



**ST. GERARD MAJELLA
CHURCH INVITES YOU TO
CELEBRATE
CHRISTMAS
MASS WITH US**

**DECEMBER 24TH
(CHRISTMAS EVE) AT 4PM & 6PM**

**DECEMBER 25TH
(CHRISTMAS DAY) AT 10AM**



Wishing you, your family & friends a
HAPPY, HOLY & HEALTHY
Christmas!
Redemptorists of Baton Rouge



St. Gerard Majella Church

A Redemptorist Family



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4th Sunday of Advent December 20, 2020

Peace Be With You

The fourth and final week of Advent is upon us as we all wait for the joyful hope at the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day. The 4th candle, purple in color, symbolizing peace called the angels candle is lit representing the 'annunciation'. The two verses in Luke's (1:26-36) Gospel that gives me that sense of calmness and peace that I can relate to personally are: (Luke 1:28) Hail, full of Grace the Lord is with you, and Luke (1:30) Do not be afraid, you have found favor with God. I have family members that have battled drug affliction. This affliction, affects every aspect of their lives, spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically.

I try to speak with them, and give them good, godly advice, but they only turn away from me. I too have much experience and knowledge in their afflictions, but I do know it must be a personal decision to turn away from evil to do good. Throughout the day, each day, whether it be in my prayer life or the hustle and bustle of life, I speak words of peace and blessings in my life, like the angel spoke to Mary, Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with you and on. Do not be afraid, you have found favor with God.

These blessings, along with others, I speak into my life to develop, grow, and strive to have the best possible personal relationship with Jesus and Mary. Like everyone, I want Jesus to be pleased with me as God was pleased with him. On days where it seems it is not possible, there is always a tiny voice deep within my inner being saying everything will be okay, a peace that surpasses all knowledge and understanding, for nothing is impossible with God.

Reflected by **Kenny**



Fr. Kevin: The Joy of The Christmas Season

"What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:4-5)

Our Spanish-speaking neighbors have a beautiful way of sharing the happy news of the birth of a child. They use the phrase "dar a luz,"

which literally means, "to bring to light." Thus, when the Christmas gospel according to Luke is proclaimed in Spanish, the people hear how the time came for Mary to "bring to light" her firstborn son (Luke 2:6-7). This delightful play on words breaks open for us the joy of the moment, on the night of our Redeemer's birth, when Mary brings the Word of God to light amid a world shrouded in darkness.

As we imagine the moment of Jesus's birth, the scene in our mind is spotlighted by Christ's ultimate triumph over sin and death through his Resurrection. We know how the story of this infant's life will unfold in a way that Mary, Joseph, and the weary shepherds could not have known as they stood witness to those tender, vulnerable first breaths. St. Alphonsus Liguori captures the extraordinary contrast of the scene in his Christmas Novena when he says to the infant Jesus:

"You inflame the seraphim with holy fire, yet look, you tremble from the cold in this stable! You give the sun, the stars, and the planets their paths of movement, yet now you cannot move at all without being carried in someone's arms!"

Long before he handed himself over to death on a cross, our Redeemer handed himself over into the arms of a humble family, one that knew the struggles of survival against the forces and powers of this world. The Word of God depended on the love and sacrifice of a family to become the "God-among-us" proclaiming the coming Reign of God through teaching and healing. On the moment Mary brought to light this Son of God, however, his destiny and mission remained swaddled in uncertainty and fragility.

And yet, how exquisite the joy! The choirs of angels crying out "Glory to God in the highest!" The shepherds rushing through the night much like Peter and John would run on another blessed dawn. On that morning – as on our every morning – the real struggles of sin, injustice, and division still held their ground in the everyday lives of the people. And yet – that morning, the joy was real because God had again breathed the Spirit over the chaos of our world, proclaiming, "let there be light!"

(continue Fr. Kevin's Joy next page)



(Cont. from Page 2 :
Fr. Kevin's Joy)



The new creation brought to light that morning moves inevitably toward that day when every tear will be wiped from our eyes "and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away" (Rev 21:4 NABRE).

Dear friends, this Christmas is unlike any other that we can remember. For nine months, we've lived under the shadow of a pandemic that calls on us to show our love to families and neighbors by doing the opposite of what our instinct demands: keeping our distance and staying close to home. Some of us feel deep sadness, or perhaps even frustration, because we anchor our year to this season and fear we are losing precious time with family and friends. But "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

We can still embrace the joy of the Christmas season because even amid the confusion and uncertainty of the moment, The Word Made Flesh still speaks and creates from the love that unites heaven and earth, the love that binds us to our

loved ones across the miles.

We can't hug grandchildren through a smartphone, but we can still hear their voice. We can lament what we can't have, or we can embrace the tender hope of that first Christmas morning, singing "Glory to God!" even as our minds – like those of Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds – perhaps hold more questions than answers. Christmas joy does not ignore the struggles and trials of our day; it denies them the power to extinguish the light of redemption, to steal from us our joy.

Our Blessed Mother brought our Savior to light, and at our baptism we received this Light along with our call to keep it burning brightly. On behalf of my brother Redemptorists, I thank you for being the Light of Christ to us, to the St. Gerard Redemptorist Family, and to our neighbors along Plank Road. The pandemic has proven powerless to stop the mission of our parish, and every week sees new opportunities to share our faith, care for our neighbor, and educate our children at Redemptorist St. Gerard Elementary School. The darkness has not overcome the light, and it never will. Keep your light shining!

From our Redemptorist Family to yours: Merry Christmas!

Fr. Kevin Zubel, C.Ss.R.
Rector, Redemptorists of Bt
Chaplain, Hispanic Apostolate
Diocese of Bt

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Weekly Collection Totals:

Regular Collection:	\$ 2839.00
Retirement Fund	\$ 574.00
Maintenance Collection	\$ 20.00
Total Collected:	\$ 3,433.00

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Dear Parishioners, Alumni and Friends,



We are blessed by God to be together again to celebrate Christmas, Jesus Christ. The Word Made Flesh is among us. God comes to us to be with us and to redeem us.

I am personally so blessed this year because numerous good things have been happening here at St. Gerard's. The RSG school is supported by many good hearted and generous people. The parish is flourishing with spiritual, pastoral and sacramental activities and events. Knights of Columbus #17544 was established. AC in Seelos Hall, restroom, sound, lights in the church and Majella House are upgraded and improved quite a bit. Many alumni, friends and parishioners are excited to come back to St. Gerard's.

For over a year, I have met and worked with so many talented and generous people who dedicate their time and life for the goodness of the people. Thank you for your generosity and trust.

On behalf of the Redemptorist Missionaries and RSG staff and students, I wish you and your family a very **blessed Christmas** and a **happy New Year** filled with joy, peace and love of God and others.

Please continue to keep us in your prayer as well as we do for you. May God, through the intercessions of Our Mother of Perpetual Help and St. Gerard, bless you with good health, happiness and holiness.

Best wishes to you and your families!

Fr. Tat Hoang, C.Ss.R.
Pastor

Mass & Ministries

Monday, 12/21	Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m.	Noel Dunbar Tweedle, Mr & Mrs. Warren Norton
Tuesday, 12/22	Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m.	Novena of our Mother of Perpetual Help
9:00 a.m.	Mildred & Ross Poret
Wednesday, 12/23	Advent Weekday
9:00 a.m.	Bums, Willetts, Hardesty & Wrights Families
Thursday, 12/24	CHRISTMAS EVE
4:00 p.m.	Mildred & Ross Poret
6:00 p.m.	All People of St. Gerard's
Friday, 12/25	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
10:00 a.m.	Nelson, Camilla, Anne, Mary Morris & Family, Carlo & Bonnie Bellelo, David Boudreaux
Saturday, 12/26	Saint Stephen, The First Martyr
4:00 p.m.	Mr. & Mrs. Collette, Paige Okpalobi, Patti Cinquemano Smith, David Boudreaux, Carlos & Bonnie Bellelo, Carl & Betty Bellelo, Steve Steedly
Sunday, 12/27	THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH
8:00 a.m.	Mildred & Ross Poret, William Clancy Jr., All people St. Gerard's
10:00 a.m.	Adams, Barbier & Delapasse Families, Reginald Parker, John Duval.

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