

# St. Gerard Majella Church



## A Redemptorist Family

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StGerardMajellaChurch.org



### 3rd Sunday of Advent December 13, 2020

## Advent: A Time of Waiting, Expecting, Rejoicing!

**Joy** is a choice made by opening our hearts and trusting in God's light of love. I am a child of God, reared by loving Catholic parents alongside 5 other siblings. We were taught to love God, one another, and respect those we meet every day. This Catholic foundation has given me the tools to choose **Joy** throughout my life, both in my blessings and challenges.

My **Joy** has come from having a wonderful, loving and caring man to call my husband, raise our children and hold each other through our sacrament of Holy Matrimony. My faith and foundation has given me the strength to choose **Joy** by opening my heart and trusting in God's plan for my life.

Grandchildren are a physical presence in God's light. I have been blessed with loving grandchildren and great grandchildren. My **joy** is hard to describe in words, but it is surely there when I am able to play, bake, and have fun with my grandchildren and great grandchildren. During these times, my soul sings the joy in my heart.

My days are spent in community with our parish at St. Gerard. Choosing to say "yes" and trust in the Lord has led me to bringing Holy Communion to our home bound, saying the rosary with parishioners, praying for other's families and loved ones, and encouraging others to join us in the very same community to experience God's gift of **Joy**.

As a daughter, sibling, wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother and parishioner of St. Gerard, I have been blessed with many **Joy**s. As children of God, we must learn to love, share, and respect all people we meet with concern and compassion.

During this 2020 year of Advent, I will pray for all to choose **Joy**. May we keep in our hearts God's words and his call to each of us.

May the God of hope fill you with all **Joy** and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. - Romans 15:13.

Reflected by **Mary Ann**





# Daily Advent Reflections with Fr. Tat: JOY

## Day 16: Monday 12/14: God's Teaching



*"Show us, LORD, your love."  
Teach me your ways, O Lord.*

Who is your favorite teacher? Why do you choose that teacher as your favorite? I remember my philosophy professor who was very strict but very caring. Her name was Dr. O'Connor. She was an ex-sister of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word. I liked her because she wanted her students to learn and to succeed in life.

Could you imagine Jesus were your teacher in one of your classes? He would teach you with wisdom, humor, and truth. He would not remain as a teacher but also a protector and redeemer. He shows you his way, love and eternal life. He opens your mind, heart and soul.

Let's be serious and gracious as we enter into Jesus' ways of love. Learn from him and trust him. Live generously towards others and be humble before God to learn. If we can do that, our hearts will be filled with joy and fulfillment.

**Prayer: Teach me your ways, O Lord.**  
**Reflection question: Are you a lifetime learner?**

## Day 17: Tuesday 12/15: God's Invitation

'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.'

Requests and responsibilities are the two heavy weights on our lives. As a pastor of a small parish and school, my responsibilities are to celebrate Sacraments, helping the poor families, supporting the school and administration. When people ask for anything I have to carefully discern and debate to see if I can do it or not. I ask people for help as well.

Today, God might ask us directly to go out and work in the vineyard. What do you think? Can you do it? I feel we should do it because what a privilege to do God's Will and to cooperate with God's invitation. The matter is "Am I totally confident in God's plan?"

If we listen, pray and discern regularly we could hear God's invitation more easily and do his will more quickly. God loves and knows us more than we love and know ourselves. And God's plan is much bigger than our plan. Choose God as your boss and friend, you will be joyful and blessed.

**Prayer: Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will.**  
**Reflection question: Do you pray enough everyday?**

## Day 18: Wednesday 12/16: Go and Tell

*And Jesus said to them in reply,  
"Go and tell John what you have seen and heard:  
the blind regain their sight,  
the lame walk,  
lepers are cleansed,  
the deaf hear, the dead are raised,  
the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.  
And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."*

I am struck by Jesus' statement above. As a Redemptorist priest, I am called to preach every day the Word of God. Go and tell the message could be a burden and privilege. It's a burden because I need to be prepared to say correctly and beautifully. It's a privilege because not many people could do it. Many people are hungry to hear the living word of God. Who am I to preach the Word?

If I truly believe in what I see and preach on it, I become even more blessed and privileged. "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard." Wow. How many of us have that kind of privilege of experiencing or encountering the goodness of God? If you do, please go and tell the good news to others.

The real joy is not meant for one individual to keep and enjoy. It is meant for others as well. The real joy is contagious and life-giving.

**Prayer: Here I am, Lord, send me.**  
**Reflection question: What one miracle in your life do you want to tell others?**



## Day 19: Thursday 12/17: Go and Tell the Good News: Jesus

*Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.*

We usually say, "There is no news that is a good news". We live in a world that is so divided and competitive. We try to draw more differences than similarities among ourselves. We put down one another in order to feel better, higher, stronger and smarter. We are willing to sacrifice everything in order to become a winner. The good news is only the good news for the winners, not for the losers. All or nothing.

How can I see the good news in order to go and tell? The good news is hidden in the heart of the prayerful, grateful, contemplative person. If we only seek for noises and approvals from others we hardly can recognize God's presence in our lives. "God is with us always." We need to be calm in order to listen well.

In a few days, we will celebrate the birth of Jesus through Mary. Right now Jesus is hidden in the womb of Mary who is very young, simple and normal. God invites us to look closely, humbly and patiently in our daily normal days in order to see little Jesus, the "Good News" in our lives.

**Prayer: Lord, open my eyes to see.**  
**Reflection question: How often do you use "beautiful words" to communicate with your loved ones?**



**Day 20: Friday 12/18: Sweet Jesus: Emmanuel**

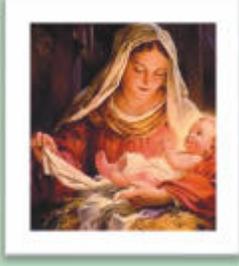
*Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."*

Where do I find Jesus? - Find a woman. A lot of times, our society overlooked the presence and the importance of women, especially the significance of mothers. In the beginning, God created man and woman in the image of God beautifully and uniquely. God gives women another special gift which is to bear another human being inside them. Because them, we all are here.

Jesus is the source of our joy. What is better than "God is with us"? If God is with us then we have no fears. If we realize that God is with us (plural), we all are safe and free from all anxieties. Sometimes we can't grasp and understand the presence of Jesus not in us only but also in everyone. God loves everyone no matter who they are. We need to love others as God has loved us.

**Prayer: Teach me how to love others.**

**Reflection question: Are you ready for God to dwell in you (again)?**



**Day 21: Saturday 12/19: John the Great**



*Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord."*

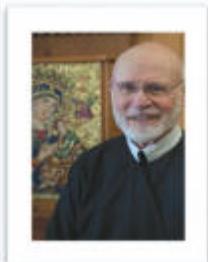
I purposely ask you to read the story about John. It's a bit long but good news. His coming and existence will be a great news to many people. His presence will bring joy and gladness to his family and the children of Israel. His purpose is "to prepare a people fit for the Lord". And he did it.

We have heard and met so many "great" heroes in our lives. Our saints are great people. Some leaders in our country are great heroes. They dedicate their lives for the service of all.

We are living in the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020. There are so many doctors and nurses, first responders in nursing homes and on the street, civil leaders as well as spiritual leaders, have been working tirelessly to protect the citizens. These people are our great heroes. They need our respect and prayer. They deserve our support and love.

**Prayer: O Lord, make me an instrument of your peace and love. Reflection question: Are you doing what God's will?**

**CHURCH & SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS:**



**Next weekend (Dec. 18-20), Fr. Tat will preach Advent retreat at his home parish, St. Agnes Le Thi Thanh Church, in Marrero, LA. Fr. Tim Watson, C.Ss.R. will celebrate all weekend Masses for us. Thank you Fr. Tim.**

**Parishioners of St. Gerard WE NEED YOUR HELP**

**We are collecting Christmas gifts for St. Gerard's beautiful shining children (ages 2-15). Please call the church office at 225.355.2553 for donation drop offs or with any questions.**

**Weekly Collection Totals:**

Weekly Collection Date:	11/29	12/9
Regular Collection:	\$ 2195.00	\$ 1192.00
Sacramental Offerings:	\$ 149.00	\$ 294.00
Special Collection	-----	\$ 285.00
Maintenance Collection	-----	\$ 974.00
<b>Total Collected:</b>	<b>\$ 2344.00</b>	<b>\$ 2445.00</b>

**Mass & Ministries**

<b>Monday, 12/14</b>	<b>Saint John of the Cross, Priest &amp; Doctor of the Church</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Peace and unity
<b>Tuesday, 12/15</b>	<b>Advent Weekday</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Novena of our Mother of Perpetual Help</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Hayden & Thomas McDowell
<b>Wednesday, 12/16</b>	<b>Advent Weekday</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Ronnie Martin
<b>Thursday, 12/17</b>	<b>Late Advent Weekday</b>
<b>8:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Eucharistic Adoration</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Bumms, Willetts, Hardesty & Wrights Families
<b>5:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Third Advent Mini Retreat: Joy (Seelos Hall)</b>
<b>Friday, 12/18</b>	<b>Late Advent Weekday</b>
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	All Souls
<b>11:00 a.m. - 2 p.m.</b>	<b>Community Feeding Program (in Parish Hall)</b>
<b>Saturday, 12/19</b>	<b>Late Advent Weekday</b>
<b>4:00 p.m.</b>	Mr. & Mrs. Collette
<b>Sunday, 12/20</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>
<b>8:00 a.m.</b>	All People of St. Gerard's
<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	Adams, Barbier & Delapasse Families, Reginald Parker, Wallace, Lillian, Linda, & Agnes Lambert, John Duval



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