

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

Third Sunday of Ordinary Time  
January 25, 2020

From Fr. George Okoro, MSP

A writer, whose name I can no longer remember, suggested that if Jesus had sent his twelve disciples for psychological testing this might well be the reply he would have received: Thank you for submitting the résumés of the twelve men you have picked for managerial positions in your new organization. All of them have taken our battery of tests. We have run the results through our own computer. After having arranged personality interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant, it is the opinion of our staff that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the enterprise. They have no team concept. Simon Peter are emotionally unstable and given to fit of temper. Andrew has no qualities for leadership. The two brothers James and John place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas shows a skeptical attitude that would tend to undermine morale. Matthew has been blacklisted by the Jerusalem Better Business Bureau for being a notorious tax collector. James the son of Alphaeus, and Jude Thaddeus, definitely have radical leanings, and registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale. The other Simon, the zealot, is a terrorist and is currently wanted by the Roman authorities. I recommend he be denounced immediately to avoid your company being blacklisted for harboring terrorists. Nathaniel is an ethnic bigot. Remember he said nothing good could come from your region. One of the candidates however, shows real potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious, and responsible, and is a good financial manager. His name is Judas Iscariot. We recommend him as your controller and right-hand man.

Going by the above assessment, the only disciple worthy of Christ's trust should be Judas Iscariot. However, we all know how the story turned out. The above assessment should give us hope that if Jesus' disciples, in spite of their weaknesses, could go on to accomplish great things for the Lord, we also can do likewise, our weaknesses notwithstanding. We are each called by the Lord at baptism and confirmation to be his witnesses. No one can say they are not suitable. Absolutely no one. We are not all called in a similar fashion but I would like to see our Gospel today as a reminder to us to make room for God in our lives, to work for his kingdom. You may not have to give up your livelihood as Peter and Andrew did in today's gospel, you are still called to witness to Christ's love and salvation in your immediate vicinity, and with all your strength. The call, in today's Gospel, to leave the boat and the fishing and follow Jesus is a reminder to make room for God every day in our live; to build up God's kingdom here on earth, in anticipation of His eternal kingdom hereafter. When we do this, the prophecy in our first reading and Gospel is fulfilled:

The people that lived in darkness  
Has seen a great light;  
On those who dwell in the land and shadow of death  
A light has dawned. (Isa 9:1)

When we leave the boat and the fishing every day to make room for God, to build up his kingdom in whatever way we can, then those who live in darkness would be able to see a great light, and the light of salvation would dawn on upon us as well.

## Stewardship

\*Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday, 1/19/20 our Offering was \$ 2, 890.00

.. Today's our second collection is for the Church Property Insurance.

.. Next Sunday's second collection is for the Church Heat.

**Food Collection:** Next Sunday we will have our monthly food collection for the needy in our community and as always thank you for your generosity in helping those less fortunate than ourselves.

## 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 8: 23, 9: 3, p. 56

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who lived in the land of gloom now have joy, for the yoke that burdened them God has smashed.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 27: 1, 4, 13-14 p. 57 The Lord is my light and my salvation.

**Second Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1: 10-13, 17 p. 57 Paul wrote to the people of Corinth: let "there be no divisions among you.. be united in mind and in the same purpose." I have heard "that there are rivalries among you...Is Christ divided?"

**Gospel:** Matthew 4: 12-23 p. 58

Jesus said to Simon Peter and Andrew, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they followed him. Jesus began to proclaim this: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He cured many people.

## Religious Education

### February: 2020

2/01/20 - Religious Education Classes 2<sup>nd</sup> Confirmation meeting in the school cafeteria at 11:30am

2/08/20 - Religious Education Classes

2/15/20 - Religious Education Classes

2/22/20 - No Religious Education Classes

2/22/20 - For children being baptized in the Religion program Baptism will be at 2:30 pm.

2/23/20 - Sunday Confirmation Class 2<sup>nd</sup> Retreat at Stepinac High School. Please be at the Rectory at 11:00 am. Please eat lunch at home.

2/29/20 - Religious Education Classes

2/29/20 - Our 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class will be doing Reconciliation @ 9:45 am. They are to come to the Hall like always.

Thanks to all the Confirmation candidates for the Retreat last Monday. I hope you have lived it and that the fruit of this retreat remains in your hearts.

Parents please have all the children come to Mass as a family and study their PRAYERS.

**Mass Intentions for the week of  
January 25, to February 2, 2020**

**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

**Monday, January 27, 2020:**

8:15 am - In Thanksgiving \* Hannah Linus  
12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

**Tuesday January 28, 2020:**

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Olgita Tomalas + \* Deborah Henriquez

**Wednesday, January 29, 2020:**

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

**Thursday, January 30, 2020**

8:15am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Ramón & Paula Navarro + \* Carmen Navarro  
7:00 pm - Virgen Maria En Accion De Gracias \* Lila Perez

**Friday, January 31, 2020:**

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile  
12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

**Saturday, February 01, 2020:**

12:05 pm - Terence Brennan & Family (Living) \* Maureen Brennan  
5:00 pm - Lisa Hind Abassi \* Bonanno Family  
7:30pm - Legion De Maria \* Laura Lopez

**Sunday, February 02, 2020:**

7:30 am - For The Parishioners/Por Los Parroquianos  
9:00 am - Margot Navarro + \* Ofelia Otero  
11:00 am - Hector Paredes + \* Julius & Arelis Rodriguez

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

**MASS BOOK**

If you want to book a 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.

**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.