

The Bells of St. Mary's The Church of the Immaculate Conception

The Baptism of the Lord January 12, 2020

From Fr. Anthony Columba Ekanem, MSP—Pastor

~ BAPTISM OF OUR LORD ~

Before Jesus began preaching, teaching, and healing throughout Galilee and Judea, He stepped into the Jordan and had water poured over Him by John the Baptist. The Spirit of God descended upon Him, and God's voice called out, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17).

Today, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Baptism of Our Lord. This feast brings to an end the season of Christmas and marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Today, at your space time, read the account of Jesus' baptism and you will notice that it is only Matthew's account that he tells of John's reluctance to baptize Jesus. This account clearly brings the importance of humility and respect on the part of John. (Matthew 3:15). In celebrating this feast, we are to recall our own baptism and its importance for us and not just the role of Jesus and John the Baptist.

The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan. The Son of God is gradually revealed to the world. Isaiah speaks of the servant of the Lord, (Isaiah 42:1) who brings justice and compassion. Peter preaches to a group of Gentiles, telling them that God was with Jesus as He brought hope and healing to all people. (Acts of the Apostles 10:34). Jesus descended into the River also to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes.

In the Eastern Church, this feast is Theophany because, at the baptism of Christ in the River Jordan, God appeared in three persons. The baptism of John was a sacramental preparatory for the Baptism of Christ. It moved men to sentiments of repentance and induced them to confess their sins. Christ did not need the baptism of John. Although He appeared in the "substance of our flesh" and was recognized "outwardly like unto ourselves," He was sinless and impeccable. Jesus conferred upon the water the power of the actual baptism, which will remove all the sins of the world. "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who takes away the sin of the world."

Many of the incidents which accompanied Christ's baptism are symbolical of what happened at our baptism. At Christ's baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; at our Baptism the Trinity took its abode in our soul. At His baptism, the "Beloved Son" of the Father reminds us we, too, become the adopted sons and daughters of God. At Christ's baptism the heavens were opened; at our Baptism heaven was opened to us. At His baptism Jesus prayed; after our baptism, we must pray to avoid actual sin.

With the Spirit of God, you received in baptism, how are you able to carry on Jesus' mission, especially as we begin a new year? What are the requirements to be a Godparent for the Sacrament of Baptism?

Stewardship

*Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday, 1/05/2020 our Offering was \$ 3, 415.00

· Today's our second collection is for Catholic Communications/Catholic University.

· Next week second collection is for the Organ Renovation.

Special Announcement

Thank you to all who supported the Mission of St. Paul in our second collection last Sunday. We have envelopes if you would like to contribute during the year.

Special Lecture: Manhattan College will be having a lecture given by Sr. Norma Pimentel, MJ. Sr. Norma is the Executive Director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley and is on the front lines of the Church's response to the recent immigration issues along the US-Mexico border. Pope Francis has praised her work to welcome all people at the border.

Please join the Manhattan College community as we welcome Sr. Norma to the Bronx.

Who: Sr. Norma Pimentel, MJ

What: Crossing Borders: A Catholic Response to Migration

When: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Where: Kelly Commons 5th Floor, Manhattan College, 4513 Manhattan College Parkway, Bronx, NY 10471

Parking is available in the Manhattan College Parking Garage.

Cardinal's Annual Stewardship Appeal

Thank you again my dear sisters and brothers, who have always responded generously to Annual Appeal of 2019. We are blessed and proud to have people like you in our parish community.

2020 Appeal Goal: \$37,500

The Goal Formula & Calculation is based on collections from the 2018 fiscal year. Please note that our assessment remains the same as our 2019 assessment, 2 month (s). Parishes are assigned an assessment between one month and three months to raise in support of the Cardinal's Annual Stewardship Appeal.

The parish goal assessment does not include archdiocesan second collections, holy days, or major holidays in this fund.

Rebate Policy

Any cash received over goal is subject to a 60/40 split, with parishes keeping 60 percent and the Appeal/ retaining 40 percent of the cash over goal. Appeal / rebate will be paid twice, first in round in October of the same calendar year and again in March of the following calendar year.

Our Parish Community which is made up of Arabic, Spanish, and English speaking parishioners, has never lacked behind in these annual efforts. May you all experience in this new year God's blessings in all you do.

Sundays Readings:

First Reading: Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7, p. 52

"Here is my servant whom I uphold, I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice:" said Isaiah. "To open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners," and to make you a light for the nations.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 p. 53 The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading: Acts 10: 34-38 p. 53 God does not play favorites. All who fear the Lord are justified. God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and the power to do good works and heal all in need.

Gospel: Matthew 3: 13-17 p. 54

Holy Spirit descended on him like a dove, and a voice from the heavens said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Religious Education

January: 2020

1/18/20 - Religious Education Classes

1/20/20 - Monday Confirmation Retreat in the Church Hall 9:30—2:00 pm

1/25/20 - Religious Education Classes

February: 2020

2/02/20 - Religious Education Classes 2nd Confirmation meeting in the school cafeteria at 11:30am

YOUTH CORNER

After numerous discussions in Pastoral Council concerning our Youth, it was agreed upon that we organize an appreciation gathering for the few who have been participating in our parish ministries. We had about 40 young people who came, and the Altar Servers were specifically acknowledged with the hope that next year we will extend it to those serving as Ushers, Lectors, and Catechists as we try to begin a Youth Group. Ms. Nancy Valencia will work with Evelyn Rosario, Karla Marmolejos, Guadalupe Campos as a team to help us revive Youth Group in our Parish. They have already agreed upon to be meeting the last Saturday of every month. Fr. George and I are appealing to parents to encourage your children to come and join the group. Any suggestion is welcome but must first pass through the team.

Next meeting will be Saturday January 25, 2020 in the Church Hall from 12:00pm - 3:00 pm

**Mass Intentions for the week of
January 11, to January 19, 2020**

Saturday, January 11, 2020:

12:05 pm - Almando, Vincenzo & Cristina De Luca + * Grace De Luca Family

5:00 pm - Rose & Joanne Kunny + * Helen McClain

7:30pm - Ana Alemania & Mercedes Matilde Balandra + * Miguel Balandra

Sunday, January 12, 2020:

7:30 am - All Souls' in Purgatory * Annie

9:00 am - Gustavo Maturana + * Orfelina Maturana

11:00 am - Lisa Hind Abbasi * Bonanno Family

Monday, January 13, 2020:

8:15 am - Erlinda R. Lagarde + * Jun Lagarde

12:05 pm - Patricia Prendergast * Family

Tuesday January 14, 2020:

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Zonia Torres + * Theresa Torres

Wednesday, January 15, 2020:

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Ana Rivera + * Malta Gonzalez

Thursday, January 16, 2020

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

7:00 pm - Maria Reyes (Sarita) + * Maria Aquino & Family

Friday, January 17, 2020:

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Eliseo Lugo Jr. + * Malta Gonzalez & Family

Saturday, January 18, 2020:

12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

5:00 pm - Rose & Joseph Goff * Friend

7:30pm - Jesus Sacramentado Accion de Gracias * Lila Perez

Sunday, January 19, 2020:

7:30 am - Josefina Sable Birthday Blsg. * Aurora Marino

9:00 am - Maria Reyes (Sarita) + * Maria Aquino & Family

11:00 am - Thanksgiving Ronald * Roveló Family

*+Indicates deceased *Indicates the person (s) who requested the Mass.*

BIBLE STUDY

“Ignorance of the Scripture is Ignorance of Christ!” - St Jerome, 5th Century

Our Bible studies have started on Monday nights at 7:00 pm in the Parish Hall.

Studies are both in Spanish and in English.

MASS BOOK

If you want to book Mass for any particular Intention, call the Parish Office.

HELP KEEP OUR CHURCH CLEAN

We are still working on the Guidelines for the use and rental of our Parish Hall.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

To catch up with your Sunday contribution, you can do it now before we start preparing the statements for your Tax purposes.