

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

**Second Sunday of  
Ordinary Time January 19, 2020**

**From Fr. George Okoro, MSP**

An elderly barman once told me that he had heard more confessions in his pub than I had heard in the confessional. "After some few pints, lips and hearts normally get unlocked and you get to hear stuff that would keep you awake the whole night," he told me. "Why not at least tell them they are forgiven?" I asked him. To which he replied, "I am neither a priest nor am I the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." At least he recognized that the Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world.

The reality of sin is something we keep grappling with. We are conscious of sin in the world and in our own lives as well. As faithful Christians, we believe that Jesus is the solution to our own personal problems and to the problems of the world at large. The problem, however, is that many people do not come to him for solutions to their problems. They know they have problems, but they do not believe that Jesus can help them on their journey towards healing. Some people look for solution in alcohol, nicotine, and drugs; others turn to all sorts of debaucheries in a bid to either find healing or, at least, escape from their problems. Sadly, these 'solutions' do not work. On the contrary, they leave us with a sense of shame, guilt, self-loathing, and worthlessness. The reason is because these quick-fix solutions treat the symptoms, not the cause of our problems.

The main cause of most of our problems is spiritual. To put it simply, we are sick in the soul. When we are sick in the soul it is easy for us to become sick in the mind and then sick in the body. There is a phrase "a healthy mind in a healthy body." Psychologists the world over agree to this. I personally believe that the state of our soul affects our whole being, mind and body. That is why when some people come to me with certain problems I give them a prescription, a spiritual prescription. I recommend them to pray for as much as possible every day and to go to daily Mass if they are free to do so, and I recommend uplifting passages from the Bible for daily reading. To heal the body we take medicine; to heal the soul we take spiritual medicine. The only dispenser of spiritual medicine is Jesus Christ.

In the miracles of Jesus one example stands out, the paralyzed man let down through the roof. First, Jesus healed his soul by forgiving him his sins, then he healed his body from the paralysis (Luke 5:18-26). This shows us that healing essentially begins from within, from the soul. Any healing that does not touch the soul amounts to simple window dressing. The healing that lasts is the one in which every anomaly and abnormality of the soul is corrected. This leads to the total transformation of the human person. As long as this type of healing goes, only Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the solution. He has come to heal us in body and in soul.

Psychologists might help you get an insight into the human causes of your problems, counselors might help you deal with your guilt, but only Jesus the Lamb of God can take that guilt away. Do you want healing? Come to Jesus. Do you want peace? Come to Jesus. Do you carry too much baggage that does not allow you to move freely? Come to Jesus. Our peace, our healing, our freedom lie in him, only in him.

**Stewardship**

\*Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday, 1/12/20 our Offering was \$ 3, 273.00

.. Today's our second collection is for the Organ Renovation.

.. Next Sunday second collection is for Church Property Insurance.

Rectory-Office will be closed on Monday January 20, 2020. In observance to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Special Announcement**

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 49: 3, 5-6, p. 54

The Lord said, "You are my servant, Israel, through whom I show my glory... I will make you alight to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 40: 2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10 p. 55 Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

**Second Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1: 1-3 p. 55 "Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus," greeted the holy people of the Corinthians church with God's grace and peace. He addressed them as "sanctified in Christ Jesus."

**Gospel:** John 8: 23-9:3 p. 56

John exclaimed, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." He continued, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove.. I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

**Religious Education**

**January: 2020**

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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Intention for the week of January 18, to January 26, 2020**

### **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 \* Rovelo Family

### **Monday, January 20, 2020:**

8:15 am - Alex Negrin + Debra Henriquez  
12:05 pm - Joan Gaudreau + \* Winnie & John

### **Tuesday January 21, 2020:**

8:15 am - Luis & Ofelia Gamis + \* Diez Family  
12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

### **Wednesday, January 22, 2020:**

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Walley Elia Fiilpo \* Luisa Filpo

### **Thursday, January 23, 2020**

8:15am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Carl & Vee Motta + \* Son George Motta  
7:00 pm - Sagrado Corazon De Jesus \* Lila Perez

### **Friday, January 24, 2020:**

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Paul Patteril + \* George Patteril

### **Saturday, January 25, 2020:**

12:05 pm - In Thanksgiving St Anthony \* Angelina Borrelli  
5:00 pm - Kenneth J. Sansevere + \* Joseph & Debbie Caruso  
7:30pm - Biran Steven Lawrence + \* Yesina Antepara

### **Sunday, January 26, 2020:**

7:30 am - Anna Elizabeth Sgoutas Birthday Blsg. \* Roselyn Fajardo  
9:00 am - Roberto Mejia + Familia Solorzano 11:00 am - Thomas F. Reid \* Catherine Reid

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