

Blessed Sacrament Parish

Liturgy of the Word

3rd Sunday of Advent – December 17th 2023

Entrance antiphon: *please stand*

(All) **Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.**

To commemorate our baptism, and to begin our celebration, let us bless ourselves with the sign of the cross: (All) **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (All) **And with your spirit.**

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare our hearts to hear the Word of God and to receive his body in Holy Communion:

**I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers
and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and
in my words,
in what I have done and in
what I have failed to do,
through my fault,
through my fault,**

**through my most
grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed
Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers
and sisters,
to pray for me to the
Lord our God.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. (All) **Amen.**

Collect prayer

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

(All) **Amen.**

FIRST READING *please be seated.*

From the Book of the prophet Isaiah (61, 1-2, 10-11)

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord: (All) **Thanks be to God**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Luke 1)

R. My soul shall exult in my God.

My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

R. My soul shall exult in my God.

For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

R. My soul shall exult in my God.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

R. My soul shall exult in my God.

SECOND READING

From the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians (5, 16-24)

Brothers and sisters: rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord: (All) **Thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(All) **Alleluia. Alleluia.** *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia.*
(Isaiah 61, 1)

The Lord be with you.

(All) **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (1, 6-8, 19-28)

(All) **Glory to You, O Lord.**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No."

Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

(All) **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

HOMILY

please be seated

PROFESSION OF FAITH:

THE APOSTLES' CREED *please stand*

With the entire Church, let us now proclaim our Faith:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead;	he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.
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PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(Claude) Let us now present our requests to the Lord, for the Church, for the world and for ourselves; let us pray with confidence to the Lord our God:

For the Church, called to lead humanity to the light of Christ, we pray to the Lord:

(All) **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For civil authorities, that they carry out their responsibilities with a deeper appreciation of all peoples and all the stages of life, we pray to the Lord:

(All) **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who are facing the coming year without hope, we pray to the Lord:

(All) **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For each of us, in our vocation to live the Good News, we pray to the Lord:

(All) **Lord, hear our prayer.**

(Claude) God, our Father, to your greatness, there is no limit. In your great goodness, hear our prayers, and sanctify your people, that our humble service may proclaim the presence among us of the Light of the world, your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives for ever and ever.

(All) **Amen.**

COMMUNION RITE

As we prepare ourselves to receive the Body of Christ in Holy Communion, and following the teaching and command given by our Saviour, we dare to say,

(All) **Our Father, who art in Heaven...**

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: *Peace I leave you, my peace I give you*, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. You who live and reign forever and ever (All) **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

(All) **And with your spirit.**

Let us offer each other the sign of Peace.

(The Holy Ciborium is brought to the altar)

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

(All) **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

We shall now receive the Body of Christ, in Holy Communion. Let us recite together the Communion Antiphon:

(All) **Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.** (Isaiah 35, 4)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

remain seated

Hear our prayers, O faithful God, and grant that we may always rejoice in the good news of salvation and humbly serve each other in your Church, as we await the return of your Son in glory. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. (All): **Amen.**

FINAL PRAYER AND BLESSING

please stand

The Lord be with you.

(All) **And with your spirit.**

(Solemn Blessing – Advent)

May the almighty and merciful God, by whose grace you have placed your faith in the First Coming of his Only Begotten Son and yearn for his coming again, sanctify you by the radiance of Christ's Advent and enrich you with his blessing.

(All) **Amen.**

As you run the race of this present life, may he make you firm in faith, joyful in hope and active in charity.

(All) **Amen.**

So that, rejoicing now with devotion at the Redeemer's coming in the flesh, you may be endowed with the rich reward of eternal life when he comes again in majesty.

(All) **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, † *the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*, come down on you and remain with you.

(All) **Amen.**

Let us go, in peace, to love and to serve the Lord.

(All) **Thanks be to God.**