with us and to take our sufferings upon himself. In that church, he sensed the closeness of Christ and his love for these suffering people who were beyond all earthly hopes.

Still, Malcolm wrestled for decades with his fickle, divided heart. He also became famous in postwar Britain as an editor, television personality, and documentary-maker. This work would bring him to Calcutta, India, in 1969 to make a documentary about a Catholic nun who had founded a religious order dedicated to serving "the poorest of the poor." In a sense, Malcolm Muggeridge introduced Mother Teresa to the affluent Western world through this landmark documentary *Something Beautiful for God*. He also came to know Mother Teresa as a concrete witness to Christ. She amazed him as someone who was eminently practical, who lived "in the world," but who did not depend on human powers or human success. Instead, she saw and loved Christ in everyone, especially the poorest people, the street dwellers of Calcutta, the abandoned sick and dying, those she found who had no other hope. Malcolm recognized in Mother Teresa a sign of the love of God that alone could give meaning to the whole of human existence, the love that transforms even suffering and death. He knew that human projects and political powers were too small (and too tainted) to produce a joy that was eternal. But here Malcolm saw living faith in the Incarnation, in the God who chose to humble himself out of love.

Around this time, Malcolm publicly professed adherence to Christianity, and worked more openly with Christian themes in the remaining years of his life. He still felt intellectually alienated from the Catholic Church by some negative aspects of the Church's historical profile and often flawed leaders. But through the encouragement and prayers of Mother Teresa and many others, he was slowly falling in love with the Church. Love finally prevailed, and he was received into the Catholic Church in 1982.

*John Janaro is associate professor emeritus of theology at Christendom College, and author of *Never Give Up: My Life and God's Mercy* (Servant Books). He blogs at www.johnjanaro.com.*



December 18, 2022

Holy Cross News of Note



THIS WEEK ON
FORMED

Week of December 18, 2022



**Christmas in Rome:
A Celebration of the Nativity**
Nowhere celebrates the birth of the Savior like Rome. This Christmas, marvel at the Holy City's festive celebration of the coming of the child Jesus.



**The Story of the Nativity: The
Truth of Christmas**
Enjoy this fast-paced, thought-provoking look at the true story of the Nativity as we enter into the joyful season of Advent. Christmas is so much more than a humdrum story we've heard since childhood. Join top scholars, speakers, and authors as they explain the gravity of Christ's miraculous birth.



**The True Meaning
of Christmas by Fulton Sheen**
This presentation combines recordings of Fulton Sheen's timeless reflections on the meaning of Christmas, mixed with Gregorian chant and seasonal music. It is sure to become a family favorite!

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Visit signup.formed.org and select our parish name.

An offering from the Aquinas Institute and gratitude prayers.

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subscription! To set up your
free account visit
formed.org/signup
and select our parish.

Catechism Corner

» *What is peace?* «

† *What is peace?*

Peace is the consequence of justice and the sign of love put into action. Where there is peace, "every creature can come to rest in good order" (Thomas Aquinas). Earthly peace is the image of the peace of Christ, who reconciled heaven and earth. Peace is more than the absence of war, more than a carefully maintained balance of powers ("balance of terror"). In a state of peace, people can live securely with their legitimately earned property and freely exchange goods with one another. In peace the dignity and the right of self-determination of individuals and of peoples are respected. In peace human coexistence is characterized by brotherly solidarity.

† *How does a Christian deal with anger?*

Paul says, "Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger" (Eph 4:26). Anger is initially a natural emotion, a reaction to perceived injustice. If anger becomes hatred, however, and someone has ill-will toward his neighbor, this normal feeling becomes a serious offense against charity. All uncontrolled anger, especially thoughts of revenge, are detrimental to peace and destroy "the tranquility of order". (YOUCAT questions 395-396)

Dig Deeper: CCC section (2302-2305) and other references [here](#).



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December 18, 2022



Holy Cross News & Note



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The angel points to the Prophet Isaiah in order to persuade the dreaming Joseph to take Mary, his wife, into his home: "The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel." Thus, due to righteous Joseph's "obedience of faith," the Incarnate Christ genealogically was "descended from David," and the words of the Psalm—"Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory"—are fulfilled. We boldly declare ourselves "slaves of Christ Jesus," knowing the love he has for us is "deep as the netherworld and high as the sky." He calls us to be holy—and makes us so.

MAGNIFICAT MAGAZINE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022

A PRAYER FOR THE Fourth Sunday of Advent

Jesus, you are constantly coming to your people,
even when we fail to see you.
In each and every moment that we are blessed
to recognize you here and now,
give us the courage to leap with joy at your coming.
Amen.



Alleluia, alleluia The virgin shall
conceive, and bear a son / and they shall
name him Emmanuel. **Alleluia, alleluia**

PARISH SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE!

Zoom web address:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9138050856?
pwd=RzZtRi8xNjJtNHg4dnhNb2MzNzBEUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9138050856?pwd=RzZtRi8xNjJtNHg4dnhNb2MzNzBEUT09)

Zoom Meeting ID 913 805 0856

Password 811195

Sun: 6:30 a.m. Mass

8:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

9:00 a.m. Mass @ Ss. Peter & Paul

10:30 a.m. Mass

12:00 noon Mass in Spanish

Mon: 8:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

7:00 p.m. Mass

Tues: 7:00 a.m. Mass

8:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

11:30 a.m. Mass @ OSF St. Paul

Wed: 7:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

8:00 a.m. Mass

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Confession

Thur: 7:00 a.m. Mass

8:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Confession

Fri: 7:00 a.m. Mass @ St. Theresa

8:00 a.m. Mass (8:15 when school is in session)

Sat: 8:00 a.m. (First Saturday ONLY)

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Confession

4:00 p.m. Mass

4:00 p.m. Confession @ St. Theresa

5:00 p.m. Mass @ St. Theresa





Holy Cross News of Note



WILL YOU PRAY FOR VOCATIONS FROM OUR PARISH?



Our Church desperately needs more priests. Join thousands of Catholics who are pledging to pray daily or weekly for vocations. www.invisiblemonastery.com Remember, each Thursday the Adoration Chapel is dedicated to prayer for vocations and we will continue to pray the litany for vocations after Thursday Mass.

THE TRADITION OF THE CHRISTMAS CRÈCHE

Pope Francis

When at Christmas we place the statue of the infant Jesus in the manger, the nativity scene suddenly comes alive. God appears as a child for us to take into our arms. Beneath weakness and frailty, he conceals his power that creates and transforms all things. It seems impossible, yet it is true: in Jesus, God was a child and in this way he wished to reveal the greatness of his love.

The birth of a child awakens joy and wonder; it sets before us the great mystery of life. Seeing the bright eyes of a young couple gazing at their newborn child, we can understand the feelings of Mary and Joseph who, as they looked at the Infant Jesus, sensed God's presence in their lives. Life was made manifest (1 Jn 1:2). In these words, the Apostle John sums up the mystery of the Incarnation. The crèche allows us to see and touch this unique and unparalleled event that changed the course of history, so that time would thereafter be reckoned either before or after the birth of Christ....

Standing before the Christmas crèche, we are reminded of the time when we were children, eagerly waiting to set it up. These memories make us all the more conscious of the precious gift received from those who passed on the faith to us. At the same time they remind us of our duty to share this same experience with our children and grandchildren. It does not matter how the nativity scene is arranged: it can always be the same or it can change from year to year. What matters is that it speaks to our lives. Wherever it is and whatever form it takes, the Christmas crèche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman, and child.... May we open our hearts to this simple grace, so that from our wonderment a humble prayer may arise: a prayer of thanksgiving to God, who wished to share with us his all, and thus never to leave us alone.

Christmas Myths



By Jimmy Akin



Every year at Christmastime, you hear people trying to debunk aspects of the holiday and the biblical accounts behind it.

One of the most common allegations is that Christmas is based on a pagan holiday, and so it is really "pagan" in origin.

Not only is this particular claim made by secularists who don't like Christianity in general, it's also made by some in the Protestant community. Before I was Catholic, some members of my Protestant congregation didn't celebrate Christmas because of its "unbiblical," pagan origins.

Other allegations charge the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth with contradictions, and almost every aspect of the Christmas story and the Christmas celebration has been challenged.

So let's take an objective look and see what the historical evidence has to say.

Not a Matter of Faith

First, we should point out that Jesus being born on December 25th is not a matter of faith.

Those who delight in saying that he wasn't sometimes seem to take pleasure in the idea that they're somehow undermining Christianity, but they're not.

Continue reading [here](#).





An Advent Wreath Made Me Catholic



Mary Pomeroy



On the first Sunday of Advent in 2017, when I went to a Catholic Mass for the first time, becoming a Catholic was the last thing on my mind. The only reason I was there for the Mass was to see the Advent Wreath and lighting of the candle. I knew nothing about the Catholic Faith except for the things I had been told by anti-Catholic Protestants. Little did I know that I was in for one of the biggest surprises of my life — and a set-up by God.

A Faith of My Own

Born in 1951 and growing up in Seattle, Washington, I had been a Christian all of my life. Our family was Lutheran, so I was baptized as a baby, attended Sunday school, vacation Bible school, and church camp. I was confirmed when I was 14 and active in Luther League in high school. I had faith in God, but it was more my parents' religion than my own. There was a short period in college when I walked away from my faith and turned my back on God. When I returned to faith in 1971, it was during the Jesus People movement, and I became a charismatic. Suddenly, God was no longer just someone I believed in. It wasn't just about going to church on Sunday to give Him that slice of my life. Instead, He became integral my whole life, and I had a living, daily relationship with Him.

In the early years of the charismatic movement, the late 1960s and early 1970s, charismatic worship was new and fresh. We sang scriptural songs accompanied by guitars. We learned a lot about the Holy Spirit, His workings, and His gifts. After college I spent a couple of years in California at a Christian organization called Youth With A Mission, a worldwide organization that trains people to become missionaries and work around the world. These missionaries emphasize the need to cultivate a deeper relationship with God. As I had no money for the training, I volunteered in their office in California and learned much through exposure to visiting speakers, listening to teaching recordings, and having conversations with many students and leaders who were there.

On February 8, 1976, I flew from Los Angeles to Anchorage, Alaska, to be a bridesmaid in my college roommate's wedding. I went from temperatures in the 70s to 30 degrees below zero! This was a pivotal point in my life. I liked Alaska and was looking for an adventure, and my friend's parents invited me to stay with them for a while. I found a job and never left Alaska. I met my husband, Willy, there. We were married in 1977 and now have three grown children and four grandchildren.

During the time we were raising our children, our family attended a local Assemblies of God church, where our children flourished in their faith through the many ministries the church offered. Despite the busyness of raising three children, I always felt that God had a purpose for my life beyond that, but I didn't know what it was. From 1989 to 1999, I was involved with the music in our church, singing in the choir and playing piano for the worship services. This did not become the lifelong purpose it may have seemed to be during those ten years.

He Leadeth Me... Through Pain and Confusion

In the late 1980s, I became involved with an interdenominational charismatic group for women called Aglow, where my faith flourished and I grew spiritually. Aglow was a large part of my life for many years, and I started by serving on a local board and continued until I was the State Prayer Coordinator, then the State Leader.

During my time with Aglow, we went to many Alaskan Native villages, where we had vacation Bible school for the children during the day and ministry services for the adults in the evening. Through the local and state gatherings, national conferences and the village trips, I made many friends in Aglow in my state and across the nation.

In 1999, the door to music ministry closed for me, and it was a difficult and painful time coming to grips with the circumstances that led to a change in how and where I served God.

It was at this time that I went to the Aglow Conference for the first time in Orlando, Florida. Women came from all over the world! We had wonderful speakers, we enjoyed worship that brought us into the presence of God, and my experience there brought me into a new intimacy and closeness with God that I had never known before.

My husband retired in 2011, but in 2014 he took a "retirement job," where he worked Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays; so he was unable to attend church. Things changed again. I started going to a church in Anchorage, but after about three years, I grew weary of making the 35-minute drive alone, then sitting alone through the services. Because of the distance, I didn't get involved in the church or make friends. I also had grown weary of the style of worship in the charismatic churches I was attending. Many of them reminded me of rock concerts with darkened rooms, flashing lights, the worship team front and center,



Advent Wreath

and very loud music. There were also things happening in Aglow in our state that were difficult for me, and I found it very hard to move forward as a leader. November of 2017 was marked by snowfalls, especially on the weekends. I stopped going to the church in Anchorage because of the weather.

About this time, a good friend of mine, and one of the very few Catholic friends that I had, moved to my area. It was November, and I was thinking about Advent and Christmas. Growing up in the Lutheran Church, we always had an Advent wreath and candles, and I always loved the anticipation of Christmas and of celebrating the birth of Jesus. Most of the churches I had gone to all my adult life had not had an Advent wreath. Out of the blue, one day I said to my friend, “I just want to go to a church where they have an Advent wreath and watch them light the candle.” She said that she needed to connect with the local Catholic church, and the following Sunday would be the start of Advent, and there would definitely be a wreath and candles, so why not go with her?

My heart sank. I was thinking, “WHY go with her — to a dead, ritualistic boring church service?” Nevertheless, I said yes. What else could I say? I couldn’t tell her how I really felt about the Catholic Church. Up until this point, my only experience with the Catholic Church was a wedding and two funerals, besides the things I had learned from other Protestants.

The Father Ran to Meet Me

This was the beginning of God’s great set-up for me. I was not looking forward to going to Mass, but I went. As we walked through the door to the nave (what we Protestants called the sanctuary), I was immediately taken aback. While I have always loved the Trinity, I have always had a special relationship with God the Father. In the churches I attended over the years, they would do just about anything to get the Holy Spirit to move. I was used to that, but encountering the presence of God the Father was a rarity. I always recognized the presence of the Father by the fact that — how can I describe it — His presence is heavy, weighty. I recognized it in that church by how I felt when I visited Jewish synagogues. As we walked through the doors of St. Andrew’s, I was hit with the heavy, weighty presence of God the Father, and I was stunned by it.

Then the priests came in, and suddenly, I did not see what happened next as a “ritual.” Instead, I saw how they revered the holiness of God so much that they approached Him with... protocol. That was something I would never see in my churches — a love and reverence for the holiness of God — and I loved it. When we started singing the liturgy, I almost melted! I was so touched by the beauty of the music and the words we were singing that I was moved to tears and kept on crying. The music sounded like something one might expect to hear in heaven.

A Brush With the Son

When it came time to receive the Eucharist, not knowing anything, I jumped up and followed my friend to the front. The woman gave me the host, but then she knew I shouldn’t have received it, and let me know it. Busted!

When we left the church, I was in shock. I knew something profound had happened to me, but I didn’t know what to do because I was NOT going to become a Catholic! But I decided I would attend there during the Advent season. This far I would go, but no farther.

The next part of God’s master plan was the third time my friend and I went to Mass together. In the church foyer, they had set up a book fair. After Mass, my friend was talking to people, and since I didn’t know anyone, I amused myself by walking around, looking at the books. I had never seen books like those. They were alien to me, with strange words and pictures. Then suddenly, I saw a book that stopped me dead in my tracks. Its title was *Rapture: The End Times Error that Leaves the Bible Behind*, by David Currie. I had spent my whole adult life in churches that espoused the Rapture teaching; still, I had had serious issues with it for years. The few times I heard someone teaching about the Rapture, I ended up with more questions and confusion than anything else. Unfortunately, there was no one to whom I could ask my questions about the Rapture, because everybody in attendance all agreed with it, whether they understood it or not. Here, for the first time, I was staring at a book that might have some answers! I didn’t have any cash, so I went home and immediately downloaded it onto my tablet and started reading. David Currie’s book was a turning point for me. He was knowledgeable and thorough and went through all the Bible prophecies, explaining how most of them have already been fulfilled.

Christmas came, and I still didn’t know what to do. I didn’t want to become a Catholic, but I was so drawn to the Catholic Church that I couldn’t stay away. Then there was another step in God’s set-up. Back in 2001, one of my friends, who is a Bible teacher, was invited to speak for two weeks at a Bible school in Magadan, Russia, and she invited me to come with her. Before I left, an Aglow friend who is Catholic told me about Father Michael, a priest from Alaska who was pastoring a church in Magadan. She told me what a wonderful priest he is, and I thought, “Wouldn’t it be great to meet him!”

We were in a foreign country, I speak no Russian, and I had no idea where the Catholic parish might be. But we would see!

The Holy Spirit Makes a Move

One day in Russia, we were walking through a building to go to a meeting, when the person leading us pointed to a door in the hallway and said that that was the Catholic church. I immediately thought of Father Michael — and just then, the door opened and out walked a man in a long brown robe. I



Advent Wreath

asked him if he was Father Michael. He said yes, and we had a short conversation. The Sunday following Christmas, who should come to celebrate the Mass and preach the homily, but Father Michael! I couldn't wait to go, and I was not disappointed.

Father Michael shared about a little five-year-old girl who would come to Mass in Magadan by herself, because her parents were not church attenders. Being so young, he didn't give her the Eucharist. One Sunday after Mass, she came to him and said, "Father Michael, why won't you give me Jesus? I just want Jesus!" Father Michael gave her Jesus.

What About Me? What Do I Want?

I thought about that incident, and I realized that I wanted Jesus, too! I had loved Jesus all my life, but I wanted Him more fully in the Eucharist. Then he talked about the Gospel passage of John 6:53–68, where Jesus told his followers that they must eat His body and drink His blood, and everybody but the Twelve left. Then He said to the Twelve, "Are you going to leave too?" Peter said, "Lord, where else can we go? You have the words of eternal life." Suddenly, those words sank deep into my heart, and it was at this point that I knew there was nowhere else I wanted to go — that this is where I belong, where God — Father Son, and Holy Spirit — was calling me and where I would find the Truth.

I was still reading David Currie's book, and one day I started reading about him and was surprised to learn that he had converted from the Presbyterian Church. He was the son of a Presbyterian pastor; his parents were teachers at Moody Bible Institute. I also discovered that he had written another book, *Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic*. I couldn't wait to get that book, too. I immediately downloaded it and started reading. It was the perfect book for me to read at that time, since I still knew nothing about the Catholic faith and had many questions.

Currie wrote this book to explain to his Protestant friends and family why he became a Catholic. His reasons were presented clearly and systematically in a way a Protestant would understand — the perfect book for me to read at that time. He addressed subjects that separate Catholic and Protestant beliefs, including the Pope, the Eucharist, and the Virgin Mary. As I read his book, I slowly came to understand what Catholics believe, and for the first time, it made sense to me. There were still many things I didn't understand. I started reading other books as well, because I craved learning about Catholicism. I read Scott Hahn's conversion story and loved it. I read *The 7 Secrets of the Eucharist* and *The 7 Secrets of Confession* by Vinny Flynn. I picked up CDs about Catholicism in the church foyer and listened to them.

One of the things that I didn't understand was the relationship Catholics have with the Virgin Mary. In the churches I went to, we

talked about Mary once a year at Christmas, and that was about it. I had an experience that changed all that.

In Alaska we get earthquakes. Once or twice a year, the house shakes a little for a few seconds, our hearts skip a beat, and then we go about our business. On November 30, 2018, we had an earthquake around 8:30 in the morning, when it was still dark in our far northern latitude. That earthquake registered 7.2 on the Richter scale — a big one! For a full minute, our house pounded up and down, the lights went out, things fell off shelves and crashed to the floor, and I had to hold onto the counter to keep from falling. When the earthquake stopped, the aftershocks started. Already traumatized, every 20 to 40 minutes, we would hear a deep rumble, the house would shake again, and fear close to panic would return. That night, I was lying in bed, exhausted. Every time I would start to relax a little, another rumble would come, the house would shake, and my heart would pound. I thought of all the people in south-central Alaska who, like me, were lying in bed with their clothes on, in case they had to leave the house suddenly, thinking, "We are all in this together!"

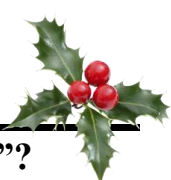
First the Blessed Trinity, Then the Blessed Mother

I tried to pray, but could not. I didn't know how to pray the Rosary, but I could say a Hail Mary. So I started saying Hail Marys, and pretty soon I started drifting off to sleep. I wasn't awake, but also not fully asleep, when I audibly heard a woman's voice say to me, "I love you."

My eyes flew open, and I thought, What was that?! It wasn't a voice that I recognized. Then it dawned on me. I had been saying Hail Marys, and she came to comfort me!

In September of 2018, I started RCIA. I cannot say enough about what a great experience it was! We had excellent teachers, and I learned so much about our Christian faith, what they believe, the sacraments, and all the wonderful things Catholicism has to offer. I especially liked the teaching about the Eucharist, which is one of the things that really drew me to the Catholic Church. In all my years as a Protestant, I knew there were deeper things to communion than what I understood, but I could never really grasp what they were.

When it was fully explained, I was thrilled to finally discover what Holy Communion really is and what it means to us as Christians. When I was a Protestant, we hardly ever talked about sin. Holiness is essential, but I didn't understand how to become more like Christ and deal with my sins. In learning about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I began to understand the importance of confessing our sins to the priest. I didn't understand the necessity of penance until after my first confession, when I forgot to do it. When I went to Mass the next day, I could immediately tell something was wrong, and then I realized that I hadn't done the penance I had been



Advent Wreath

assigned! It is a very important part of confession. I still struggle with understanding purgatory, something I didn't know about at all before. I recently took an online class from goodcatholic.com about what we believe, and I encountered one of the best explanations of purgatory that I have ever heard.

On April 20, 2019, at the Easter Vigil, I was confirmed at the age of 67. The confirmation name I chose was Anne. St. Anne, the mother of Mary, is the patron saint of seamstresses, of which I am one. St. Anne was the grandmother of Jesus and a name that has been given to many in my family.

I have been a Christian all my life, but becoming Catholic feels like coming home. St. Andrew is a wonderful parish, and I sing in the choir, go to weekly Adoration (where we pray before Jesus in the Eucharist), attend weekly Rosary prayer, and attend Bible studies. I figure I will be learning about God and our relationship to Him for the rest of my life, and that thought makes me very happy.

My husband has now retired again and attends a Protestant church in our area. He doesn't mind that I attend Catholic Mass, but he prefers to remain a Protestant. I join him at his church about once a month. I am the only Catholic in my family of Protestants, and my prayer is that someday I will have others in my family join me. Even if they don't, it is okay because they are Christians and accept the choice I have made. Even so, Father, make us one (John 17).



Mary Pomeroy

Mary Pomeroy grew up in Seattle, Washington, and attended Western Washington State University, where she received a BA in Home Economics. In 1976, she moved to Alaska, where she met her husband, Willy. They have three grown children, two sons and a daughter, and four grandchildren. During the years when her children were growing up, Mary was a stay-at-home mom. She later worked with the blind and visually impaired, and after that worked in a quilt shop. Now that she is retired, Mary enjoys sewing, hiking, camping, skiing, and most of all, spending time with family and friends. She attends St. Andrew Catholic Church, where she sings in the choir and attends Bible studies.

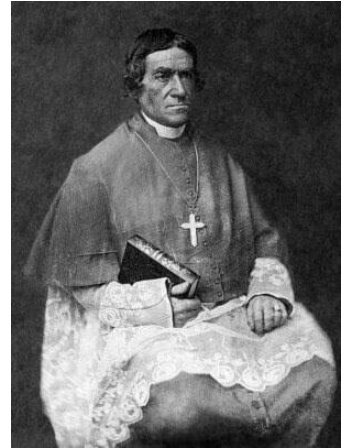
[An Advent Wreath Made Me Catholic - The Coming Home Network \(chnetwork.org\)](http://chnetwork.org)

Who was called the "Snowshoe Priest"?

Meet the astounding first bishop of the Mitten's icy Upper Peninsula.

In the vast tracts of Upper Michigan, in thick-drifted mid-winter, in wind or flake or stillness, the bent and burdened figure of a man could be seen trudging across the scudded snow.

He carried bundles on his back—medicines, linens, precious Viaticum—and tramped on worn snowshoes. He had no companions, no beast of burden, no means of communication, but angels watched his steps.



This is how Venerable Bishop Frederic Baraga administered to his vast diocese of Michigan for fifteen years.

He would travel as far as 250 miles on his snowshoes, just because he'd heard rumors of stranded settlers in need of Holy Communion or of a child at death's door. He always brought as many gifts as he could carry.

Bishop Baraga had originally come from Carniola, present-day Slovenia. He lost both parents by the time he was fifteen years old, but before their deaths he had witnessed their strong example of virtue and piety.

At first Baraga studied law, but upon graduation he entered the seminary. He was ordained just two years later, in 1823.

After seven years among his native parishes, he was sent to the United States as a missionary. His work among Germans and Indians bore great fruit. (Fun fact: Baraga wrote the first rules of grammar and a dictionary for the Chippewa language! He is holding his Chippewa dictionary in the image above.)

1853 saw him appointed the first bishop of Upper Michigan. Here he toiled among his loving flock until his death fifteen years later.

Bishop Baraga was joined in his missionary work by countless others. They established hundreds of Catholic churches and communities throughout the United States. You can travel in the footsteps of these Catholic pioneers when you open up [*Monuments, Marvels, And Miracles: A Traveler's Guide To America*](#). Telling the intriguing tales of over 500 American holy sites, these engaging and riveting pages will be hard to put down! A perfect gift for the adventurer in your life.

Anyone who has discovered Christ must lead others to him. A great joy cannot be kept to oneself. It has to be passed on.



Pope Emeritus
Benedict XVI



Signs of Grace Youth Group



Tacos **TONIGHT** & Christmas Cookie Decorating

Sunday, December 18th, 5:30 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.



Holy Cross School Basement

See Ya 'Round, Like a *Cookie!*



Confession Schedule for Christmas
All Confessions will be at Holy Cross.

12pm - 1pm: 12pm - 1pm Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.

5pm - 6pm: Tues., Wed., Thur.

11am - 12pm on Saturday the 24th

No other Confessions will be scheduled.



The Holy Cross Parish Office

will be closed on

Friday, December 23rd &

Monday, December 26th.

God commands us to love Him, not as much as He deserves, because He knows our capabilities and therefore He does not ask us to do what we cannot do. But He asks us to love Him according to our strength, with all our soul, all our mind, and all our heart.

—St Padre Pio



CATHOLIC 101 Along with the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition is often used as a club to batter the Church's moral authority in the public square. How many of us can explain the real history of the Inquisition? This paper is a great place to start. [READ](#)

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Volunteers

Holy Cross

Saturday, December 24th, 4:00pm

Lector: Clare Fischer

EME's: Deacon Ray & 2 Volunteers

Servers: Jerry O'Sadnick & 3 Volunteers

Saturday, December 24th, 5:45pm

Lector: Brian Corrigan

EME's: Paul & Yvonne Sondgeroth & Jackie Emm

Servers: 4 Volunteers

Sunday, December 25th, 12:00am

Lector: 1 Volunteer

EME's: Tom Schuhler & 2 Volunteers

Servers: 4 Volunteers

Sunday, December 25th, 6:30am

Lector: 1 Volunteer

EME's: 3 Volunteers

Servers: 4 Volunteers



The 2023 Daily Dollars are here! If you need more Daily Dollars they are available in the church's vestibule or in the Parish Office. Thank you for supporting Holy Cross School!



The 2023 Daily Dollars are here!

~ A great gift-giving idea ~

A chance to win money and help our school!



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