



The Catholic Community of the East End of Pittsburgh

ST. BEDE CHURCH
509 South Dallas Avenue
Pittsburgh PA 15208

MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL CHURCH
7705 Bennett Street
Pittsburgh PA 15208

ST. JAMES CHURCH
718 Franklin Avenue
Wilkinsburg PA 15221

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil 4:00 pm St. James
Sunday 9:00 am Mother of Good Counsel
11:00 am St. Bede

Monday - Saturday 9:00 am St. Bede

Novenas 9:30 am St. Bede

Monday Miraculous Medal Perpetual Novena
Wednesday Mother of Perpetual Help Novena

Confession & Eucharistic Adoration

Saturday 9:30 - 10:30 am St. Bede

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available by appointment.

*St. Bede Church is open
Monday to Friday 7 am to 3 pm
Saturday, 8 am to 12 pm*

Faith Formation (CCD) Sunday 9 am on Zoom

Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals
by appointment only.



Our churches are accessible.

PARISH OFFICE
509 South Dallas Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
parishoffice@stmarymagpgh.org
Phone: 412.661.7222
Fax: 412.661.9337

SECOND SUNDAY

OF
Advent

A voice cries out:
In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!
Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill shall be made low.

Isaiah 40:3-4

DECEMBER 6, 2020

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"With God All Things Are Possible!"

Website: saintmarymagdalenepgh.org



@smpgph



[St. Mary Magdalene Parish PGH](http://St.MaryMagdaleneParishPGH)

Parish Office

412.661.7222

Pastoral Staff

Rev. Thomas J. Burke, Pastor tburke@diopitt.org
Rev. David Taylor, Senior Parochial Vicar dtaylor@diopitt.org
Rev. C. Matthew Hawkins, Parochial Vicar
mhawkins@diopitt.org

In Residence

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Rev. Augustine Temu temuago@yahoo.com

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Gerard Rohlf 412.657.7570; grohlf@stmarymagpgh.org

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Social Ministry & Community Outreach 412.241.1309

Anne Scheuermann ascheuermann@stmarymagpgh.org
Pat Hoffman, Social Worker
Marcus Smith, Food Distribution Assistant/Maintenance

Holy Rosary Food Bank

Veronica Synder 412.731.4195

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Paul Denk, Ray Krivanek, Michael Natalia, Annette Shunk

Principals

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412.242.3515; info@stbca.net; sistertheabowman.org
St. Bede School: Sr. Daniela Bronka 412.661.9425;
info@saintbedeschool.com; saintbedeschool.com

New Parishioners Welcome! To register, please call or email the parish office. Registration forms are also available on the welcome page of our website:
saintmarymagdalene.org

PROTECTION OF GOD'S CHILDREN

Report suspected child abuse
At the 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline: 800.932.0313
If a child is in imminent danger, call 911

Mass Online: Livestream

The direct link for the live stream: facebook.com/smmppgh/live/
(choose the video with the red "live" icon)
(link is also on the homepage of our website)

You do not have to have a Facebook account.

December 5, St. James Church, 4 pm
December 13, Mother of Good Counsel Church, 9 am

The Mass will be available on the homepage of our website and YouTube within two hours of the livestream.

saintmarymagdalene.org
[St. Mary Magdalene Parish PGH](http://St.MaryMagdaleneParishPGH)

Stewardship

Offertory

November 22 \$6,600.00

PSP 2020

Goal \$153,393.00 Received \$102,691.00

Because of the holiday, the offertory for November 29 will be reported in the December 13 bulletin.

Online Giving We invite you to consider online giving through Faith Direct

To sign up at Faith Direct, for regular contributions or for a one time gift, visit faithdirect.net and use church code PA994. Enrollment forms are available at all our churches and Parish Office.

Advisory Councils

Parish Pastoral Council

Patricia Albacete
Linda Atkins
Lois Campbell
Denise Charron-Prochownik
Anne Kovalan-Santoni
Peter Lahoda
Teresa Maynor
Joan Price
Janice Reed
Dante Romito
Eric Setzler
Gloria White

*Pastoral Council meets
on the 3rd Monday
of the month.*

Finance Council

Martin Albacete
David Aleva
Christopher Benec
Linda Burke
Michael Myers
Michael Polite
Judy Prata
Mara Sullivan

*Finance Council meets
on the 4th Monday
of the month.*

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

are due on Monday at 9 am for next week's bulletin.

Larger announcements must be submitted
a week prior to the Monday deadline.

bulletin@stmarymagpgh.org

Please Note: Bulletin announcements for December 20 are due Wednesday, December 9, at 9 am.

As a Faith Community,

we pray for all who request prayers.

*Loretta Ashley, Gail Britanik, Scot Brown, Terri Burns,
Amy Corpuz, Louann & Joseph Gordon, Theresa Grieco,
Dureena & Richard Grove, Marlene Joseph, Mary Lou Laird,
Kimberly Lattimore, Martin Lavelle, Patricia Marino,
Matilda McGuinness, Michelle Menziatti, Leslie Paat,
Dee Pryor, Mary Reidell, Emily Reiling, Marion Reynoso,
Natalie Semler, Janice Simmons, James & Rose Smith,
Carlos Steele, and Arlene Trichtinger.*

Our parish community prays for those who request prayers for any reason. If you, a family member, or friend would like to be on our prayer list, please contact Cathy at crffaele@stmarymagpgh.org or 412.661.7222.

Mass Intentions December 5–13

Saturday Vigil Second Sunday of Advent	4 pm Livestream	Nancy Campbell (St. Mary Magdalene Parish Pastoral Council)	HAWKINS
SUNDAY SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	9 am	Barbara Bauknight (St. Mary Magdalene Parish Pastoral Council)	BURKE
	11 am	Gary Nickel (Fred & Ruth Ziffer)	TAYLOR
MONDAY Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	9 am	Dr. Robert Lee (Bridget & Sean Kelly)	ADEOYE
TUESDAY Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	9 am SB 9 am SJ 12 pm MOGC 7 pm SB	Mary Jane Sisk (Family) Anna Seeger (Bob & Carole Seeger) Barbara Bauknight (Janice Reed) Rose Plutnicki (The Patton Family)	BURKE TAYLOR ADEOYE TEMU
WEDNESDAY Weekday	9 am	Helen and Joseph McKinney (John J. McKinney)	BURKE
THURSDAY Weekday	9 am	Dr. Robert Lee (Tom Hile)	TEMU
FRIDAY Weekday	9 am	Joseph Marlovitz (Sr. Daniela Bronka)	HAWKINS
SATURDAY Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe	9 am	Joseph Krajcovic & Family and Kulwicki Family (Barbara Krajcovic)	ADEOYE
Saturday Vigil Third Sunday of Advent	4 pm	George Pavlic (Griffith Family)	BURKE
SUNDAY THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	9 am Livestream	Cary Allen Hodges (Allen R. Hodges, M.D.)	TAYLOR
	11 am	Joseph Wymard (The Wymard Family)	HAWKINS

December 5-13

SAT	Adoration & Confession A Christmas Flavored Chili Saturday	St. Bede 9:30 am Zoom 5:30pm
SUN	CCD Christian Mothers Faith Sharing	Zoom 9 am Phone 11 am Zoom 2 pm
MON	Miraculous Medal Novena Cultural Action Team	St. Bede 9:30 am Zoom, 7 pm
TUE	RCIA Fratelli Tutti Reflection & Discussion	Zoom 7 pm Zoom 7 pm
WED	Food Bank Pick Up Christmas Carols on SJ Bells	Ministry Ctr 8:30 am St. James 5 pm
THURS	Mother of Perpetual Help Novena Christmas Carols on SJ Bells Bible Study with Fr. Matthew	St. Bede 9:30 am St. James 5 pm Zoom 7 pm
FRI	Christmas Carols on SJ Bells Christmas Organ Concert	St. James 5 pm St. James 5:15 pm
SAT	Adoration & Confession Advent Morning of Reflection	St. Bede 9:30 am Zoom 10 am
SUN	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe CCD Faith Sharing	MOGC 9 am Zoom 9 am Zoom 2 pm

Except for CCD and RCIA,
Zoom and phone information is on the Events page
of our website: saintmarymagdaleneppgh.org/events

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be celebrated at Mother of Good Counsel on Sunday, December 13, at the 9 am live streamed Mass.

In Memoriam

*Russell Brooks
Howard Hauff
Doris Ann Wagner Springer*

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

Faith Sharing on Sundays at 2 pm

Join parishioners for a time of reflection, listening, and perhaps sharing your perspective, every Sunday.

Readings: bible.usccb.org

The Zoom link is sent by email
and is on the Events page of our website:
saintmarymagdaleneppgh.org/events

CAT Corner

Let's love one another. Only God can see what is in the bottom of our heart; we are half blind.

St Therese of Lisieux

All are invited to join the Cultural Action Team.

For more information and the Zoom link for the meeting at 7 pm on Monday, December 7, please contact Linda Atkins, 412.880.8253 or Jennifer Gorske, 412.370.2638

Fratelli Tutti: Reflection & Discussion

Join fellow parishioners for an 8 week virtual exploration of Pope Francis' latest encyclical letter. Tuesdays at 7 pm. The fifth chapter, "A Better Kind of Politics", will be discussed on December 8.

Visit our website, saintmarymagdalene.org for the Fratelli Tutti page. The page has a link to the encyclical, to read online or purchase; a list of the topics for the series; and articles on the encyclical.

Contact Cathy at craftaele@stmarymagpgh.org or 412.661.7222 for more information.

Copies of Fratelli Tutti are now available at St. Mary Magdalene Parish. Its focus on the gift and value of each person and welcoming the stranger makes for great Advent Season reading. To request a copy, call or stop in at parish office. You can either pick one up or have it mailed to you. A donation of \$10 is suggested.

From the Encyclical

"In this world that races ahead, yet lacks a shared roadmap, we increasingly sense that the 'gap between concern for one's personal well-being and the prosperity of the larger human family seems to be stretching to the point of complete division between individuals and human community.... It is one thing to feel forced to live together, but something entirely different to value the richness and beauty of those seeds of common life that need to be sought out and cultivated'. Technology is constantly advancing, yet 'how wonderful it would be if growth of scientific and technological innovation could come with more equality and social inclusion. How wonderful would it be, even as we discover faraway planets, to rediscover the needs of the brothers and sisters who orbit around us.' " (number 31, *Fratelli Tutti*)

Christmas Fair Trade Sale continues through Monday, December 7 online and by phone . We are working with **10,000 Villages**, 5820 Forbes Avenue in Squirrel Hill., 15217. We can shop in person at the store; order and pay over the phone with a credit card, 412.421.2160; and/or order online at tenthousandvillages.com. Please use our special code: **FUNDSTMM**. In store shopping counts until Christmas if the code is used.

If ordered by phone or online, items must be paid for in advance and will be available for pick up in the Activities Room at St. Bede on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13, between 10 am and 4 pm.

If you do not want to participate in the Fair Trade Sale, but do want to support our Global Solidarity Partners , donations can be made to St. Mary Magdalene Parish. Please put Global Solidarity Partners on the memo line of your check and mail to the rectory or put in an envelope and drop in the collection box in church.



St. James' Carillon will be announcing to Wilkinsburg the coming of Christmas on December 9, 10, and 11 at 5 pm. Michael Kearney will play Christmas carols for about 15 minutes each evening. Please stop by to listen to our beautiful bells... in the church, outside on the sidewalk, in your car, or if you live nearby... open your windows.

On Friday, if Covid-19 conditions permit, an organ concert of Christmas music will follow the bells.

Bible Study with Fr. Matthew is on Thursdays at 7 pm on Zoom. The study will also be posted, with a short mini-lecture, on our website and YouTube.

For more information, contact Fr. Matthew at 412.661.7222 or mhawkins@diopitt.org.

To register (required), visit the homepage of our website: saintmarymagdalene.org

A Walk One Winter's Morning Join fellow parishioners on Saturday, December 12, at 10 am for an Advent morning of reflection centered on the characters we meet in the Nativity narratives and the real meanings of this season. There will be time for group discussion, private reflection, and prayer.

For Zoom link: saintmarymagdalene.org/events

The Future Leaders of our Holy Catholic Church need YOU! The parishes of St. Paul Cathedral and St. Mary Magdalene along with Sacred Heart and St. Raphael Catholic Churches are working together to build a vibrant collaborative Catholic youth ministry program for the East End of Pittsburgh.

With the support of Fr. Stubna, Fr. Burke, and Fr. Mele, we have created a study group to build this important ministry from the ground up.

We NEED enthusiastic people filled with the Holy Spirit to join us and help make this a reality for the youth of our community. We are looking for adults, college students and high school students to form our core and junior leadership groups.

We will be holding a Zoom meeting on December 16, at 7 pm to outline our mission statement and to begin planning exciting events that engage and attract our Catholic youth to a deeper relationship with Jesus through the fellowship and community of their peers.

For more information, please contact Melissa Viator at mviator@stmarymagpgh.org.

For Zoom link: saintmarymagdalene.org/events

If you are unable to join us, please pray for us as we seek to establish a strong youth ministry program for the future leaders of our Catholic Church. Thank you.

St. Bede School News

Science Projects Every year the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders work on science projects as a large portion of their science grade. Mrs. Killmeyer, our science teacher, gives all of the students a rubric and due dates, and helps the students throughout the process. Based on our grades, we turned in our first draft of the written reports between November 23rd and November 27th. Once our report is done, we begin to work on a slideshow to present to the class. Our final reports are due January 3rd, and we will present our slide shows January 3rd through January 12th. From what we know now there will not be a science fair, meaning that we do not have to create the presentation boards we would usually make.

Tree Sale On Saturday, November 21, the middle school, some siblings of middle schoolers, and of course parents worked to set up the annual Christmas tree sale on the Saint Bede upper playground. They helped drill wood planks together and set up tents and signs. For doing this, the middle schoolers got the service hours that they need to eventually make Confirmation.

Art Projects Throughout the School So far this year we have had Kindness Rocks outside of our school, and many decorations in the hallway in school. Recently we have been doing an Ancient Egypt theme in art class, and there have been quite a few creations hanging up in the hallway. The 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th graders also took part in decorating some of the school doors for Thanksgiving, which was a fun assignment to do in STREAM.

Typical School Day The coronavirus has made school much more difficult than usual, but I think all of us are beginning to adjust. In the morning we all get out temperatures checked, and once we enter the school property we are required to wear our masks, and distance ourselves until we are allowed to enter the building. In each of our class rooms, our desks are distanced and have shields bordering the outside of each of them. To limit the amount of people in the hallway, most of our classes are in our homerooms and we move only for a couple periods. Throughout the day we use our computers to communicate with each other, and do all of our assignments. We can either bring in our own computer, or use the computers available to us at school, and we sanitize everything very frequently. At lunch we either sit at the playground, the upper playground, or the lawn area, and we alternate throughout the week. We are required to sit six feet away from each other at least, and we are not allowed to share or trade food. Recess is a quite different. Once we are done eating, we have to put on our masks, and still distance ourselves from each other. We are not really allowed to play many games, since many of the games we are used to involve touching each other, or touching the same equipment, but we still find ways to have fun. At dismissal, they call small amounts of people out at a time, to limit the amount of people in the hallways, and then we are free to go. Although it is hard to know what comes next, I think our school is finding new and innovative ways to keep all of us healthy and happy.

Teresa Conway-Phillips, 8th grader

Our Parish Pantries have requested laundry detergent during December. Please bring donations to one of the churches. If you bring them to the Parish Office, 509 S. Dallas Avenue in Point Breeze, it is preferred that they be brought between 10 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If not, they can be left on the front or back porch.

It is suggested that donations no longer be put in plastic bags but recyclable bags which will then be used at the pantries.


Thank you for your continued support.

Prayer During Advent For online prayer opportunities during Advent, including Bishop Barron's Advent Reflections, see the homepage of our website:

saintmarymagdaleneppgh.org



The St Bede Athletic Association Christmas Tree Sale begins on December 3rd. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 5:30-8:30 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 9 am to 8 pm. In addition to freshly cut trees from Musser's Farm in Indiana, PA, garland, tree delivery, and wreaths are also available. Cash and checks will be accepted, and all proceeds benefit the St. Bede Athletic Association. **PLEASE NOTE**, we are receiving 25% less trees this year, so get your tree while supplies last, because they will go quickly!

 **CATHOLIC EDUCATION PLUS** Radio Program, with Fr. Tom Burke as host, highlights elementary and secondary schools; colleges; youth ministry programs; and more, and is broadcast every other Sunday morning on KDKA-AM.

Fr. Tom's guest on December 6 is Kimberly Stevenson, Principal at J.F.K. Catholic Elementary School in Washington PA.

See the homepage of our website, for the link to podcasts of the programs: saintmarymagdaleneppgh.org.

PASTOR'S NOTE



Prepare the Way!

This weekend we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. All the readings encourage hope. This Advent, we too hear the words of comfort as we must wait patiently for an end to our own afflictions, and hope for a new heaven and a new earth.

In today's first reading from Second Isaiah, we read what scripture scholars often refer to as "The Book of Consolation" as we read how God entrusts a prophet with the task of bringing comfort to a weary people. They have endured long enough harsh words of judgement as well as the oppressive demands of foreigners. God will lead the people back from Babylon to their homeland. The prophet assures his people a new exodus as the people travel from Egypt to the Promise Land.

In the second reading, from Second Peter, we read how Peter encourages us to make ready for the coming of the Lord. Christ's final coming speaks of new heavens and a new earth. In the gospel this weekend, we read the beginning of the Gospel of St. Mark and are introduced to Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, who always points to Christ. The beginning of the public ministry of Jesus coincides with the activity of John the Baptist. We must strive to walk in his light. The only way to find peace and happiness is to forget ourselves and love others.

The Coronavirus has brought us isolation and taken many lives and altered our way of life. Division in our families, neighborhoods, church, and nation can cause us to look at all the doom and gloom in our world. Let us not fall into the negativity of the world problems but look at the Advent Wreath with the two candles lit as a sign of light, hope and peace. Advent provides us the opportunity to hear the Good News and we are encouraged to recognize the "desert experiences" in our lives as a sign of growth and strength. There is still a voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting us to prepare our hearts for the one who is to come.

Prepare the Way!

Looking Ahead

Feast of the Immaculate Conception Tuesday, December 8

9 am - St. Bede, Livestream
9 am - St. James
Noon - Mother of Good Counsel
7 pm - St. Bede

Christmas Eve - Thursday, December 24

2 pm - Mother of Good Counsel (Fr. Matthew)
4 pm - St. Bede (Fr. Taylor)
5:30 pm - St. James (Fr. Tom) Livestream
Midnight- St. Bede (Fr. Tom) Broadcasting Live on KDKA Radio 100.1 FM and 1020 AM

Christmas Day - Friday, December 25

9 am- Mother of Good Counsel (Fr. Tom)
10:30 am- St. James (Fr. Taylor)
Noon - St. Bede (Fr. Matthew)

New Year's Eve - Thursday, December 31

4 pm - St. James (Fr. Tom)

New Year's Day - Friday, January 1

9 am- Mother of Good Counsel (Fr. Matthew)
11 am- St. Bede (Fr. Taylor) Livestream

Year End Donations

As we come close to the end of another year, I want to thank those who have worshiped, prayed and celebrated with us. As you make decisions on your year-end contributions, please consider your St. Mary Magdalene Parish Community. Your financial contributions in the weekly offertory collection help us continue to keep the parish campuses updated, clean and comfortable. With the Covid-19 pandemic there are extra costs with cleaning and sanitizing our three churches weekly, keeping up to date with technology to have Livestreaming available and the extra costs this time of year with snow removal and salt. Please remember to support our Parish, Schools, Social Ministry Center, and the Parish Share Campaign. Together we can keep the Catholic Community of the East End, Alive and Well and Growing.

Welcome

A special welcome to **Aaron, Jenna, and Colten Kinkela, Chris and Debra Luther, and Peter and Marilyn Messina** who recently registered at St. Mary Magdalene Parish.

Congratulations to Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory who was appointed by Pope Francis during a consistory ceremony last Saturday, November 28 in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. Cardinal Gregory becomes the first black American cardinal.

Thank you to **Melissa Viator** for decorating St. James Church, **Mary Grace and Judy Prata** for decorating Mother of Good Counsel Church, and **Angie and Tim McVeagh and Nancy O'Brien** for decorating St. Bede Church for the Season of Advent.

Something to Think About...

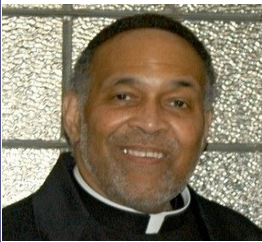
*The really happy person is the one
who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.*

Anonymous

With God, All Things Are Possible!

Fr. Tom Burke, Pastor
tburke@diopiitt.org

Fr. David Taylor



During the years when I was in the seminary studying for the priesthood, I always kept in touch with family and friends. My family moved to Pittsburgh that same year.

There was a lot of change for all of us. My brother was serving as pastor of St. Benedict the Moor Parish during that time. I was blessed to be able to communicate with him often. In some ways I saw him as a forerunner helping to prepare me for the road ahead. I continued to learn a lot from him as we both served as priests here in Pittsburgh.

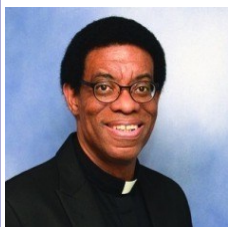
John The Baptist is often referred to as a forerunner to Jesus. It was, however, in a much different way. John The Baptist was a good friend and relative who served as a moral leader among those who would listen to him. Like the prophets of the Old Testament he soon became unpopular and was rejected by many. Jesus like most of us could benefit from a partner in ministry.

John's message was loud and clear, "prepare the way of the Lord", and make straight his path. John was happy to step aside and make a way for his mentor and leader. All of us are challenged in the same way. We have our own gifts and talents to be used for the benefit of all.

This Advent season comes with many challenges as we struggle to bring our country together along with a major health crisis that is afflicting the whole human community. We listen to Jesus, John and many others who are trying to show us the way.

I was so proud to see the installation of Cardinal Wilton Gregory and twelve others to serve as the chief advisors to Pope Francis. Cardinal Gregory and I studied for the priesthood at the same time in Chicago, Illinois. I got to know him well in his year as a deacon. His family, like my own, were converts to Catholicism. Attendance at Catholic schools really made a difference in our lives. He becomes the first African American Cardinal to serve in this country.

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



Although the global Covid-19 pandemic has been, from its very outset in the United States last winter, frightening and tragic, it has created an opportunity, as tragedies often do, to deepen our awareness of the spiritual dimensions of our lives and our self-understanding as both transitory and eternal beings.

Bishop Robert Barron recently pointed out that this pandemic should make us all aware of the radical contingency of our lives: tomorrow is not promised to any of us. It is an illusion for us to live in the midst of a world that is passing away and yet to believe that our transitory world is permanent. Yet, underlying all that is transitory and that which is fading into history at this very moment, there is a new creation that is beginning to take shape. This new creation began with the incarnation of the Word when the Word became flesh and Jesus Christ was born. This is what we will celebrate on Christmas day, and it is what we now anticipate during the season of Advent.

Because of the incarnation and dawning of the new creation we must not allow our sudden awareness of the radical contingency of our lives lead us to immobilizing fear, hopelessness, and despair. The sudden realization of how vulnerable we are should not overwhelm us or cause us to turn inward and focus only on our problems and our fears. Christ entered into a world of radical contingency to redeem us and show us the way forward, which is to break free of being focused only on ourselves.

Recently, Pope Francis noted yet another dimension of the spirituality that this pandemic may awaken in us. Francis wrote in an opinion piece that was published in the New York Times: "The pandemic has exposed the paradox that while we are more connected, we are also more divided." We have been made aware of how interdependent we are, even to our counterparts on the other side of the globe. In our own families, neighborhoods, and communities, we depend on each other to keep the virus contained and to reduce its opportunity for spreading.

At the same time, the pandemic exposes the vast inequalities in our society and around the globe. Again, in our own communities and neighborhoods we can see the difference between wealth and privilege in contrast to poverty in terms of one's ability to shelter-in-place while working or to gain access to online learning. We see the difference that access to reliable and affordable health care makes for those who have it in contrast against those who don't. The pandemic unites and divides us all.

As Pope Francis pointed out, the virus exposes the disparity of resources in our society and it may tempt us to see some lives as being cheap and disposable. This marginalization of "the other" is antithetical to Christianity. Francis writes: "It is hard to build a culture of encounter, in which we meet as people with a shared dignity, within a throwaway culture that regards the well-being of the elderly, the unemployed, the disabled and the unborn as peripheral to our own well-being." We must not allow this crisis to scare us into abandoning our obligation to the well-being of our neighbor and the stranger.

As Christians we may be awakened through this crisis. The crisis may awaken us to our human interconnectedness as well as to a deeper understanding of the spiritual and theological lens through which we should see all of our experiences. Francis writes: "To come out of this crisis better, we have to recover the knowledge that as a people we have a shared destination. The pandemic has reminded us that no one is saved alone. What ties us to one another is what we commonly call solidarity. Solidarity is more than acts of generosity, important as they are; it is the call to embrace the reality that we are bound by bonds of reciprocity."

This is the Christian path of Eucharistic living. Christianity is about far more than simply checking the boxes and jumping through the hoops that enable us to be compliant with a set of rules and regulations. Christianity is about learning the true meaning of love and solidarity, which lifts us up, draws us out of ourselves, transcends our apparent isolation, and enables us to live abundantly in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.