



St. John the Baptist

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

12319 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20904

Sunday and Daily Masses have been suspended until further notice.

Baptism

Parishioners are asked to call the Parish Office for the times of the monthly liturgical celebrations and to arrange for classes.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Please call the Parish Office to arrange a confession.

Marriage

Parishioners requesting a marriage date must have been registered in the parish for six months.

Phone Numbers

Parish Office & Rectory:
301-622-1122
Fax: 301-625-9266
School: 301-622-3076

sjbssparish.org
[@SJB_Catholic](https://www.facebook.com/sjbcc)

Sunday, March 22, 2020

This week's readings: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a Psalm 23 Ephesians 5:8-14 John 9:1-41

Lent: Fourth Sunday



In this Lenten season, our focus is on the psalms we sing each Sunday.

Today's First Reading gives us a glowing account of the young shepherd called David. "He was ruddy, a youth handsome to behold and making a splendid appearance." Samuel anoints him and "from that day on, the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David.

Tradition tells us that David, the shepherd, penned today's psalm (Ps. 23, *The Lord is my shepherd...*) to God, the ultimate Shepherd, who watches over and anoints all his sheep with his tender care. By virtue of our baptism, each of us has been anointed with the oil of salvation and claimed as Christ's own. The second reading from St. Paul harkens to baptism as well with his commandment to the Ephesians: "Live as children of light."

Next week's readings - Lent: 5th Sunday

Ezekiel 37:12-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:8-11 John 11:1-45

Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home)

Chapter Two – *The Gospel of Creation*

II. The Wisdom of the Biblical Accounts

In the Bible's first creation account in the Book of Genesis, God's plan includes creating humanity. How wonderful is the certainty that each human life is not adrift in the midst of hopeless chaos, in a world ruled by pure chance of endlessly recurring cycles. The creation accounts, in their own symbolic and narrative language relay profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. When these vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us, the rupture is sin. It is significant that the harmony which Saint Francis of Assisi experienced with all creatures was seen as a healing of that rupture.

We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us. This allows us to reject the misinterpretation of the meaning of "dominion" over the earth. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature.

Continued next week.



Week-at-a-Glance

Due to the coronavirus and our need to practice social distancing, all activities at St. John the Baptist have been cancelled until further notice.

Year-End Statement

If you would like a year-end statement from St. John the Baptist Parish, please call the Parish Office, 301-622-1122. Faith Direct will be sending statements directly to participants.

SJB Athletics Positions Available

SJB Athletics seeks volunteers for several positions including Athletic Director, coordinators and coaches. All volunteers and coaches must be Virtus Certified. Interested candidates should contact current Athletic Director Michael Diokno at michael.diokno@gmail.com.

Jubilarian Mass Registration Open!

The annual ADW Jubilarian Celebration of marriage, honors couples married 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 51+ years. This year the Mass will be held on Sunday, June 28, at 2 p.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception with his Excellency, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory, as the celebrant. To register, please contact the Parish Office, 301-622-1122 no later than Friday, May 15, to let us know if you will be attending.

Visit the Holy Land

Join Fr. Tony D'Souza (301-990-3203) and Fr. Brian A. Coelho for a 10-Day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, July 20-29, 2020. For more information, please contact the St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church Office at 301-753-9177, parish@staroftheseaindianhead.org or Lilian Signoret at 346-351-5668, lilian@nativitypilgrimage.com or visit <http://www.nativitypilgrimage.com/frbrian-washington>. See the flyers in the SJB Parish Office or posted on our bulletin boards.

ADW Annual Appeal



The ADW Annual Appeal continues and it is still possible to contribute to the Appeal. As in the past, 100% of your contribution to the Annual Appeal will be designated to the ministries and programs supported by the Appeal. Thank you for your generosity.

Mass Intentions (March 23-March 28)

- Monday - Healthcare Providers
- Robert J. Norris Jr. -L- (C. Norris)
- Tuesday - Victims of the Coronavirus
- Joseph McMahan (Ionata Family)
- Wednesday - Victoire Pierre-Louis (M. Chrles)
- Peter Huan Hguyen (Parishioner)
- Thursday - Physicians and Health Support
- Joseph McMahan (C. Schwab)
- Friday - Rev. Francis J. Bober (Parishioner)
- Gene Petruzzeli -L- (A. Eskin)
- Saturday - Dan McAuliffe (T. & J. Flynn)

The Mass intentions for the week will be prayed by both priests.

Parish Clergy

- Rev. Y. David Brault Pastor
- Rev. Cezary Kozubek Associate Pastor
- Rev. Glen Willis Weekend Associate
- Rev. Austin Charles Ochu Weekend Associate
- Rev. Eliot Nitz Weekend Associate
- Rev. Nicolás Rodriguez Weekend Associate
- Deacon James Gorman Permanent Deacon
- Deacon Ed McCormack Permanent Deacon

Parish Directory

- Father Brault pastor@sjbssparish.org
- Father Kozubek assocpastor@sjbssparish.org
- Parish Office secretary@sjbssparish.org
- Finance Office kkuzemka@sjbssparish.org
- Faith Formation adultdre@sjbssparish.org
- Youth Ministry youth@sjbssparish.org
- Liturgy & Music sdecamp@sjbssparish.org
- Social Concerns socialconcerns@sjbssparish.org
- Athletic Ministry www.sjbathletics.org
- Parochial School brian.blomquist@sjbsilverspring.org
- Bulletin sjbbulletin@sjbssparish.org
- Parish Website www.sjbssparish.org
- School Website www.sjbsilverspring.org

****Bulletin Deadline****

March 29 Bulletin & Website deadline
Friday, March 20, at 9:00 a.m

Send Bulletin announcements to
sjbbulletin@sjbssparish.org
Send Website announcements to
kbrown@sjbssparish.org

March 13, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last night, Archbishop Gregory made the difficult decision to close all Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Washington from March 16 to March 27 and to cancel all public Masses in the Archdiocese, effective March 14, until further notice, while dispensing the faithful from their Sunday obligation.

This decision was not an easy decision. Archbishop Gregory recognizes his obligation to ensure the health of the faithful, both spiritual and physical. By implementing effective social distancing measures the archdiocese supports the common good of all citizens and prioritizes the dignity of every human life, especially those most vulnerable at this time. We know that many Catholic faithful are saddened or upset by the decision to cancel Masses. We ask for your public support and fervent prayer, especially on behalf of the sick and dying. The decisions of the Archdiocese are based on the recommendations from local public health professionals and by legal requirements from the local governments. The decisions will continue to be assessed and reevaluated based on both public health officials and local government restrictions and guidelines. We are continually monitoring the situation and will communicate any updates.

Our hope is that this restriction of the public celebration of the Mass will be for a very limited period. For the time being, it is necessary to keep in mind the common good of public health and the importance of doing our part in preventing the spread of the coronavirus by avoiding large gatherings.

As Catholics, caring for our spiritual and sacramental lives is paramount. Therefore, the Archdiocese is providing the following pastoral guidance and resources for your use:

The Archdiocesan website has a page with informational resources on coronavirus: <https://adw.org/coronavirus/>.

At the pastor's discretion, churches may remain open for personal prayer. Please follow all protocols recommended by health professionals about maintaining safe interpersonal distance.

The Archdiocesan website has resources on how to receive spiritual communion: <https://adw.org/coronavirus-dispensation-and-prayers/>.

Take time to read and reflect upon the readings from Sunday Mass. You can find the readings at usccb.org and a Sunday Gospel reflection on our [YouTube channel](#).

The Archdiocesan website has audio and written Stations of the Cross: <https://adw.org/coronavirus-dispensation-and-prayers/>.

Our archdiocesan Sunday TV Mass is available online: <https://adw.org/parishes-masses/sunday-tv-mass/>.

Here is a prayer by Pope Francis to Mary during the coronavirus pandemic: <https://adw.org/text-of-popes-prayer-to-mary-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>.

Pastoral care to the sick will continue incorporating protocols recommended by health professionals.

The Archdiocese will continue to make additional spiritual and informational resources available and provide regular updates on our website. Please know of Archbishop Gregory's prayers and love for you.

In Christ,

Reverend Daniel B. Carson
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

2020 Lenten Supper Talks

Due to the coronavirus and social distancing, the 2020 Lenten Supper Talks have been postponed.



Share in Hope by Feeding the Poor

The collection for the St. Camillus and Mid-County United Ministries (MUM) Food Pantries has been postponed.

Please see future bulletins for more details on these programs.

Bereavement Ministry

The Bereavement Ministry support group meeting Monday, March 23, has been cancelled. For further information, please call Ruth Anne McCormick at 301-622-0664 or email her at drdram612@gmail.com, or call Eileen Bonhag at 301-421-9065.



Living the Gospel Series

Next session in the "Living the Gospel: Contemplation and Action" Adult Faith Formation Series workshop scheduled for March 28 at the Church of the Resurrection has been cancelled.



Sodality Trip to See the Play "Queen Esther"

The SJB Sodality has cancelled their trip to see the play "Queen Esther" at the Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA, scheduled for Wednesday, April 29. For more information, please contact Ellen Cygnarowicz, 301-879-0232, or Mary Ellen Monk, 301-622-2892.

Pope Francis's prayer to Mary during coronavirus pandemic

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.
Source: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/03/11/read-pope-francis-prayer-mary-coronavirus-pandemic>

Faith Formation Ministry

L.J. Milone, Director, 301-622-1122,
adultdre@sjbssparish.org

All Faith Formation and Adult Faith activities are suspended until further notice.

Youth Ministry

Fr. Cezary Kozubek, 301-622-1122,
youth@sjbssparish.org

All Youth Group Meetings are suspended until further notice

The Season of Lent

The Light is ON for you!

Confessions will be available Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 8 p.m. by driving to the Mary statue between the Rectory and the Church. At the statue, park then get out of your car and walk to the seated area by the statue. Fr. David or Fr. Cezary will be there for confessions.

Please know that you can always schedule a confession by calling the Parish Office, 301-622-1122.



Stations of the Cross

Cancelled until further notice.

Reconciliation Service

The Reconciliation Service scheduled for tomorrow, Monday, March 23, has been cancelled.



SJB School Gala - A Night at the Races,

The SJB School Gala scheduled for March 28 has been cancelled. Alternative plans are under discussion. Please check the school website (<http://sjbsilver spring.org>) for updates.



Weekly Stewardship Report

Our Weekly Stewardship Report will be suspended until our Masses resume.

While we are temporarily not celebrating Mass, your weekly donations to help keep our bills paid are appreciated. Please mail them to St. John the Baptist, 11239 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20904 or drop them off at the Parish Office when we are open.

Social Concerns

Cynthia Norris, 301-622-1122, social_concerns@sjbssparish.org

Haiti Secondary School Fund Drive March 2020

During Lent, we have our annual fund drive to support the secondary school, College St. Jean Baptiste (CSJB), named after SJB. Before CSJB was established in Baradères, Haiti, students had to travel to Port-au-Prince or Les Cayes to complete a high school education. This is similar to living in MD and traveling to upstate New York. Of course, this possibility only existed for students who had family or friends in the distant cities ready to house and feed them. The high school opened new and exciting opportunities to the people of Baradères. That high school was established with our donations and named for our own parish.



Due to the political crisis in Haiti, classes were suspended for the first few months of this school year for many students, but this was not true in Baradères. Fr. Noemi Ambroise, pastor of our sister parish, St. Pierre in Baradères, told us that all schools in the parish were open. One alumnus of CSJB, Fr. Chandeleur Belanston, said during Haiti's recent political crisis, we must "act for a better tomorrow in the present. The biggest problem of the world, the biggest source of crisis in the world, is a lack of formation for some and a lack of conscience for others. . . We can't resolve a crisis by creating another one."

We at SJB are needed to help Fr. Ambroise continue to keep CSJB open and our students fed. This will help prevent a second crisis. There are 365 students currently enrolled at CSJB, and they need your help. 100% of your donations go directly to Baradères! Please be as generous as you can. Donations can be brought to our Parish Office or mailed to St. John the Baptist, 11239 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Thank you!

Share the Cross 2020

During our Lenten journey, we can make a difference by "sharing the cross of Christ" in a personal way. Below is a sample of suggestions. More information will be in the bulletin during Lent. Select the cross of your choice as part of your Lenten journey. The following CST principle lists ways in which we help those in need and build community at SJB. Each item is labeled on a colored cross and found on the wooden cross or in the basket at the foot of the altar in the Church. Items listed below with an * are new this year. Bring all donated items to the Parish Office Monday through Friday. The crosses are color coded as follows:

Call to Family & Community & Participation	Yellow
Care for God's Creation	Green
Human Rights & Responsibilities	Red
Dignity of Life	Orange
Preferential Option for the Poor	Blue
Solidarity	Purple



- * Where do you see or hear about rights being violated in your community or around the world?
- * Whose responsibility is it to ensure those rights are protected or fulfilled?
- * How might God be inviting you to advocate to protect the rights you feel most passionate about, and to ensure that corresponding duties are fulfilled?
- * How can we participate together in Christ's mission?

Human Rights & Responsibilities:

- TASSC: provide survivors of torture and persecution with nourishing non-perishable food: peanut butter, jelly/jam, granola and protein bars, individually wrapped nuts, trail mix.
- Learn about the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC) <https://www.tassc.org>
- Manna Food Center is at the center of ending hunger in Montgomery County. Go to <https://www.mannafood.org/programs> for more information.
- * Take the Civilize It! Dignity Beyond Debate Pledge at <https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it>
- * Human trafficking is very real and happening in Montgomery County. <http://usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program>
- * Say the Civilize It! Prayer

"We must speak of man's rights. Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood."

– St. John XXIII, *Peace on Earth (Pacem in Terris)*, no. 11

Mystical Word

written by L.J. Milone, Director of Faith Formation, ljmilone@sjbssparish.org

The story goes that Thomas Aquinas, one of the world's ablest theologians, suddenly stopped writing. When his secretary complained that his work was unfinished, Thomas replied, "Brother Reginald, some months ago I experienced something of the Absolute, so all I have ever written about God seems to me now to be like straw." How could it be otherwise when the scholar becomes a seer?

Thomas Aquinas, one of the church's greatest minds and certainly one of our best theologians put down his pen and was reduced to silence. He saw something, a something that is not some-thing but nothing beyond being: the very mystery of God.

"As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth...[Jesus said,] 'While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, 'Go wash in the Pool of Siloam' – which means Sent –. So he went and washed, and came back able to see. His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, 'Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'It is,' but others said, 'No, he just looks like him.' He said, 'I am.'" The man born blind saw something great. He could see, period! Jesus healed his eyes so he could perceive the light and be rescued from darkness. Anytime light shows up in the scriptures it has to do with seeing spiritually.

What did the man born blind and Aquinas see? They saw "the single truth of the unity of God and man" found in Jesus Christ. THE truth is the incarnation: Jesus reveals that all are inherently one with God even as everyone is still human. That is the paradox of the truth of God in human flesh. Jesus is divine AND human. Because of Jesus, we are both one with God and still very much ourselves. The man born blind is a stand-in for all of us. Just as Jesus healed his sight, his consciousness, Jesus heals our sight, our consciousness.

Meister Eckhart preaches, "There is a fine saying of one pagan master to another about this. He said: 'I am aware of something in me which shines in my understanding; I can clearly perceive that it is something, but what it may be I cannot grasp. Yet I think if I could

only seize it I should know all truth.' To which the other master replied: 'Follow it boldly! For if you could seize it you would possess the sum-total of all good and have eternal life!' St. Augustine spoke in the same sense: 'I am aware of something within me that gleams and flashes before my soul; were this perfected and fully established in me, that would surely be eternal life!' It hides, yet shows itself; it comes, but like a thief with intent to take and steal all things from the soul. But by emerging and showing itself a little it aims to lure the soul and draw her



towards itself, to rob her and deprive her of herself." If we follow the inner intuition to see reality as it is, that is, to know the truth and so be healed of our blindness, we have to drop all our biases, preoccupations, opinions, and, ultimately, our very selves.

Meister Eckhart also preaches that we should "withdraw from all things in order to concentrate all our powers on perceiving and knowing the one infinite, uncreated, eternal truth! To this end, then, assemble all your powers, all your senses, your entire mind and memory; direct them into the ground where your treasure lies buried. But if this is to happen, realize that you must drop all other works - you must come to an unknowing, if you would find it." We must abandon our knowledge to know the truth.

And, knowing the truth affects all things in life. "The Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.' So some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a sinful man do such signs?' And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, 'What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?'...He replied, 'If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see.'" The priests interrogate the man born blind who now sees, and all the man can do is testify to the truth. Knowing the truth affects how we talk and interact. Truth becomes the ground for all communication. To speak truth, though, one must surrender all falsehood. We must guard our speech so that we speak the eternal truth that we find within once we abandon all earthly wisdom. Then we will see truly that God is one with everything.