

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph...and the virgin's name was Mary.

LUKE 1:26-27

THE ANNUNCIATION, HENRY OSSAMA TANNER, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## Wondering Why

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**T**he old axiom goes: if you want to make God laugh, tell God your plans. All too often the vision God has for us takes us in quite varying directions. The stories of King David and of Mary echo such realities. David, who wanted to build a temple for the Ark of the Covenant so God would not need to live in a tent, had his plans nixed, only to be reminded that it is *God* who does the building in life and not David. And Mary, who found herself confused over how she might conceive, was asked to simply trust and place her life in the hands of God. Both said “yes.”

There are always times when the unfolding path of God for us may unsettle us: the complexities of immigrants at our doorstep, the changing demographics of our cities, the need to close or merge parishes, the upheavals of our personal lives. We find ourselves asking why without receiving any answers. Each time there is no answer, consider it an invitation to trust in a power greater than ourselves.

Not all rhythms of life are necessarily caused by the hand of God, but then one can never be sure. Who is to say where and how and through whom God works? Christmas comes as a reminder that God's love and presence still unfolds in varied and new ways, always giving birth again and again to the divine made flesh in our lives. The mystery of the Incarnation points to this truth: God is present in all of life. ●

### Reflect

***Have you ever had your plans unsettled in a way that turned out, in the end, to be a gift from God?***

# Catholic Communities

Parish Pastor  
**Rev. William Pifher**  
419-446-9288



## Our Lady of Mercy

409 E. Main St.  
Fayette, OH 43521

### MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday 8:30 a.m.  
Thursday 9:00 a.m.

### PASTORAL COUNCIL

Ron Eisel  
Pat Eisel  
Ray Hollstein  
Mike Burkholder  
Traci Maginn  
Barbara Roby

Clothing items can be donated via our drop off site on the east side of the building. Our store is open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Contact Rhonda Monahan at 517-306-7986 for information.

## OLM PARISH OFFICE

P.O. Box 429  
Fayette, OH 43521

**Phone:** 419-237-2441  
**Hours:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Tuesday and Thursday

### PARISH STAFF

**Secretary:** Sherry Renner  
[OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com)

**Bookkeeper**  
Tami Baker

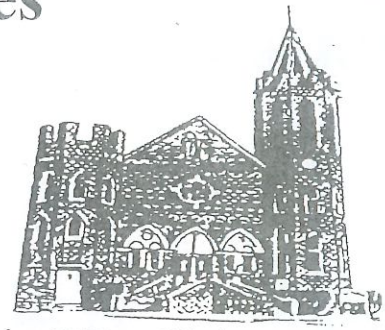
[OLOMBookkeeper@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:OLOMBookkeeper@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com)

**Youth Leader/CRE**

Anita Van Zile

[OLOMCre-youth@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:OLOMCre-youth@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com)

**Website (bulletin online)**  
[stpeterarchbold.com/our-lady-of-mercy](http://stpeterarchbold.com/our-lady-of-mercy)



## St. Peter

614 N. Defiance St.  
Archbold, OH 43502

### MASS SCHEDULE

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of month 8:30 a.m.  
Saturday 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday 10:30 a.m.  
Tuesday 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 9:00 a.m.  
Friday 9:00 a.m.

### Parish Secretary

Kim Garrow 419-446-2150  
[email-stpeter@rtecexpress.net](mailto:email-stpeter@rtecexpress.net)

### Religious Ed

Deb Herring

### Parish Council President

Stephen Bernath

### SACRAMENT INFORMATION

- **Baptism:** Please call Father Pifher at 419-446-9288 to make arrangements for Baptism. A month's notice would be helpful.
- **Reconciliation:** Father will be available for confessions *starting 30 minutes before Mass each week.*
- **New Parishioners:** A warm welcome as you enter our Parish Community! You are asked to register at the parish office or see the pastor as soon as possible. If you are moving from the parish, please inform the office so we may remove your name from our parish records.
- **Anointing of the Sick:** Those who can participate: Anyone who is seriously sick or suffering a grave illness (not a cold, or flu) which is treated or medicated for by a doctor. Also for those of old age which often brings morale or depression factors (body, mind, or spirit). Please make arrangements with Father or call the parish office.
- **Matrimony:** Please contact the Parish Office *six months* ahead of your planned wedding date, for Marriage Preparation and scheduling.
- **RCIA :** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a series of classes designed to bring new members into the Catholic church. Weekly sessions begin in September. People who have not been baptized, who have not been practicing or who have been raised in another faith are all welcome to register. Parishioners are encouraged to invite interested family members and friends. There is no obligation to join the church. This is simply an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith. Contact Fr. William Pifher at 419-446-9288.

**BULLETIN DEADLINE:** Please note that the bulletin deadline is **Tuesday, Noon.** Please either call, email at [OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com) or put in the collection basket any announcement for the following week's bulletin



# SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023

## 4th Sunday of Advent – Christmas Eve

ROSARY WILL BE PRAYED SUNDAY'S AT 8 A.M.

### DECORATING

Thank you to everyone who helped make Our Lady of Mercy beautiful for the Christmas Season.

### CHRISTMAS EVE, CHRISTMAS DAY, JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> MASSES

#### Christmas Eve

Our Lady of Mercy – 7:00 p.m.

St. Peter – 4:30 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

#### Christmas Day

Our Lady of Mercy – 9:00 a.m.

#### January 1<sup>st</sup>

Our Lady of Mercy – 9 a.m.

### NO MASS

There will be NO MASS on Thursday, December 28, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

### SAVE THE DATE

Our Lady of Mercy's Altar Rosary Society invites all parishioners over the age of 21 for an Adult Night Out on January 27, 2024, starting at 6:30 p.m. More information will be coming.

### PREVIOUS WEEKS BULLETINS

For your convenience, the previous weeks bulletin will be on the back table.

### THE WISDOM OF THE SAINTS – Introduction by Matthew Kelly

"The most beautiful act of faith is the one made in darkness, in sacrifice, and with extreme effort." - St. Padre Pio

### Do Something Beautiful for God – The Essential Teachings of Mother Teresa

**Dec. 24** – It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.

**Dec. 25** – At Christmas, we see Jesus as a little babe – helpless and poor. And he came to love and be loved. How can we love Jesus in the world today?

**Dec. 26** – Am I convinced of God's love for me and mine for Him? This conviction is the sunlight that makes the sap of life rise.

**Dec. 27** – Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.

**Dec. 28** – I did not know that our work would grow so fast or go so far. I never doubted that it would live but I didn't think it would be like this. Doubt I never had because I had this conviction that if God blesses it, it will prosper.

**Dec. 29** – There is more hunger in the world for love and appreciation in this world than for food.

**Dec. 30** – The first requirement of prayer is silence. People of prayer are people of silence.

**Dec. 31** – Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.



*And she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. – Luke 2:6*

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

### ST. PETER NEWS

#### EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Every Tuesday starting at 8 a.m. ending with Mass at 7 p.m.

#### CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

4:30 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

#### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FISH FRY-DAYS

January 12, 2024 – March 29, 2024

*Did you know that Deacon Larry Zachrich is also available for Baptisms and Weddings? Contact Larry at 419-966-7091.*

### FAYETTE/SURROUNDING AREA COMMUNITY EVENTS

---Jan. 11 – Bean Creek Coffee House 7 p.m. – Fayette Opera House – Free & open to the public

---Jan. 27 – Lee Warren & Friends 7 p.m. – Fayette Opera House - \$15 General Admission, \$12 Seniors, \$10 Students

If you know of any Fayette Community events, please either call or visit the office or email to [OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com)

**Prayer Chain-ANYONE** wishing to submit prayer requests can email Anita Van Zile at [vanzilejn@hotmail.com](mailto:vanzilejn@hotmail.com) or call Pat Eisel at 419-737-2163. **Privacy Issues for Parish Office: IMMEDIATE FAMILY** – must contact the parish office for all prayer requests to be posted in the parish bulletin. Please submit with the exact verbiage requested. Contact Sherry Renner at the parish office at 419-237-2441, no later than Thursday at noon. By law, the parish office does not divulge private information we receive from hospitals.

# LITURGICAL SCHEDULE – December 30, 2023 & January 1, 2024

## December 30, 2023 – 8:30 a.m. Mass

Greet & Gifts – Joyce Bonin & Marge Crowell

Reader – Mary Bird

Servers – Evan Beauregard & Kruez Lichtenwald

Ushers – Dennis & Denise Miller

## January 1, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. Mary Mother of God, Mass

Greet & Gifts – Jerry & Anita Van Zile

Reader – Anita Van Zile

Servers – Micah & Will Maginn

Ushers – Jerry & Anita Van Zile

# Christmas Flowers



## In honor / memory of

Mr. & Mrs. Dave Borer

In memory of unborn babies

Mrs. Joyce Bonin

Marcel Bonin

Mr. & Mrs. Phil Baker

Deceased members  
Baker & Menchlaofer Families

Mr. Dan Lumbrezer

Bernard & Ruth Lumbrezer

Mrs. Marge Crowell

Rodney Moran,  
Pigott, Kosciuczyk & Crowell Families

Miss Linda Tilley

LeRoy & Barbara Tilley  
Patti & Nancy

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Van Zile

Chad Miller  
Judy Miller  
Maxine Sanders  
John Sanders

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Miron

Michael & Joyce Dwyer  
Emma & Carl Daris  
Monna & Irving Dwyer  
Duane & Edith Dwyer

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Siegel



# Standing Strong as a Catholic Man

presented by: Dr. Ray Guarendi

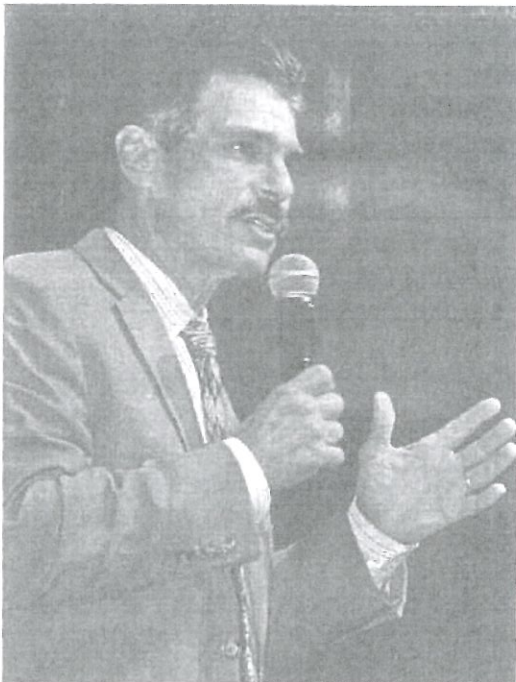
St. Mary Catholic Church, Edgerton, Ohio

300 S. Michigan Ave., Edgerton, OH

**January 13, 2024 9am - 5pm**

\$10 at the door

RSVP—Text: 419-575-6936 / Email: [mark@gerschutz.com](mailto:mark@gerschutz.com)



Dr. Ray Guarendi is a Catholic father of ten adopted children, a clinical psychologist, author, professional speaker, and national radio and television host. Dr. Ray has given over 3,000 talks around the country on topics including smart parenting; happier marriages; successful families; and a variety of motivational themes, for both personal and professional application. He captivates audiences with his humor laced presentations filled with practical advice and proven techniques.

## Calling All Men!

Come spend a Saturday with  
Dr. Ray to strengthen  
your faith and your family.

### Agenda

8:30—9:00	Registration
9:00—9:55	Men of Faith
9:55—10:05	Break
10:05—11:00	Men of Faith
11:00—12:00	Lunch
12:00—12:55	Men of Family
12:55—1:05	Break
1:05—2:00	Men of Family
2:00—3:30	Adoration and Confession
4:00—5:00	Mass

# Saints of the Day (www.morningoffering.com)

Week of December 24 – December 30

**Sunday, Dec. 24– Adam and Eve-** Adam and Eve, the first man and woman created by God as recounted in the Old Testament book of Genesis, are the father and mother of all humanity. Through their willful disobedience to the command of God, sin came into the world. To redeem mankind which was thereby separated from the perfect communion with the Holy Trinity for which they were created, God became man, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and died on a Cross. Jesus is the New Adam, and Mary is the New Eve. Christian tradition recognizes that Adam and Eve were rescued by Christ in virtue of His death, burial, and resurrection, and are with God and the saints in heaven. Their feast day is celebrated together on December 24th.

**Monday, Dec. 25 –St. Anastasia -** St. Anastasia (c. 281-314 A.D.) was a Roman citizen of the noble class, born to a wealthy pagan father and a Christian mother. She was secretly baptized due to her mother's desire to raise her as a Christian. Anastasia married a Roman pagan of her class, and, when he discovered that she was a practicing Christian, he became a cruel tyrant and inflicted much suffering upon her. After her husband's untimely death, Anastasia devoted her life to acts of charity and to consoling Christians who were imprisoned for their faith. When she was discovered to be a Christian during the persecutions of Diocletian, Anastasia was captured, tortured, and starved before being crucified, burned alive, and beheaded. The place of her martyrdom is Sirmium in what is today Serbia, and afterwards she was venerated as a healer and exorcist. St. Anastasia is one of the seven women, besides the Virgin Mary, commemorated in the Roman Canon of the Mass. Her feast day is December 25th.

**Tuesday, Dec. 26–St. Stephen -** St. Stephen (1st. c.) was one of the Church's first deacons in Jerusalem and an eloquent preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. According to Sacred Scripture he was "a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost" and "full of grace and fortitude." The account of his martyrdom is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. After boldly preaching against the Jewish leaders for their rejection of the promised Messiah, he was accused of blasphemy and stoned to death by an angry mob. The man who would later become St. Paul the Apostle, while he was persecuting the Church before his conversion, was among the mob as an approving witness. St. Stephen's name comes from the Greek word meaning 'crown,' fitting as he was the first Christian to earn the martyr's crown. St. Stephen's feast day is celebrated on December 26th.

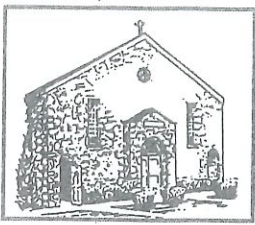
**Wednesday, Dec. 27– St. John the Evangelist -** St. John the Evangelist (1st c.) was one of the Twelve Apostles, and one of the three in Jesus' inner circle, along with his brother, James, and Simon Peter. St. John was the disciple who reclined on the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper, and the only one of the twelve to not forsake Christ during His crucifixion and death. John stood faithfully at the foot of the Cross alongside the other holy women, and therefore he was the disciple to whom Jesus entrusted the care of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In addition to being called "The Evangelist" he is also known as the "Beloved Disciple." After the death and resurrection of Jesus, St. John was an important leader of the Church in Jerusalem. He lived to a very old age and composed the fourth Gospel that bears his name, three epistles, and the book of Revelation. He is the only one of the Twelve Apostles who was not martyred, instead being exiled to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea under the persecution of Roman Emperor Domitian. St. John the Evangelist's feast day is December 27th.

**Thursday, Dec. 28 – The Holy Innocents -** The Holy Innocents (1st c.) are the children mentioned in the account of Jesus' birth in Matthew's Gospel (2:16-18). When the Magi came to Jerusalem to find and adore the Baby Jesus, the newborn King of the Jews, King Herod requested that they inform him of the Child's location under the pretense of offering Him adoration, too. After paying the Child homage and offering Him their gifts, the Wise Men were warned in a dream not to betray Jesus' location, and departed for their home country by another route. Meanwhile the Holy Family was warned by an Angel to flee into Egypt. King Herod fell into a jealous rage over the Magi's failure to report back to him. He ordered all the baby boys aged two years and under to be killed, according to the appearance of the Bethlehem Star to the Three Wise Men, in an attempt to kill the Baby Jesus. These baby boys died not only for Christ, but in his stead. The Church venerates them as martyrs. It is uncertain how many children were killed, whether a small number, or in the thousands. The Latin Church instituted the feast of the Holy Innocents in the fifth century. The Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome is believed to possess the bodies of several of the Holy Innocents. Their feast day is commemorated on December 28th.

**Friday, Dec. 29- St. Thomas Becket** - St. Thomas Becket (1118-1170), also known as St. Thomas of Canterbury, was the son of a prosperous London merchant. Being a well-educated youth, he was appointed as clerk to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and was later made Archdeacon. In this role he met and became close friends with King Henry II of England. The King promoted Becket to the office of Lord Chancellor, and, when the Archbishop of Canterbury died, made Becket the new Archbishop in 1162, the most powerful ecclesiastical position in all of England. King Henry II supposed that having his close friend in such a position would enable him to enforce his will on the Church. However, in his new role as priest and archbishop, Thomas Becket experienced a religious conversion and transferred his ultimate allegiance to the Church. This led to frequent conflicts over the rights of the Church between the King of England and the Archbishop of Canterbury, resulting in Becket's exile. When Becket returned to England, he was murdered by four knights, the king's lackeys, as he was offering Mass at the Canterbury Cathedral altar on December 29, 1170. St. Thomas Becket's feast day is December 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Saturday, Dec. 30- St. Anysia of Salonika** - St. Anysia of Salonika (d. c. 298 A.D.), also known as St. Anysia of Thessalonica, was born to wealthy and pious Christian parents near Thessalonica, Greece. After the death of her parents, while she was still a young lady, Anysia dedicated her life completely to Christ. She made private vows of chastity and poverty, spent her days in fasting and prayer, and gave her wealth to the poor. She lived under the persecutions of the Roman Emperor Maximian, who declared that anyone who met a Christian could kill them without trial. One Sunday while on her way to church, St. Anysia was harassed by a Roman soldier. In one account he attempted to force her to make sacrifice to the pagan sun god. Anysia refused, declared her commitment to Christ, and spat in the soldier's face. Enraged, the soldier ran her through with his sword, winning Anysia the crowns of virginity and martyrdom. Her feast day is December 30.





# Our Lady of Mercy Parish



DECEMBER 24, 2023

## PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church is united by our commitment to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of our rural families and steward the resources entrusted to us. We value the diversity within our Catholic community and invite all to walk with us on our journey of faith.

### THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Church	Intention
Sun. Dec. 24	8:30 a.m.	OLM	Novena Prayers
	4:30p.m.	SP	Novena Prayers
	7:00p.m.	OLM	Novena Prayers
	10:00p.m.	SP	Novena Prayers
Mon. Dec. 25	9:00 a.m.	OLM	Novena Prayers
Tues. Dec. 26	7:00 p.m.	SP	For the People
Wed. Dec. 27	9:00a.m.	SP	For the People
Thurs. Dec. 28	9:00a.m.	OLM	NO MASS
Fri. Dec. 29	9:00a.m.	SP	Communion Service
Sat. Dec. 30	8:00a.m.	SP	NO MASS
	4:30p.m.	SP	For the People
	4:30p.m.	SP	For the People
Sun. Dec. 31	8:30a.m.	OLM	Giovanni Stella, Mike & Joyce Dwyer Living & Deceased Sarnac Family
	10:30a.m.	SP	For the People

### UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Mass 7 p.m.
- Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Mass 9 a.m.
- Jan. 1 – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, Mass 9 a.m.
- Jan. 3 – Religious Ed resumes
- Jan. 7 – BFF's resume
- Jan. 21 – Youth breakfast
- Jan. 27 – 6:30 p.m. Our Lady of Mercy Adult Night Out, put on by Altar Rosary Society

### SACRIFICIAL OFFERING REPORT

Reported for December 17, 2023

SUNDAY OFFERTORY (10 envelopes)	\$ 481.00
LOOSE OFFERINGS	\$ 157.00

<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 1,747.00</b>
Over/(Under)	(\$ 1,109.00)

<b>OTHER COLLECTIONS</b>	
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 50.00
Votive Candles	\$ 1.00
Maintenance	\$ 15.00
CPC Jar	\$ 10.00
<b>TOTAL COLLECTION</b>	<b>\$ 714.00</b>

### NEXT WEEK'S MINISTERS

December 31, 2023 & January 1, 2024

Reader	See bulletin insert
Servers	See bulletin insert
Greeters/ Gifts	See bulletin insert
Ushers	See bulletin insert
Ministers of the Eucharist	Until further notice
Money Counters	See bulletin insert

**Word(s) of the week** (from Merriam-Webster online dictionary)

**GIFT** – something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation

**PEACE** – a state of tranquility or quiet

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.” - Matthew 1:23

# Dear Padre,

*The Bible talks about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Is there scriptural proof that Jesus was Mary's only child?*

The Catholic Church's position is that Mary had only one child; her son called Jesus. Yet there are at least ten scriptural references to "the brothers of Jesus" or to his "sisters" (see Matthew 13:55–56, Mark 6:3, and Luke 8:19–21).

The difficulty is that the meaning of the term "brothers" (translated from the Greek *adelphos*) isn't restricted to the sharing of a parent. On the contrary, it may not only refer to other relatives, including cousins, but also to close relationships, such as disciples. This is not unlike how we might refer to "brothers in arms" as those who fought in a war together, or a religious order of brothers or sisters.

Recall, too, that Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, and there is no equivalent for the meaning of "cousins" as we know it in that language. Instead, the word for brother or sister was used when referring to cousins. Thus, when St. Jerome (*circa* 340–420) translated the Bible from Hebrew into Church Latin, he considered "the brothers of Jesus" as cousins, not siblings. After all, it would have been the rightful responsibility of these male relatives of Jesus to take care of Mary when Jesus died. Yet Jesus entrusts his mother to the care of his beloved disciple John (John 19:26). ●



VIRGIN AND CHILD, ASIA (ARTIST UNKNOWN)

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
December 25 <i>Nativity of the Lord</i>	December 26 <i>St. Stephen, the First Martyr</i>	December 27 <i>St. John, Apostle and Evangelist</i>	December 28 <i>Holy Innocents, Martyrs</i>	December 29 <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	December 30 <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	December 31 <i>Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph</i>
Is 52:7–10 Heb 1:1–6 Jn 1:1–18 or 1:1–5, 9–14	Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59 Mt 10:17–22	1 Jn 1:1–4 Jn 20:1a, 2–8	1 Jn 1:5–2:2 Mt 2:13–18	1 Jn 2:3–11 Lk 2:22–35	1 Jn 2:12–17 Lk 2:36–40	Sir 3:2–6, 12–14 Col 3:12–21 or 3:12–17 Lk 2:22–40 or 2:22, 39–40

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*Let us ask our Lady for a grace...that she kindle our enthusiasm for the ideal of holiness which is not a matter of holy cards and images, but is about living what happens each day, humbly and joyfully...with our eyes fixed on God and the neighbor we meet.*

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 8, 2021