Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE THIRD WEEK IN ADVENT**

**MONDAY 12/12**
Zechariah 2:14-17
Rom 8:28-30; Lk 2:15-19

**TUESDAY 12/13**
Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13
Matthew 21:28-32

**WEDNESDAY 12/14**
Isaiah 46:8, 18, 21-25
Luke 7:18-23

**THURSDAY 12/15**
Isaiah 54:1-10
Luke 7:24-30

**FRIDAY 12/16**
Isaiah 56:1-3, 6-8
John 5:33-36

**SATURDAY 12/17**
Genesis 49:2, 8-10
Matthew 1:1-17

Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:
Monday, Our Lady of Guadalupe; Tuesday, Lucy; Wednesday, John of the Cross

**DECORATING ST. JOSEPH CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS**

Monday, December 12, is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The celebration begins in Mammoth with las mañanitas at 4:00 AM and continues with la misa en español at 6:00 AM. If you want a seat, come early. This is the largest gathering of the entire year. In Lee Vining las mañanitas is at 5:00 PM and la misa en español is at 6:00 PM.

**SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, MONO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

P.O. Box 372, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Phone: 760-934-6276

Rev. Paul Boudreau, pastor

**CONFESSIONS**
The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, and 5:30 to 5:45 on Christmas Day.

**CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE**
Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church – Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM, Midnight Mass: 9:00 PM, Christmas Day: 8:00 AM
Lake Tahoe: Christmas Eve: 9:00 PM, Christmas Day: 8:00 AM

Lee Vining:
Our Savior of the Mountains Mission –
Christmas Day: 10 AM
Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission –
Christmas Day: 12 Noon

**THE MONO COUNTY CATHOLIC**

Before the mountains were born, the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity you are God.
Psalm 90:2

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels.
Isaiah 61:10

**COLLECTION FOR THE RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS**

Back in the day, the nuns who taught in our classrooms did so for little or no pay. The result today is that there is a large and serious unfunded retirement debt that looms over thousands of religious sisters, brothers, and priests. The annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious addresses that need. Today we join with Catholic churches everywhere in taking up a second collection after communion for this cause.

**PRAYERS**
Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, Antonio Salinas, Josefina Flores, Jim Rothe, and John Walis.

**DAILY MASS**
Weekday Mass is celebrated this week Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday in St. Joseph’s Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don’t ring the bell. Everyone is welcome to stay after for coffee and fellowship.

**FESTIVE HOLIDAY POPS**
The Felici Piano Trio and Eastern Sierra Chamber Orchestra presents “Festive Holiday Pops” - Music by Handel, Bach and festive holiday tunes featuring soprano Maria Jette, next Saturday, December 17, beginning at 7:30 PM in St. Joseph Church. Tickets, discounted for seniors, on sale online and at the door.

**LA FIESTA DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUADALUPE**
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SECOND READING:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

In all circumstances give thanks.

We recently celebrated the national day of thanksgiving, expressing our gratitude for a country in which freedom rings, antelopes play, and turkey is served with mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce. Some Americans were grateful to God, and others to Thomas Jefferson. But some, we must acknowledge, were not grateful at all. For some among us, freedom has yet to ring, and the table has yet to groan with food. How can Saint Paul bid us, all of us, to give thanks under these circumstances? In fact, Paul argues that we should give thanks under all circumstances, an idea that seems rather preposterous. How can we be grateful for financial hardship, troubled children, failing parents, sudden illness? How can we be grateful “now, and at the hour of our death,” as if the two moments had anything in common?

Being thankful for misfortune was never the point, as in the caricature of Saint Francis who finds “perfect joy” in a beating. Gratitude is the profound spiritual awareness of one’s complete indebtedness to God in all this, despite all things. We reside in gratitude, and the heart opens to thanksgiving.

Paul bid us, all of us, to know that this is not our work alone, but God’s work first and foremost. Being thankful for misfortune was never the point, as in the caricature of Saint Francis who finds “perfect joy” in a beating. Gratitude is the profound spiritual awareness of one’s complete indebtedness to God in all this, despite all things. We reside in gratitude, and the heart opens to thanksgiving. If all of this sounds difficult, it helps to remember that this is not our work alone, but God’s work first and foremost. We have to become instruments of God’s favor. If we have to become instruments of God’s favor, we need to surrender our pride. What would it take to make the spirit of jubilee alive in our world now? If we are rich, we need to surrender our surplus and if we are poor, our envy. If we hold others bound by unforgiveness, we need to show mercy; and if we have done wrong, confess our sin and seek restitution. If we live with hurt, we must embrace the light of healing. And if we have caused hurt, we have to become instruments of healing. If all of this sounds difficult, it helps to know that this is not our work alone, but God’s work first and foremost. What we need to do is lead, follow, or get out of the way.

Perhaps the key to spiritual growth is surrender, at once the simplest thing to do and at the same time the most resisted act. If we surrender to God’s grace and remove ourselves as obstacles to it, the spirit of jubilee would flood our world with liberation. Greed, hardness of heart, and oppression are all about holding on, closing our fists and not letting go. When we open our hands, salvation takes wing and sings Mary’s song: The mighty are cast down from their thrones, and the lowly are lifted up; the hungry are filled with good things, and the rich are sent away empty. It is praise for the God of justice.