



St. Mark's new pastor, the Very Rev. Peter O. Akpoghiran, J.C.D., will arrive the afternoon of December 7<sup>th</sup>. He will celebrate Mass at 8:00 am and 6:00 pm on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> (see below for details). We would very much like to have a reception to welcome Fr. Peter to the parish; however, with covid infections rising, we should not have any "gatherings" at this time. We will have a reception for him when it is safe to do so. For now, just introduce yourself to him (from a safe distance & wearing a mask) when you see him before or after

## FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION Tuesday, December 8

Because of the Covid dispensation from attending Mass, this feast is NOT a holy day of obligation this year; however, Fr. Peter will be celebrating Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception at both 8:00 am and 6:00 pm on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>.



## Second Sunday of ADVENT Dec. 6, 2020



### MASS INTENTIONS: December 7-13

**MONDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Communion Service  
(NO MASS)

**SATURDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Vernon Keller  
by Patsye Lunk

**TUESDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Fr. Ed  
by Ernest & Shirley Webre  
**TUESDAY 6:00 PM:**  
Murphy Robert  
by Marjory Robert

**SATURDAY 5:30 PM:**  
Jules & Josephine Petit  
by Ernest & Shirley Webre

Louis Robert  
Gwen Robert  
by Barbara & Charlie Gaubert

**WEDNESDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Kay Roth  
by Lillian Wegmann

James & Minerva  
Champagne  
by Randy & Leslie Petit Family

**THURSDAY 8:00 AM:**  
JoAnn Hymel  
by Lloyd & Curtis Alexander

Rena Gassen  
by Marjory Robert  
Ronnie Galley  
by Friends

**FRIDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Beatrice Z. Brown  
by Elsie Petit

**SUNDAY 8:00 AM:**  
Parishioners of St. Mark

### PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

Dutch Kappel, Dolena Robert, Carol Jones, Sam Granier, Monica Schexnaydre, Audrey Zeringue, Dana Jones, Gay-Lynn Folse, Morris Zeringue, Gaye Webre, Lynell Wipple, Sandra Cortez, Ernest Webre, Diane Triche, Joyce King, Easton Owen, Glenna Smith, Vanessa Johnson, Juli Zeringue, Elsie Sandolph, Larry Landry, Troy Pintado, Kerri Breaux, Hilton Landry, Linda Caminata, Mende Ford, Babette Robert, Haley Dufrene, Ken Oberle, Mabry Laviolette, Daryl Riddle, Al Luquette

**PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL THE PARISH OFFICE TO ADD A NAME TO THE PRAYER REQUEST LIST.**

**ALSO, PLEASE CALL TO REMOVE NAMES FROM THE LIST.**

### REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

Today's first reading, **Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11**, begins the second section of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah which is known as Deutero-Isaiah ["deutero" means "second"]. These chapters--40:1 through 55:13--are written as the Exiles prepare to leave Babylon.

[Note: this is about 200 years **after** God called the first Isaiah to be His prophet. The first Isaiah, also known as Isaiah of Jerusalem, dies long before his prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile to Babylon are fulfilled; however, another prophet, whom scholars call "second" or Deutero-Isaiah continues his mission.]

In the reading's opening verses, God commissions Deutero-Isaiah to speak a tender and loving message to the Exiles. Through Deutero-Isaiah, God comforts His people by telling them that their time of servitude and exile is over, that God has given them "double" for their sins--that is: God has **punished** them, but He has also **purified** them and is giving them a new beginning--a fresh start! Soon they will return to Jerusalem. Using poetic language, Deutero-Isaiah tells the Exiles that their journey home will be pleasant--"the mountains made low and the valleys filled-in" means **that as long as they walk in the way of the Lord, staying on the path that God has prepared for them, they will walk easily on a wide, flat road.** Just as God revealed his powerful presence when he led the Israelites out of Egypt, He will do so again as He leads the Jews in a "new exodus" from Babylon.

Through the prophet, God encourages His people to look beyond the destruction and devastation that they will find on their return; rather, they must look ahead to the day of glad tidings/good news--to the day when the country of Judah and the city of Jerusalem will be fully restored and ruled by God. God will care for them as a good shepherd cares for his flock. When they are weak and tired, God will carry them as a shepherd carries the lambs and leads his flock to safety. As long as God is with His people--**and they remain close to Him**, they will have nothing to fear.

[Note: During this liturgical year, most of the Gospel readings will be from Mark. Mark's Roman-Christian audience is less concerned with a person's origins than they are with the results of that person's life. Thus, Mark's Gospel has no "infancy story;" rather, it begins with John the Baptist announcing the beginning of Jesus' adult mission as the long awaited Messiah.]

The **Gospel of Mark (1:1-8)** begins with a combination of two Old Testament prophecies. They are: #1) the **"messenger of the Covenant who prepares the way"** in  
CONTINUED ON BACK



SANCTUARY LAMP IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

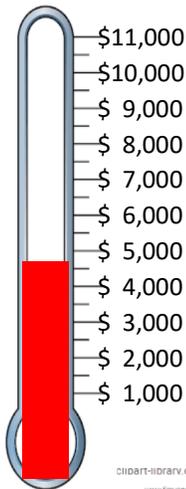
**JESSE LOUVIERE**

(Dec. 6-12)

by Randy & Leslie Petit Family

## The capital campaign to repair and update the rectory in memory of Fr. Ed will end on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>.

**GOAL!**



Donated items, donated labor and amazing volunteers have kept costs to a minimum with maximum results.

If you have already made a contribution, "thank you;" if not, please consider making a donation to help us reach our goal. Any amount--large or small--is greatly appreciated.

MANY PEOPLE ARE NOT COMING TO CHURCH DURING COVID, SO PLEASE HELP TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THIS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN IN MEMORY OF FR. ED.

**Total: \$4,786.00**

Place donations: 1) in the box in church; 2) in the parish office letter slot; 3) in the mail (10773 River Rd., Ama, LA 70031).

Reflection continued . . .

Malachi 3:1, and #2) the "voice in the desert crying out to prepare the way of the Lord" in (Deutero)- Isaiah 40:3. Mark then describes John the Baptist as the fulfillment of these two prophecies.

[Note: Jewish tradition teaches that the great prophet Elijah,

who did not "die"--but was taken alive into heaven in a fiery chariot (see 2 Kings 2:11) is going to return to earth to be the "messenger" of the Messiah. In fact, the last verses in Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, specifically state: "Lo, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the day of the Lord comes." When he returns, Elijah's mission will be to turn the people's hearts back to one another and to God so that they will be ready for the Messiah (see Malachi 3:23-24).]

Because the Jews are expecting Elijah to announce the coming of the Messiah, the New Testament presents John the Baptist in the role of Elijah. For example, in today's reading John appears in the desert clothed in camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist--which is the same way Elijah is dressed in 2 Kings 1:8. Moreover, John is calling the people to repent and prepare their hearts for the Messiah--which is what the Jews believe Elijah will do when he returns. John the Baptist is the "new" Elijah; he is the messenger calling for repentance, for a change of heart, for a return to God in preparation for the Lord's coming.

John says that the day of "good news" is approaching; soon, God will reveal himself--not through the words of a messenger, but through Jesus, God's divine Son, His own Word Made Flesh. John's baptism of water represents the **desire** to be free of sin, but the baptism of the coming Messiah will be an **actual purification** from sin through the Holy Spirit. John prepares the way for Jesus who is himself "the Way of the Lord." Jesus is the WAY; he leads his followers in a new exodus--an exodus out of the captivity of darkness and death, an exodus away from the slavery of sin and into the eternal life, light and love of God's Kingdom.



Wikipedia

**CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENT REMINDER:**  
Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020 – 9:30 am- Mass & Meeting  
Parents, Sponsors & Students are to attend Mass followed by a meeting that will last about an hour.

**ATTENTION ALL WHO ATTEND 9:30 am MASS:**

At the 9:30 am Mass on Dec. 13, SIX pews will be reserved for the Confirmation candidates, parents & sponsors (see above). There will be room for some others to attend Mass, but not as many as usually attend. **THEREFORE, YOU MUST CALL THE PARISH OFFICE (504-431-8505) DURING THE WEEK TO RESERVE A SEAT FOR THE 9:30 am MASS ON DECEMBER 13<sup>th</sup>.** If no answer, leave a message (including name & phone #).

## Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

**SECOND COLLECTION**  
NEXT WEEKEND-- Dec. 12-13



The Archbishop sent the following letter concerning next weekend's collection to help our aging religious:

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul urges us to remain steadfast in helping others: "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up." (Gal. 6:9). During these unprecedented times, many are hurting and need our assistance, including elderly religious. As we approach the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, I encourage your continued support.

As you know, senior religious were instrumental in establishing Catholic schools, hospitals, and charitable agencies. Often this progress came at a great sacrifice, and many older sisters, brothers, and religious order priests served for little to no pay.

Today, hundreds of religious communities do not have enough retirement savings and struggle to provide for a growing number of elder members. Covid-19 has only increased the challenge to provide adequate care.

Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital funding for medications, nursing care, and more. If you are unable to give during Mass, please mail or bring your offer-tory envelope to your parish.

In these difficult days, you may feel as though your generosity has been exhausted. I ask just two things. First, please join me in praying for God's protection for all our elderly religious. Second, please support the Retirement Fund for Religious collection as you are able--and know that women and men religious across the country hold you and your loved ones in grateful prayer.

Wishing you God's blessings and with the assurance of my prayers, I am,

Sincerely in Christ,

+ *Gregory M. Aymond*

Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond  
Archbishop of New Orleans