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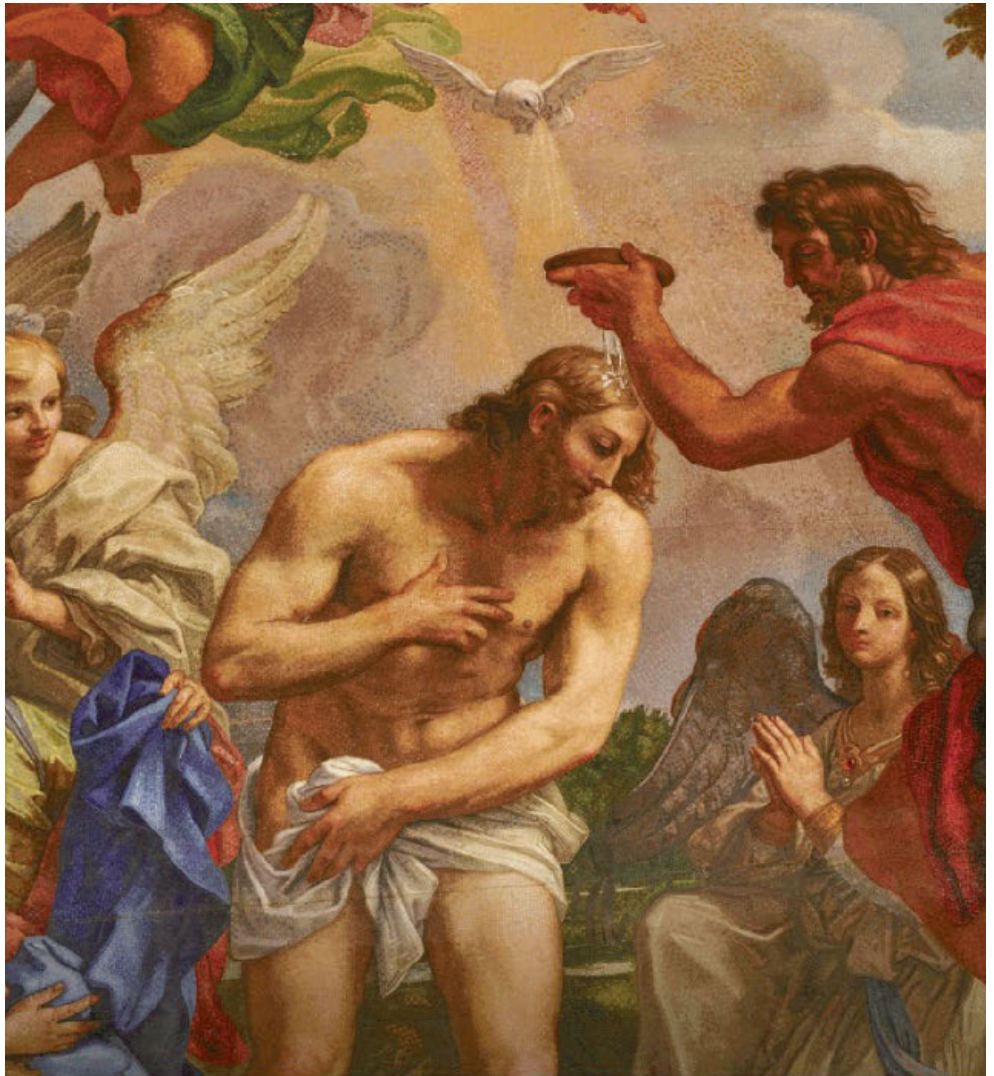
## MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday	10:00 am
Sunday ( <i>Spanish</i> )	12:00 pm
First Sunday ( <i>Bilingual</i> )	10:00 am
Tues. & Fri.	5:30 pm
Wed. & Thurs.	8:00 am
Saturday (Sunday Vigil)	5:00 pm
Sunday Vigil @ Coalgate	5:00 pm

## PARISH STAFF

Very Rev. Jovita C Okonkwo,  
*Pastor & Dean, Southern Vicariate*  
Rev. Khiet Nguyen,  
*In Residence @ Coalgate*  
Debbie Osborne,  
*Secretary & Office Manager*  
John Wolf,  
*Director of Communications*  
Pam Pulchny,  
*Director of Religious Education*  
Bill Avanzini,  
*Administrator, Coalgate Mission*

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stjohmcalester@yahoo.com  
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## THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YR C JANUARY 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

*After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove.—Lk 3:21-22a*

## WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

- New Parishioners:** Welcome! We are glad to have you. Please register in the vestibule, parish website, or at the parish office.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Offered on Saturdays 4:00 p.m. to 4:55 p.m.; Sundays 9:30 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. or by appointment.
- Sacrament of Anointing:** Offered during *Mass for the Sick* on 1st Tuesdays of the month. Call the office/rectory for sick visits.

## CHURCH CONTRIBUTION

JANUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2022

	Jan. 2, 2022	Total M-T-D
Main	\$3,086	\$3,086
Assistance	\$950	\$950
Bldg/Main	\$35	\$35
Youth	\$20	\$20

\*N/B Our budgeted operating cost for January 2022 is \$18,000. Your generosity has brought in \$3,086. We'll need an extra \$14,914 to fully fund the parish this month. Thank you to all those giving larger donations. May God reward you tenfold!

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Jan. 13—Fred Mullins; Jan. 14—Emily Jackson, Grant Priddy; Jan. 15—Ann Lalli, Faye Ervin, Kyle Schulz

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Jan. 14—Doug & Debbie Basinger

### PRAY FOR THE SICK

Ada Nell Ward, Alan Holloway, Amy Nohelty, Bette Santine, Bob Armstrong, Candace Sanner, David Griffin, Don Laws, Donna Espinosa, Donnie Sherman, Elizabeth Thompson, Elizabeth Tweedel, Frank Gonzales, Gary Jackson, Guy Hudson, Hal Dalton, Herman Seiter, Ian Leybas, Irma Gonzalez, James Gray, Jamie Keef, Jason Wright, Jesse & Johnny Stiles, Jim Kelley, Jim Lauerman, Jonathan Reed, Juanita Zimmer, Kimberly Thomas, Mark Grosfield, Mary Zoller, Mr. Homer Sr., Norma Powers, Paul Mills, Paul Zoller, Ruth Lauerman, Sawyer Davis, Sue McMullin, Sue Tillman, Tad Bowden, Tammy Gardner, Teddy & Janet Bernasky, Tim Mills, Tony Helmert, Zearley Families, Andrew Zdeb, SSG Ben Ales, Edward Zdeb, PVT Erick Palacios, SGT Greg Thompson, AMN James Lisle, PFC John W. Pelzel, PVT J P Dunlay, AMN Michael Kaskie, SGT Pierre Tertaje, SSG Timothy Moore; those who suffer from Coronavirus.

(To add or remove a name on this list, please email [stjohnmcalester@yahoo.com](mailto:stjohnmcalester@yahoo.com) or call 918-423-0810).

## REFLECTION

Fr. Chukwudi Jo Okonkwo



While several Americans brought down their Christmas trees the day after Christmas, intentional Catholics know that Christmas season only began on Christmas day and concludes today with the feast of the **Baptism of the Lord**. Christmas, like Easter, is celebrated with an octave—eight consecutive days that liturgically form a single day. The octave of Christmas ended on January 1, the **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**. Last Sunday marked the **Epiphany of the Lord** and the visit of the Magi. **Today, Christmas season comes to an end and we enter the Ordinary Time of the Year.**

To understand the import of today's feast, we must situate it within the incarnation of God, which is Christmas. Some key terms need explanation, namely, "*natura*" and "*essentia*," in order to appreciate the meaning of Christmas. Nature is the form in which a being manifests itself. For example, God is the being whose nature is "to be;" that means: He manifests himself as "esse" or existence. In a similar sense, we manifest ourselves as human, just as the grass manifests itself as vegetable. Distinct differences exist in the natures of God, humans, and vegetables. We do have something in common with grass, that is, we are creatures. God is uncreated: He always is and has always been. (In Exodus 3, the passage about the Burning Bush, He revealed His name to Moses as—"He who is;" the Jews translate that as "Yahweh"). However, we are made in God's image. Now, we need not be over-excited about that, just as a grass effigy shouldn't jump in excitement just because it is fashioned in the likeness of a human being. **Christmas for grasses would mean that one of us took the nature of grass, just as for us it means that God took our nature.**

I don't know what the most despicable thing about grasses is – maybe, allergies. But I know what it is for human beings: something we call SIN. **Today's feast is about God's identification with the most despicable thing about us: sin.** That was why John the Baptist, who perhaps understood best whom Jesus was, protested that he was not worthy to perform this ritual for one who not only didn't need it, but rather should do it for others. **Jesus' insistence to be baptized, thus, becomes the climax of the incarnation, for He desired to become one with all Israel (God's people), you and me, in our sin condition.** That was a moment of great divide. Heaven and earth become married; the old gives way to the new. The Spirit of God which "hovered" over the deep in the original creation (Gen 1:2) would now descend like a dove upon Him, signaling a new creation.

This new beginning was sometime in the past signaled to Noah after the dove returned to him bearing an olive branch to indicate that **salvation**, symbolized by *dry land*, was at hand (Gen 8:11). The flood, in Noah's time, which destroyed the earth prefigured the baptismal water that destroys sin. **Christ's descent into the Baptismal water was meant, on the one hand, to sanctify it in order to quell completely its destructive power for God's people, and, on the other hand, to turn it into an utterly destructive force for sin, for the enemies of God and His people, as He did at the Red Sea.** The Holy Spirit descending as a dove on Jesus, just as He brought an olive branch to Noah, signals the arrival of God's favor, a form of dry land, and an assurance of salvation.

Baptism is full of rich symbols. The Baptismal font at the Cathedral is shaped like a womb from which new babies are delivered. At St Bernard, you'll get the sense of going into the grave, as you approach the Baptismal font—symbolizing dying and rising with Christ. St. Hilary of Poitiers says that **"everything that happened to Christ during His baptism happens to us. After the bath of water, the Holy Spirit swoops down on us from high heaven, and we become adopted by the Father's voice, calling us to be His sons and daughters."** By baptism we overcome Adam's sinful death through God's overpowering love.



## MASS INTENTIONS:

- Sunday, Jan. 9. The Baptism of the Lord  
10:00 am † Rev. Deacon Jarrel J. Nohavitz, KC\*HS
- Monday, Jan. 10. Weekday  
Private Mass
- Tuesday, Jan. 11. Weekday  
5:30 pm † Dame Sarah C. Ray, DGCHS
- Wednesday, Jan. 12. Weekday  
8:00 am † Dame Georgia B. Reed, DHS
- Thursday, Jan. 13. Weekday; Saint Hilary, Bishop, Doctor of the Church  
8:00 am † Dame Jessica Sanchez Romeo, DCHS
- Friday, Jan. 14. Weekday  
5:30 pm † Dame Darlene Robertson, DHS
- Saturday, Jan. 15. Vigil of the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time  
5:00 pm † Bill Wright // Sandy Gaylor

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS:

### SAT. JANUARY 15, 2022 5 PM MASS

Lector: Tony & Margaret Fields; EMHC (Body) — Regina Edwards

Servers: TBA Music: TBA

Ushers: Volunteers

### SUN. JANUARY 16, 2022 10 AM MASS

Lector: Kali Pulchny, Mary Herandy; EMHC (Body) — Al Ross

Servers: TBA Music: TBA

Ushers: Volunteers

## NOTICES:

### END OF CHRISTMAS/BEGINNING OF ORDINARY TIME SEASON

The Feast of the Lord's Baptism concludes the Christmas season. Tomorrow we begin the first cycle of the Ordinary Time season that will stretch till Ash Wednesday, March 2nd. The liturgical vestments change to green, signaling the fruitfulness of our baptism and the good works that accompany it.

### LAUNCH OF FORMED.ORG FOR OUR PARISH AND COALGATE

As we enter the year 2022, the parish brings you a tool to help you grow in your faith and become true disciples of Jesus. We will be launching "Formed.org"— an online platform that delivers Catholic content, children's programming, audio talks, e-books and more. All you need is an online device and you can sign in and receive thousands of content. The Diocesan Rural Outreach program helped pay for this program. We'll be sharing it with our sister church in Coalgate. The launch date will be January 29/30. Meanwhile, our Wednesday Faith Enrichment meetings continue this Wednesday at 7:00pm. The topic is: "*Sanctoral Cycle-Liturgical Year versus Calendar Year.*"

### ALCUIN CATECHIST FORMATION OPPORTUNITY

The Alcuin Institute will be offering its formation for catechists from the Southern Vicariate on Friday Jan. 14th, from 1-7pm at the parish hall. The theme for the year is "Revelation"— touching on the topics of: 'truth,' 'faith & reason,' 'scripture & tradition,' and 'modern science.' All our RE teachers and parish executives (parish & finance council members) are required to attend.

## FRIDAY HOLY HOUR ADORATION

Join us for Mass and Eucharistic adoration at 5:30 p.m. Respond to the love of Christ by spending an hour every week in His Living Presence.

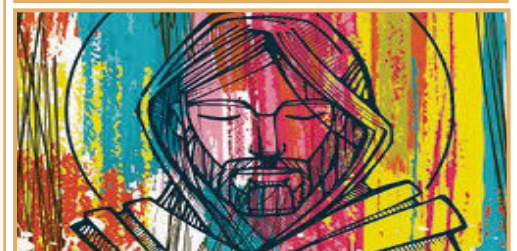


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## ST. JUDE'S CENTER

The requested items for the St. Jude's Helping Center this week are pancake mix, syrup, peanut butter, and other breakfast items. The center is accepting winter items such as coats, blankets, socks, and gloves. You may drop them off at the center or bring them to Church. Also contact Amelia London at 918-424-8833 to volunteer.

The Knights of Columbus will meet this week Tuesday and the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Meal will be at 6:30 pm followed by a 7:30 pm meeting.



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The Ladies Guild will meet this week Monday and the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings are now 5:00 pm.

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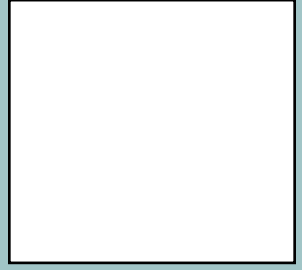
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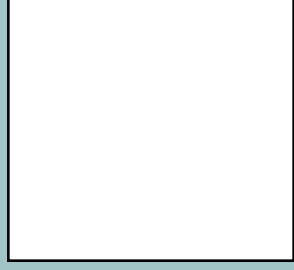


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