

# Church of St. Theresa

*A Caring Community Reaching Out To One Another in Christ*

2855 St. Theresa Avenue, Bronx, New York

## SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday at 5:00pm,  
Sunday at 7:30am, 9:00am(Italian),  
10:30am(Family Mass) 12:15pm ,  
1:30PM(Spanish) & 5:00pm

## WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday thru Saturday 8:00am & 9:00am

## DEVOTIONS

Miraculous Medal & St. Theresa  
Novenas after Monday morning Masses  
St. Anthony Novena after Tuesday  
morning Masses.

Thursday 12 Noon Mass  
& Eucharistic Adoration

Exposition & Benediction of the  
Blessed Sacrament First Friday 6:00PM

## CONFESSION

Saturdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm  
and by appointment

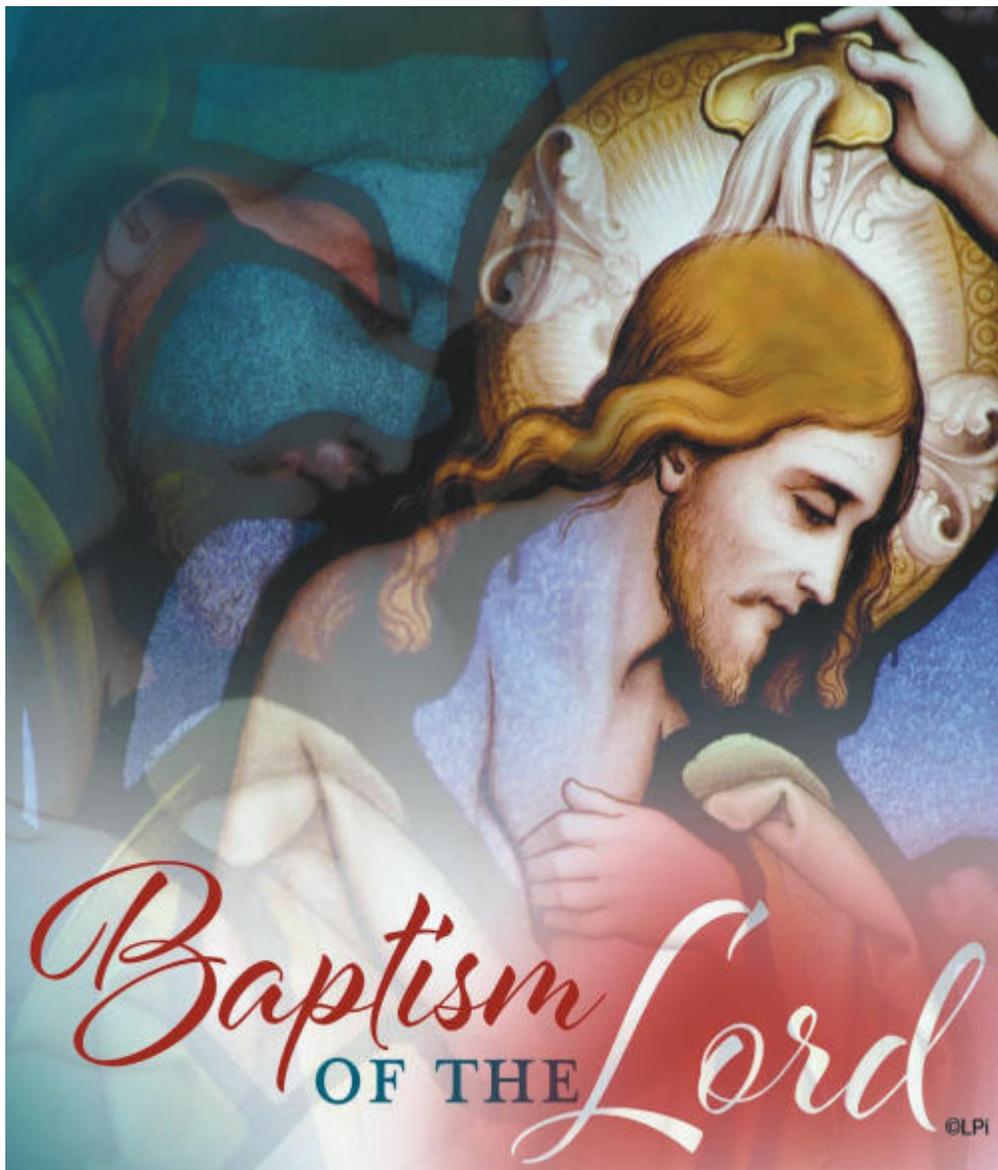
## BAPTISMS

Baptisms take place most Sundays  
after the 1:30pm Mass.  
We ask parents to attend the Baptism  
preparation meeting. Register at the  
Rectory for the meeting.  
The date of the Baptism will be discussed  
at the Baptism meeting.

## MARRIAGES

Call the Rectory at least six months in  
advance of the wedding date to make an  
appointment with parish clergy.

**ST. THERESA'S FAMILY IS OUR FAMILY**  
**"ST. THERESA STRONG"**



*Rev. Msgr. Thomas Derivan, Pastor*

*Rev. Joseph Ligory, Parochial Vicar*  
*Rev. Edmundo Gomez, Retired,*  
*Rev. Robert Imbelli, Weekend Associate*  
*Deacon, Robert Carolan*

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## CHURCH OF ST. THERESA, BRONX

### FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DERIVAN

Today is the official ending of the Christmas Season. As you know, the Christmas Season of the Church Year is more than Christmas Day itself. It extends for more than two weeks after Christmas. Two Sundays ago we celebrated another Christmas feast—the feast of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph united in the family of God’s love. Then last Sunday when we came to church, we celebrated another feast of the Christmas Season, the Feast of the Epiphany, when Our Lord was visited by the Magi who brought Him their precious gifts. And today we celebrate the final feast of the Christmas Season—the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. At first, this feast seems strange for Christmas. We do not hear of the Infant Jesus today—quite the contrary. We hear of the adult Jesus, probably thirty years of age, not the Infant in the manger, but the man baptized by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River. How is this feast part of Christmas? That is a good question, one which we should think about in the presence of the Lord today.

We must remember what Christmas is. Christmas celebrates the coming of the Lord. In the words of the hymn we hear at Christmas time, “Away in a manger, no crib for His bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky looking down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.” But today we ask this question: Why? Why Christmas? Why did the Lord Jesus come from heaven to born “away in the manger?” We must always remember the reason why Jesus came. He came from heaven so that we might go to heaven. He was born in the manger that we may be born to eternal life. But there is something more that we must say and it is hard. He came from heaven to die for us. He came from heaven so that He might be our Savior from sin and death. As the great Bishop Sheen said, one day the wood of the stable of Bethlehem would be replaced by the wood of the Cross of Calvary.

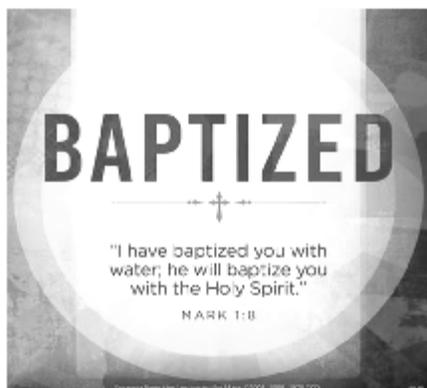
Today’s feast celebrates Jesus beginning His work of saving the world. It celebrates Jesus beginning His mission, humbly receiving baptism at the Jordan River, humbly getting ready to humble Himself by dying for us on the cross. The Lord Jesus had His mission, the mission that involved His preaching and teaching and healing people’s bodies and souls, but the mission that would lead Him from Good Friday to the glory of His Resurrection at Easter. It reminds us that the Lord was born to give His life for us.

The Lord Jesus had His mission. And so do we. That is what we should remember today. Everyone has a mission, something that God wants you to do, in fact often several missions that God wants you to do. Your mission involves your daily work which can be offered to God. Your mission involves your family, the love parents give to their children and the love and respect children give their parents in return. Sometimes God has a special mission. Deacon Carolan has a mission as he prepares for the priesthood. But let me mention one special mission that is so beautiful in the eyes of God. Last week a couple who was visiting here brought their two sons to church, both in wheelchairs, both with cerebral palsy. The love that they all had for one another was beautiful to see. Those parents did not look at their sons as handicapped persons. They looked at them simply as the sons they loved. Is there any doubt that couple has a mission, a beautiful mission? And certainly God gives couples like that a special grace to do their mission and to do it well.

Today on this feastday ask the Lord to help you with your mission in life, whatever it may be. Remember your mission is important in the eyes of God. Pray that the Lord Jesus who accepted His mission on this feastday will give you the strength to accept yours. The great English cardinal St. John Henry Newman wrote this beautiful reflection on our mission in life. May these words be in our hearts today:

“God has created me to do Him some definite service.  
He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.  
I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.  
I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.  
He has not created me for naught.  
Therefore I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place.  
Therefore, I will trust Him.  
Whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.  
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.  
If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.  
He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about.  
He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers.  
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me.  
Still, I will trust Him. God knows what He is about.”

Father Thomas B. Derivan



**Please continue to share the peace and joy of our faith with others .** There are so many that are in the need of Jesus. Can you be for all of us a living sign to all our parishioners and neighbors, and tell them for us “we need them and love them”. Someone may hear and accept the invitation from you and return home to worship the Lord with us. So please invite a friend, relative, or neighbor to come with you to Church next Sunday. God will do the rest. Let us share our treasure of faith with others.



## BAPTISM OF THE LORD

### INFORMATION ABOUT ARRANGING BAPTISMS IN OUR CHURCH



Each year in January, I think it is important to present the following information to explain our procedure for the baptism of children here in St. Theresa's Church. Please share this information with Catholic friends and neighbors who either are expecting babies or have recently had a new-born.

- 1) Baptism is the beginning of the Christian life. A child should be baptized as soon as possible after birth. Some parents, for whatever reason, delay the baptism of their children until the children are one or two years of age or older. This is not the practice of the Church. We believe that we should share our faith with children from infancy. Just as a child exists as a member of his or her family from birth, the child should be part of God's family, the Church, as soon as possible after birth. The child should be baptized within a month after birth.
- 2) Parents should realize that the baptism of their child is the beginning of the journey of faith. Sadly many people look at the baptism ceremony as simply the occasion of a celebration, a family gathering, a party. Those things are fine as long as we see that Baptism is the beginning of the process of training children in the faith. Parents should bring their infants to Mass. Our Lord himself said, "Let the little children come unto me." (If the child has some difficulty, a parent can bring the child into the vestibule to calm the child down.) There is no reason not to bring the child to Church. The child should see the Church as God's house, but also as his or her house, the house of prayer where we come to show our love for God Our Father.
- 3) When parents are selecting godparents for their children, they should pick wisely. A godparent should be like a "second parent" to the child in matters of faith. The godparent should not just be there for the baptism ceremony and then no longer be part of the child's spiritual life. The godparents should encourage the child to grow in faith, to come to Mass, to receive the other sacraments. Sometimes a godparent does this so well that when the child comes to the time of selecting a sponsor for Confirmation, he or she picks the godparent from baptism. To make it clear, our usual custom is to have two godparents, a man and a woman (although only one is necessary). At least one must be a practicing Catholic. If the other is not a Catholic, that person accepts the role of being a "Christian witness" and accepts the responsibility of encouraging the child to grow in the Catholic faith. Parents should select relatives or long-time friends as godparents for their children.
- 4) In the baptism ceremony, we remind parents that they are "the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith." Parents should make their home a "little church." Pope Francis, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope John Paul II have all called the family "the domestic church." The child should grow up seeing a crucifix in the home, a statue of Our Lady, a picture of a favorite saint, and other religious articles. When the child gets older, parents should read to him or her from a Children's Bible. Prayer should be the ordinary thing in the family. Before bed, parents can pray briefly with their children. It does not have to be long prayers, just a simple talking with God. And of course the best of family prayers is the Rosary. How wonderful it would be if each family said a decade of the Rosary together each night, parents and children together, remembering that "A family that prays together stays together."
- 5) When the children are old enough (i.e., First Grade in school), they should begin their formal religious education, either in our CCD Program for public school children or in Catholic school (where religion is taught daily). Parents should not put off the religious training of their children. The policy of the Archdiocese is that children must be in their second year of religious instruction in order to prepare for First Holy Communion. Since the proper age for First Communion is Second Grade, children should begin religious education in Grade 1. Please bring this to the attention of friends who may have children in public school.
- 6) Obviously children should come to Mass every Sunday or Saturday evening. I mentioned above about bringing little children to Mass. This, of course, is true of older children as well. Since children can generally not come to Mass by themselves, they depend on parents to bring them. Parents should not let anything get in the way of coming to Mass on Sunday with their children. The saddest thing to hear from children is the statement, "I wanted to come to Mass on Sunday, but no one would take me." Of course there are so many things to do, but Mass should be the priority. There is nothing more important than praising and thanking God each Sunday.

Let me add that, during the current pandemic, we are taking every precaution in church to keep everyone safe. Parents should not hesitate to bring their children to any of our Masses: Saturday, 5P M; Sunday, 7:30AM; 9:00AM (Italian); 10:30AM; 12:15PM; 1:30PM (Spanish) and 5:00PM. You should sit in the benches marked "Seating for Families."

- 7) In our parish, parents are asked to take part in the BAPTISM PREPARATION when they wish to arrange the baptism of their child. At present this is online. Parents should first come to the rectory to fill out the proper form. You will then be instructed to view the "Baptismal Instruction for Parents" on our website: [sttheresachurchbronx.org](http://sttheresachurchbronx.org). After that, you are to see me in church on Sunday after any Mass so that we can give you the necessary papers, go over the instruction and set the date for the baptism itself. At present, baptisms are done individually on Sundays. Those who wish to have baptism in Spanish are asked to contact Father Gomez for the proper procedure.

I hope this information is helpful to you, particularly to parents and prospective parents. May we all appreciate the Sacrament of Baptism more and more. May we remember how blessed we are to be BAPTIZED IN CHRIST.

Father Thomas B. Derivan

JANUARY 10, 2021

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**MESSAGE OF OUR HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS FOR THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

Today's celebration of the Baptism of the Lord concludes the Christmas Season and invites us to think about our baptism. Jesus wished to receive the baptism that John the Baptist preached and administered in the Jordan. It was a baptism of repentance: those who approached expressed the wish to be purified of sins and, with the help of God, they committed to begin a new life.

Thus we understand the great humility of Jesus, the One who had no sin, in joining the line of the penitents, mingling among them to be baptized in the waters of the river. How humble Jesus is! And in so doing, he manifested what we celebrated at Christmas: Jesus' willingness to immerse himself in the river of humanity, to take upon himself the failings and weaknesses of men and women, to share their wish for liberation and the triumph over all that distances one from God and renders one a stranger to brothers and sisters. As in Bethlehem, even along the banks of the Jordan, God keeps his promise to take upon himself the destiny of the human being, and Jesus is the tangible and definitive sign of it. He took all of us upon his shoulders; he carries all of us, in life, in our days.

Today's Gospel passage emphasizes that when Jesus "came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove" (Mk 1:10). The Holy Spirit, who had worked from the beginning of creation and had led Moses and the people in the desert, now descends in fullness upon Jesus to give him the power to accomplish his mission in the world. The Spirit is the creator of Jesus' baptism and also of our baptism. He opens the eyes of our hearts to the truth, to the whole truth. He propels our life along the path of charity. He is the gift that the Father has given to each one of us on the day of our baptism. He, the Spirit, transmits the tenderness of divine forgiveness to us. And it is again he, the Holy Spirit, who makes the revelatory Word of the Father resonate: "You are my Son" (cf. v. 11).

The celebration of Jesus' baptism invites every Christian to remember his or her own baptism. I cannot ask you whether you remember the day of your baptism, because most of you were infants, like me; we were baptized as infants. But I ask you another question: do you know the date of your baptism? Do you know what day you were baptized? Each one think about it. We must always keep that date in our memory, because it is a date of celebration; it is the date of our initial sanctification; it is the date on which the Father gave us the Holy Spirit who encourages us to walk; it is the date of the great forgiveness.

Let us invoke the maternal protection of Mary Most Holy, that all Christians can understand ever better the gift of baptism and commit to living it with coherence, witnessing to the love of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit.

Angelus Address, January 7, 2018

**ORDINARY TIME OF THE CHURCH YEAR**

Today's Feast of the Baptism of the Lord concludes the Christmas Season. Beginning on Monday the Church begins Ordinary Time, as you will see in the green vestments worn by the priest when you come to Mass next Sunday.

Ordinary Time is called "ordinary" not because it is common or unimportant, but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered. The Latin word *ordinalis*, which refers to numbers in a series, stems from the Latin word *ordo*, from which we get the English word order. Thus, the numbered weeks of Ordinary Time, in fact, represent the ordered life of the Church—the period in which we live our lives neither in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons) or in penance (as in Advent and Lent), but in watchfulness and expectation of the Second Coming of Christ. In the Ordinary Time the Church concentrates on the words and deeds of Our Lord given to us in the Gospel. Each year we hear a different gospel at Mass. The readings for this year are from the Gospel of St. Mark.

Ordinary Time refers to all of those parts of the Catholic Church's liturgical year that are not included in the major seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. Ordinary Time thus encompasses two different periods in the Church's calendar, since the Christmas season immediately follows Advent, and the Easter season immediately follows Lent.

As you remember, the Church year begins with Advent, followed immediately by the Christmas season. Ordinary Time begins on the Monday after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which we celebrate today. This first period of Ordinary Time runs until Ash Wednesday when the liturgical season of Lent begins. Both Lent and the Easter season fall outside of Ordinary Time, which resumes again on the Monday after Pentecost Sunday, the end of the Easter season. This second period of Ordinary Time runs until the First Sunday of Advent when the liturgical year begins again.

In any given year, there are either 33 or 34 Sundays in Ordinary Time. Because Easter is a moveable feast, and thus the Lent and Easter seasons "float" from year to year, the number of Sundays in each period of Ordinary Time varies from the other period as well as from year to year.

**HANDICAP ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH**

The side entrance to the Church on Pilgrim Avenue will be open every Sunday for anyone who is handicapped or in a wheelchair. Also this same entrance will be opened every weekday until 9:30AM.

**CONFESSIONS** are heard every Saturday from 4:00PM to 5:00PM or by appointment in the Rectory.



## MISSIONARY ZEAL, OUR TRUE CALL

Being a Christian has always been a struggle. In the beginning we bore the enmity of Roman conquerors of Jerusalem. In other times missionaries both misunderstood and feared were killed by those whose gods demanded human sacrifices. Modern day martyrs, including St. Isaac Jogues of France, who traveled to New York repeatedly, was killed by the people he believed he could save. He was not deterred even after being severely harmed in a previous missionary trip.

Today missionaries are still killed around the world, churches burned, Christian symbols desecrated. And even without the most tragic ending, missionaries face obstacles many of us cannot imagine. Most are in harm's way, with secular war around. And almost all are in areas of deep poverty, so the missionaries are, like St. Francis, reduced to bare bones. They live in conditions that would bring many of us to our knees. But at all times the hearts of Christians, especially our missionaries have been brave and strong as they stood up to the lions in Rome and the peoples who martyred Christians in almost every continent. In fact, joy is the constant at many of missionary parishes. The stripped-down life has its advantages. It creates an ability to truly see the path, the light and the true way. And it is this clarity that allows all of us to evangelize and be missionaries in our own right. Pope Francis likens our true faith to being in love,

“People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that are life-giving.”

You don't need to be an expert to defend and promote Christianity. It is our baptismal responsibility and one we know will allow us to grow in faith. So today we must be brave in the presence of evil (of whatever kind) and stand our ground. We are Christians, bringing God's Word.

(From Franciscan Mission Associates)



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Founded in 1975, Birch Family Services empowers individuals with autism and developmental disabilities to lead fulfilling lives. With 30 sites across New York City, we are recognized as a leading provider of early childhood and school-age education, residential, and community services for this vulnerable population. For nearly 5 decades, our individualized, person-centered services and programs have helped more than 20,000 individuals and their families navigate significant transitions across the lifetime. Key to this success has been the strong clinical staff and administrative leadership who understand the needs of the people we support. This year, Birch is celebrating 45 years of service to the community. To learn more, visit [Birchfamilyservices.org](http://Birchfamilyservices.org).

Located across from the St. Theresa School, Birch Family Services, Pelham Bay Early Childhood Center provides special needs services for preschool children with developmental disabilities. Many of our families come to us from the surrounding Pelham Bay, Throggs Neck, Westchester Avenue and East Tremont areas. At Pelham Bay ECC we strive to provide not only person-centered services, but family centered approaches as well. We recognize that the services a child receives during these key preschool years can be crucial toward setting the stage for future progress and development. Collaboration between school, family and community are key in fostering success for our children. During the short time Pelham Bay ECC has been operating, since September 2016, we have made continued efforts to foster relationships with our families and with the surrounding community. We look forward to continuing to provide services for the surrounding Bronx areas. Pelham Bay ECC, 2855 St. Theresa Avenue, 646-975-2700.



### JANUARY 13TH SAINT HILARY OF POITIERS Bishop and Doctor († c. 368)

In the 4th century, the heresy of Arianism, which held that the Son of God was not truly divine but merely a created being less than the Father, swept through the Church. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers in Gaul (modern France), was a key defender of the Church's teaching in the West.

Hilary had not been raised a Christian. He converted after reading John's Gospel, received baptism as an adult, and became a priest. He was named Bishop of Poitiers in 353. Two years later, Hilary avoided attending a council that was stacked with Arian bishops. The year after that, in 356, the emperor exiled him to Phrygia, in present day western Turkey.

But Hilary was not to be put down. While in exile, he wrote theological treatises and attended two councils. His voice was so influential in the East that, after a few years, the Arians begged the emperor to have him returned to Poitiers. His people rejoiced to have him back. As imperial persecutions eased, Hilary brought order to the church in Gaul, rallying his brother bishops to the side of orthodoxy, that Jesus is indeed a divine Person. He died around the year 368 and was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1851.

At the end of his treatise on the Trinity, Hilary offers this prayer: “Keep this piety of my faith undefiled...that I may always hold fast that which I professed in the creed of my regeneration.”

*Merciful Father, through the intercession of Saint Hilary of Poitiers, help me to remain true to Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man.*



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED  
MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH AND THEIR FAMILIES  
ROBERT GIANOTTI, DOMINICK MUCCIO,  
JEANNE FERRY, MARIE CARDINALE



**SATURDAY JANUARY 9, 2021**

5:00PM Thomas Vlahos

**SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 2021**

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Theresa

9:00AM Josephine Crusco

10:30AM June Ricci

12:15PM Flora Ferrante

1:30PM Rosalba Gomez

5:00PM Fr. Charles Szivos

**MONDAY JANUARY 11, 2021**

8:00AM Salvatore Lucania

9:00AM Nicoletta Ferrara

**TUESDAY JANUARY 12, 2021**

8:00AM Fernande Flory

9:00AM Vincent Horan

**WEDNESDAY JANUARY 13, 2021**

8:00AM James Martino

9:00AM Rose Taratino

**THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 2021**

8:00AM Mary Cea

9:00AM Renato Piscina

12NOON Providenza Pepe

**FRIDAY JANUARY 15, 2021**

8:00AM Richard John Ciuti

9:00AM Helen Procaro

**SATURDAY JANUARY 16, 2021**

8:00AM Logan Gribbon

9:00AM Tim McGuire

5:00PM Helen & Vincent Virgintino

**SUNDAY JANUARY 17, 2021**

7:30AM Parishioners of St. Theresa

9:00AM Marie Sansalone

10:30AM Maria Grazia Russo

12:15PM Nino & Cleo Rosi

1:30PM Rosalba Gomez

5:00PM Margaret Raniola

**RESPONDING TO CHRIST'S MESSAGE**

One of the many ways we can participate during Mass is the Responsorial Psalm which comes between the readings. Early Christians followed the practices of the Jewish Synagogue and responded to a scripture reading by singing a psalm or bible canticle. That is what we do today. We respond to God's Word with God's Word – a psalm or biblical canticle. As children learn first the words and then the meaning, Christians too learn the Word of the Lord by hearing and singing and reciting. The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls prayer "a reciprocal call between God and family," exactly what is done during the Responsorial Psalm.

The meaning we derive from the psalm comes by our pondering and reflecting on the message we have received. The more familiar refrains are ones we do in a rote method – reflexively. And that, like falling into a slightly meditative state during a rosary, is fine occasionally. But to get the most from the Responsorial Psalm, it is best to concentrate on the words.

The psalms for daily or Sunday Mass are most familiar including Ps. 25, "To you O Lord I lift my soul," Ps. 22 "My God my God why have you abandoned me" and Ps. 103 "The Lord is kind and merciful." Each of these is generally used during a particular part of the Liturgical calendar and matches or supports the tone of the other readings. While we know them well it is important, like during other familiar parts of Mass to "tune in" fully. This was the most difficult thing for some during the past year as Mass consisted of sitting in our homes and not being in the community. Known phrases and comfortable seating often make it difficult to focus. But these words beg to be heard. The rich but simple messages of the Psalms cover many emotions, anger, frustration and sadness, but a true reading of the Psalms will also illustrate the writer's steadfast hope and belief that God will never fail us; that no matter what the obstacle, God will be our savior and our lives are worthy in His eyes and we are all His children. It is that support that we must reach for during troubling times. Listen closer next time to the Responsorial Psalm or better yet – read them on your own, and you will be refreshed and content in the love of the Lord.

(From Franciscan Mission Associates)



**KIDS HEAVENLY HUMOR**

**What does one volcano say to the other?**

I lava you!

**What's the difference between a guitar and a fish?**

You can tune a guitar but you can't tunafish.

**Why can't you give Elsa a balloon?**

She'll Let It Go.



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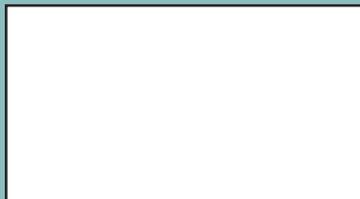
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