

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

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WELCOME!

Thank you for celebrating with us today. We invite you to come and worship with us again. If you would like to be a member of our faith community, please take a moment to register. We would love to have you as our spiritual companion.

MASS SCHEDULE

12/31, New Year's Eve - SATURDAY

5:00 pm Vigil Mass (Vietnamese)

TUESDAY - FRIDAY

6:00 pm (Vietnamese)

**12/25, Christmas & 1/1 New Year's Day
SUNDAY**

8:30 am Mass (English)

10:30 am Mass (Vietnamese)

Livestream (Facebook and Youtube)

12:30 pm (Vietnamese for Youth)

ANOINTING OF THE SICK MASS

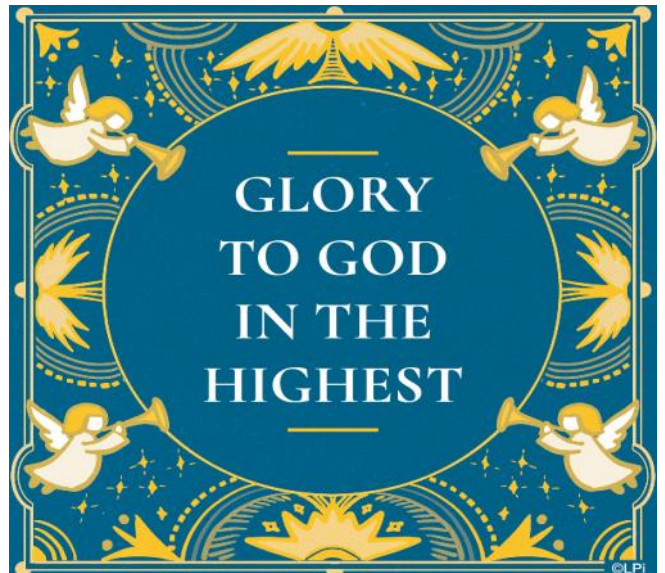
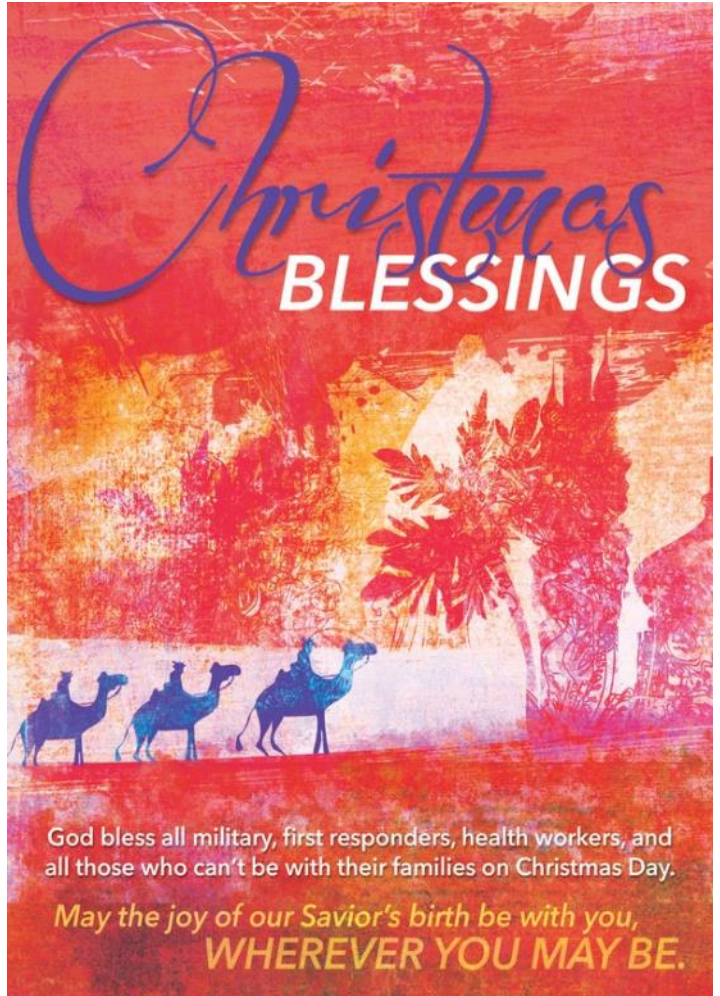
1st Friday of the Month - 5:30 pm Adoration
6:00 pm Mass

CONFESSIONS

Saturday 4:30 pm - 4:50 pm
Sunday 8:00 am - 8:20 am
Tuesday - Friday 5:30 pm - 5:50 pm

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP (DECEMBER 17TH – 18TH)

Donation	\$5,997.00
Donation Online	\$2,195.00
Maintenance Fund	\$5.00
Debt Reduction	\$0
Total Donation	\$8,197.00



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

PARISH STAFF

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PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday: Closed
 Tuesday & Friday: Please Call for Appointment
 Wednesday: 9:30am - 3:00pm
 Thursday: 9:30am - 3:00pm
 Please leave a message if no one answers and your call will be returned.



Christmas Day Homily

By Father Peter Doan

One of the keywords of St John's writings is light. As we just heard in the Gospel of John today: "In Him (Jesus) was life and the life was the light of men." **The light Jesus brings is the light which puts chaos to flight.** In the creation story, God moved upon the dark, formless chaos which was before the world began and said: "let there be light" (Gen 1:3). From that first light, vegetation began to spring up from the ground, waters began to flow forth, animals of all types appeared on the surface of the planet, and then human beings emerged, bearing the image of the Creator, relying on the light of the sun as the source of their life.

It can be argued that light is the most important force in all of creation. Without it, we can not see or be seen. We cannot grow. We cannot live. Light reveals the truth about reality. Light warms our bodies. Light shows us the way that we are supposed to God. One of the oldest fears in the world is the fear of the dark. There is a story of a child who was to sleep in a strange house. His hostess, thinking to be kind, offered to leave the light on when he went to bed. Politely he declined the offer. "I thought", said his hostess, "that you might be afraid of the dark." "Oh, no", said the boy, "you see, it is God's dark." With Jesus, the night that surrounds us is as light as the day.

And the Gospel today declare to us that God *is* light. And the light is Life. Therefore, anyone who has life, has God. And anyone that has God, has the light. This is why Jesus declared to humanity, "*You are the Light of the world*" (Mt 5:14).

He taught us that we had the power to bring life, to be life, and to shine gloriously. But from the earliest pages of Scripture, we also learn that while we humans are fundamentally partakers in the Light of God, we often stumble into deep darkness. We lose our way. We act outside of our nature. We begin to bring destruction, injustice, and suffering to the world that we live in. Our light is buried beneath layers of deceit and greed. And as the light dims, we grow colder, more disoriented. Our life is drained of us. We move further from our truest identity as children of the light, and life in a state of confusion about who we are and what this world is all about.

At His birth, there was no midwife, no crib, and no warm blankets. No, instead, God chose to enter the world in the same way that the *most* oppressed people born among the dust and dirt, among common farm animals, wrapped in left over scraps of cloths. In this image, we realize that God is not like the tyrannical kings that ruled the world, seeking power and glory for himself, but instead, put himself in solidarity with those who have been cast down, thrown out, and who are seen as burdens and blights to the rest of society.

In this image, we also find the simple yet radical message of how we can find personal redemption: Through humbling ourselves, disconnecting from material possessions, pursuits of worldly power, and through giving generously, loving sincerely, and finding joy and gratitude in every moment of every day.

The light which Jesus brings is a revealing light. It is their condemnation that people loved the darkness rather than light; and they did so because their deeds were evil; and they hated the light lest their deeds should be exposed.

Brothers and sisters, we never see ourselves until we see ourselves through the eyes of Jesus. We never see what our lives are like until we see them in the light of Jesus. Jesus often drives us to God by revealing us to ourselves.

And lastly, **the light which Jesus brings is a guiding light.** If people do not possess that light, they walk in darkness and do not know where they are going. When they receive that light and believe in it, they walk no more in darkness.

Isn't it true that in our own lives, when someone is filled with light and life, all of us are drawn to them? The light is contagious. No matter how big or small, no matter how seemingly important a person is who is filled with light, we gravitate to them because they seem to have something that we are deeply longing for: satisfaction and joy.

Christmas calls us to remember to our redemption and blessing will never come from the systems of power, from the White House, or from anyone else. It comes in the most unlikely places, the places where we have been conditioned to believe that God would never be. In the poor, the weak, the newly born, in the dark, cold, wet feeding trough of farm animals. In the most unlikely places, if we open our eyes and our hearts, we can find God, peace, and unexpected blessing.

As we move in to the celebration of Christmas, may we open the eyes of our hearts and open our hands to receive whatever God may have for us and give to all those who need it as the hands and feet of God. May we remember that God is *with us*, forever and always, and will never leave us or allow darkness to overtake us. May we remember that the light has dawned, that darkness is being expelled, and that a day of hope and redemption is at hand.

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 25, 2022

Sunday: *Vigil:* Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25 *Night:* Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14 *Dawn:* Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20 *Day:* Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Monday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22

Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8/Mt 2:13-18

Thursday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35

Friday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18

Next Sunday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

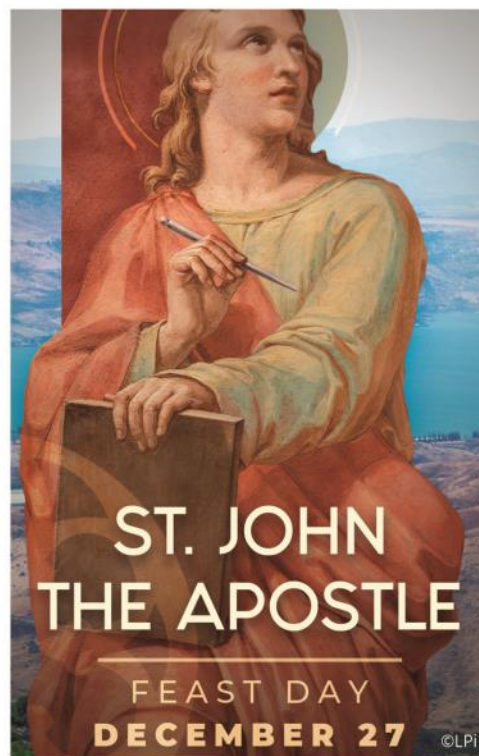
OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 25, 2022

Sunday: The Nativity of the Lord
Monday: St. Stephen, First Martyr
Tuesday: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
Wednesday: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
Thursday: St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr
Friday: Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Saturday: St. Sylvester I, Pope; New Year's Eve
Next Sunday: Mary, The Holy Mother of God, National Migration Week, New Year's Day, World Day of Peace

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

The true meaning of Christmas is not found in the twinkling lights, the beautifully adorned trees, or the exchanged gifts. It is revealed when we find God along the way of our lives, especially when we feel displaced, desperate, and alone. Fleeing from their home, Joseph and Mary cautiously made their way through the uncertain, complex, and dark paths to a longed-for place of safety and welcome. Not sure where to lay their heads, they created makeshift preparations for the birth of their child, the Son of God. God, who always was, is, and will be, without beginning or end is the one constant in life who sees us through difficult and scary times. Jesus is the light, which enlightens everyone, and comes into the world to show us the truth. It is joyful good news that calms our fears and allows us to go forth into the nighttime of our lives, courageously. This is the meaning of Christmas. We are never lost or alone. God is with us, loving us and leading us where we need to be.



SAINT OF THE WEEK

Saint John was one of the Twelve, part of Jesus' inner circle, among the few that witnessed the Transfiguration, the raising of Jarius' Daughter, and the Agony in the garden at Gethsemane. He and his brother James were the sons of Zebedee and Salome. When Jesus called them, they left their father mending nets and followed him. Jesus called the brothers "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder" — they were passionate in their faith and Jesus had to rebuke them for their fiery zeal on more than one occasion. John, the younger brother, possibly the youngest disciple, was the only one present at Jesus' death.

Saint John the Apostle is traditionally thought to be the author of the fifth Gospel, the three Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. However, there has been some debate among scholars from antiquity to the present. Tradition also gives him the title Beloved Disciple and John's Gospel sees him seated next to Jesus at the last supper and the one to whom Jesus gives the care of Mary at the crucifixion.

Although Church tradition says that John survived the other disciples, living a long life, much of it is steeped in myth and legend. Some say he retired to Ephesus after the crucifixion with Mary and remained there until he died. But in other traditions he is more active. For a time he remained in Jerusalem with the other disciples, then founded churches in Asia Minor. In a legend of his persecution, during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, John is taken to Rome and thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil but preserved from death. He is then exiled to the island of Patmos where the Book of Revelation was written.

Most accounts agree that after his exile and the Assumption of Mary he returned to Ephesus where he died sometime after 98, during the reign of the Emperor Trajan.