

December 13, 2020

Advent III

St. Mark's Catholic Church

Rev. Msgr. Sean P. Flynn, Pastor

Rev. José Fernandez-Bangueses, Resident Priest

Rev. Bernard N. Mohan (*Wednesday and Friday*)

Deacon Michael Keary

215 Crescent Pkwy, Sea Girt, NJ 08750 Phone 732-449-6364 Web: www.stmarkseagirt.com



Third Sunday of Advent

Lectionary: 8

Reading 1

I61:1-2A, 10-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God.

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

Responsorial Psalm LK 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54.

R. (Is 61:10b) My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

Reading 2

1 THES 5:16-24

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

Alleluia IS 61:1 (cited in LK 4:18)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

JN 1:6-8, 19-28

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John.

When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?"

He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ."

So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?"

And he said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

So they said to him,

"Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us?

What do you have to say for yourself?"

He said: "I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'*" as Isaiah the prophet said."

Some Pharisees were also sent.

They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?"

John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."

This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

JOY



Readings for the Week December 13, 2020

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9; Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23; Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25; Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14; Lk 7:18B-23

Thursday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17

Friday: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25

Saturday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25

Sunday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38



We ask you to be especially generous in your Christmas donation this year. We use this collection to help pay some of our larger expenses. While our income has been significantly reduced this year due to the pandemic, we have had some extra expenses including paying someone to sanitize the church after every mass, baptism, and funeral. Thank you

Pray FOR THE SICK

The list of parishioners, relatives, and friends are in need of your prayers for healing. Note to ensure the consent of the person whose name appears here, the pastor's policy requires that only they or a family member may request a name be added to this list. Also if you or a loved one are unable to attend mass and would like to receive Holy Communion in a home or assisted living, please notify **Donna at 732-449-6364 ext. 100.**

Benjamin Ohlweiler

Jeremy Pavlick

Lucy Gargano

Julia Buonocore

Fred Buonocore

Christine Frauenheim

Alexandra Gavilanes

Sarah Gallagher

Jimmy Azzollini

Vivian Wilson

Ken Hauck

Dorothy Waugh

Patricia Cavanaugh

Rose Courtney

Grace Philhower

Jim Bogan

Maria Valdez

Ani Slevin

Eternal Rest grant onto them, O Lord, And let perpetual light shine upon them.

Please remember in your prayers those of our diocese, parish, friends, and family members who have recently died.

† *William Muscato*

May the angels lead you into paradise...

We would like to thank all those who have attended Mass the past few weeks, who wore a mask and adhered to the social distancing requirements. We wish to remind those who are afraid to come to Mass because of health issues, that the dispensation from Sunday and Holy Day obligation will remain in effect until further notice.

Thank you to Roberta and Mark Hayek of Straight Edge Construction for mounting Mr. Zellers memorial plaque.



Christmas Mass Schedule



Christmas Eve

1:00 PM Spanish Mass.

3:00 PM Mass with contemporary Christmas Carols.

5:00 PM Mass with contemporary Christmas Carols.

8:00 PM Traditional "Midnight" Mass with traditional Christmas Carols.

Christmas Day

8:00 AM Traditional Christmas Carols.

10:00 AM Mass with contemporary Christmas Carols.

12 Noon Mass with traditional Christmas Carols.

2:00 PM Spanish Mass.



Christmas Flower Memorial envelopes are now available!

It's a beautiful way to celebrate the birth of our Savior and to remember a loved one on Christmas!

This Week's Mass Intentions

Date	Intention	Requested by
Monday, December 14		
7:30 AM	† Anne Macenczak	Estate
	† Anne Hart	Estate
	Joseph and Michael White	Family
11:00 AM	† Buonocore and Hoblitzell Families	Family
	† Patrick Murray	Maryann Keller and Family
Tuesday, December 15		
7:30 AM	† Frank Rocco	Family
11:00 AM	† Dan Buckley	Linda Ryan
	† Evelyn and Gerald F. Healey, Sr.	Marilyn and Bob Healey
Wednesday, December 16		
7:30 AM	† Mr. Carpenter	Mr. and Mrs. Sernitsky
11:00 AM	† Robert Kelleher	Bertucci Family
	† Catherine Santangelo	Irene and Joe Santangelo
Thursday, December 17		
7:30 AM	† William McCoy	Carol Murphy
11:00 AM	† Catherine and Amedeo Valentino	Claire Lisanti
	† Joseph and Kenneth Tahan	Marion Reilly
Friday, December 18		
7:30 AM	† Stephen Cagnacci	Family
	† Phyllis Blaine	Estate
11:00 AM	† Mitchell Oblinski	Julie and Lou Cocozza
	† Anthony and Teresa Montanelli	Irene and Joe Santangelo
Saturday, December 19		
7:30 AM	† Nicholas Venanzi	Saint Mark's Parish Family
	† Lydia Kenah	Tom and Pam Kenah
4:30 PM	† George O'Grady	Family
	† Gerald Healey	Family
	† Michael McClmont	Dorothy Kelly
Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20		
8:00 AM	People of the Parish	
10:00 AM	† Mary Petroski	The Leonhardt Family
	† Marge Donovan	Sandra and Ed Zipf and Family
	Dylan Finn	Howell Middle School South Sunshine
	† Joseph and Eleanor Stanley	Family
5:00 PM	Maria Valdez	Family and Friends
	† Silviano Ramirez	Daughter and Family
	Private Intention, (Special Intention)	Family

Please note: Sunday and holiday Mass times have changed due to Covid. If you have a mass intention, please be sure to check the times. If you have any questions, please call the office.

An illustration featuring five lit candles of varying heights, each with a flame and a circular glow. They are positioned behind a large, green holly wreath with detailed leaves and berries. The text is overlaid on the candles and wreath.

The angels
sang a
message
of JOY!

Luke 2:7-15

©JPPC

Blessing of a Christmas Tree



That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the world, let us pray to the Lord. R/.

After the intercessions the leader invites all present to say the Lord's Prayer.

The leader says the prayer with hands joined:

Lord our God,
we praise you for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.
We praise you for the light of Israel:
the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,
who fills us with the wonder of your love.

Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we illumine this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives
be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree
come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R/. Amen.

The lights of the tree are then illuminated.

The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now and forever.
R/. Amen.

The blessing concludes with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

—*From Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers*



Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give
to those who
have given
a lifetime.



Please give during the annual collection this weekend, December 12/13.

The National Religious Retirement Office coordinates the annual national appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes financial assistance for retirement needs to eligible religious institutes. The National Religious Retirement Office and the Retirement Fund for Religious are sponsored by the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. NRRO strives to support, educate and assist religious institutes in the United States to care for their elderly and frail members now and in the future. NRRO aims to:

1. raise funds for retired religious;
2. help religious institutes realistically assess their current retirement needs and implement planning;
3. educate religious institutes to allocate assets realistically;
4. develop educational tools, programs, services and resource materials that enable religious institutes to address retirement wisely.

Visit www.retiredreligious.org to learn more about who we help and why they need our help now.

Please give to the Retirement Fund for Religious appeal in your parish or send your donation to:

**Retirement Fund for Religious
P.O. Box 96988
Washington, D.C. 20090-6988**

CYO News



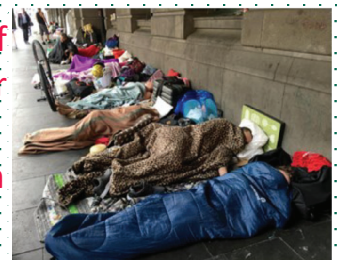
St. Mark's would like to thank the CYO for their generous donation of 12 beautiful Christmas wreaths now adorning our beautiful church.

Many thanks to all who supported the CYO Christmas Wreath sale last weekend! Because of your generosity, we were able to send generous donations to Madonna House, Good Counsel Homes, The Missionaries of Charity, and Mission of Mercy Ugandan Missions. Again, thank you for your generosity and support of our parish CYO!

"Operation Thermal"

The Missionaries of Charity sisters have asked us for donations of NEW thermal tops and pants in adult sizes for the homeless in our area. These will be gifted to them by the Sisters on Christmas Day. Please place new thermals in the boxes designated "CYO Operation Thermal" on **December 12/13**.

Thank you. A blessed Advent season to all!





POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES “THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH.”

Today, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Holiness Pope Francis has used the feast day to declare the year ahead, beginning today, the “Year of St. Joseph,” her blessed spouse and the foster-father of the Lord Jesus. In an apostolic letter released today entitled “*Patris corde*” (“With a Father’s Heart”), marking the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St. Joseph as “Patron of the Universal Church” by Blessed Pope Pius IX, Pope Francis indicated that the “aim of this apostolic letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtue and his zeal.” The Holy Father noted that “after Mary, the Mother of God, no saint is mentioned more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate his central role in the history of salvation.”

Commenting on the apostolic letter, the Vatican News Office explained that “The Holy Father wrote *Patris corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary” people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint

Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,” who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

Throughout the document, the Holy Father describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

The full text of the apostolic letter may be found on the Vatican website.

In a separate decree, Vatican Apostolic Penitentiary has announced that a plenary indulgence is attached to the faithful who commemorate St. Joseph throughout his special year “with prayer and good works.”

The plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the Pope’s intentions) to Christians who, with a spirit detached from any sin, participate in the Year of St. Joseph on these occasions and manners indicated by the Apostolic Penitentiary:

The plenary indulgence is granted to those who will meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord’s Prayer, or take part in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph. “St. Joseph, an authentic man of faith, invites us”, the decree reads, “to rediscover our filial relationship with the Father, to renew fidelity to prayer, to listen and correspond with profound discernment to God’s will.”

The indulgence can also be obtained by those who, following St. Joseph’s example, will perform a spiritual or corporal work of mercy. St. Joseph “encourages us to rediscover the value of silence, prudence and loyalty in carrying out our duties,” the decree notes.

The recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and among engaged couples is another way of obtaining indulgences, in order that “all Christian families may be stimulated to recreate the same atmosphere of intimate communion, love and prayer that was in the Holy Family.”

Everyone who entrusts their daily activity to the protection of St. Joseph, and every faithful who invokes the intercession of St. Joseph so that those seeking work can find dignifying work can also obtain the plenary indulgence. On 1 May 1955, Pope Pius XII instituted the feast of St. Joseph “with the intent that the dignity of work be recognized by all, and that it inspires social life and laws, based on the fair distribution of rights and duties.”

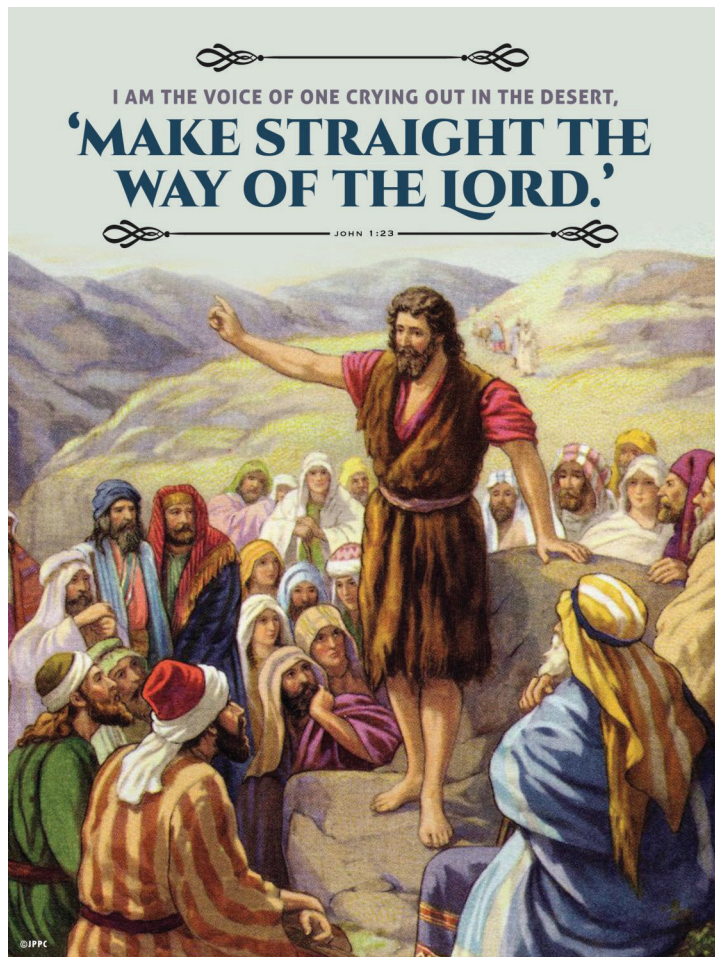
The plenary indulgence is also granted to the faithful who will recite the Litany to St. Joseph (for the Latin tradition), or the *Akathistos* to St. Joseph (for the Byzantine tradition), or any other prayer to St. Joseph proper to the other liturgical traditions, for the persecuted Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*, and for the relief of all Christians suffering all forms of persecution. Because, the decree notes, “the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt shows us that God is there where man is in danger, where man suffers, where he runs away, where he experiences rejection and abandonment.”

In addition to these, the Apostolic Penitentiary grants a plenary indulgence to the faithful who will recite any legitimately approved prayer or act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, for example, “To you, O blessed Joseph” especially on “19 March, on 1 May, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, on St. Joseph’s Sunday (according to the Byzantine tradition) on the 19th of each month and every Wednesday, a day dedicated to the memory of the saint according to the Latin tradition.”

Amid the ongoing Covid-19 health crisis, the gift of the plenary indulgence is also extended to the sick, the elderly, the dying and all those who for legitimate reasons are unable to leave their homes.

They too can obtain the plenary indulgences if they are detached from any sin and have the intention of fulfilling, as soon as possible, the three usual conditions and recite an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, offering to God the pains and hardships of their lives.

The Diocese of Trenton will begin planning special opportunities to celebrate the universal patronage of St. Joseph throughout 2021.



Reflection by Rev. Leonard N. Peterson

The worst thief of the year never robbed a bank or a convenience store, but he continues on his crime wave because nobody has yet been able to stop him completely. Actually, this outlaw is neither a him nor a her, but rather an "it," and has a name. Call it "Covid 19."

Among other thefts it has for the most part robbed us all of much of our customary way of life and made us near prisoners in our own homes. Were it not for all the electronic gizmos and gadgets, we might have all gone a lot more stir crazy than we have.

On the most serious level, it has taken a world wide death toll in the millions, AND thereby effected tens of millions more who loved their departed ones. It has ushered in a wave of fear on an unprecedented scale, and even turned the education of our young into a process involving screens on machines. It has made the fun of birthday and anniversary parties partial; graduations virtual; weddings less joyful and funerals more hurtful. Last but not least it has made our public prayer constricted with rules and regulations and even closed many of our churches. When the story of 2020 is documented, it will likely include that now familiar image of a spiked ball that will loom large in the memories of a generation.

Despite all this, it is the hope of our Church that with trust in Jesus we will maintain our hope and experience true joy. "Joy?" you ask in the midst of this and more. "Have you lost your mind, Church?" "But wait!" the Church replies, "you may be confusing joy with happiness. They are quite different. 'Happiness' is rooted in the ancient word 'hap' which means 'luck' or 'good fortune.' It is transitory while joy is abiding. Happiness is a passing thing, quite contingent on present circumstances, able to vanish with a phone call you receive." The Church continues: "Joy is completely different from happiness. It is a deeper reality, reaching down inside our souls to that place at our spiritual core where decisions are made. Where God's holy Spirit dwells, independent of externals." To this I add that our Scriptures tell us we are made by God for God. That we are loved by Him and destined for heaven.

In the context of the Advent season now upon us, when we are supposed to be preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus, it is time to stoke the flames of joy within us that may be lying dormant. Recall the love that is behind God's decision to take on our nature and demonstrate how to live in response to that love.

This third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as "Gaudete" or "Rejoice" Sunday. The Mass celebrant's vestment take on that rare rose color, as the purple of penance gets mixed in with the white of joy because Christmas is near. One way to feel that joy is to imitate the moving humility of John the Baptist while surrounded by his adoring followers. He forthrightly tells them he is definitely not the expected Messiah. Instead he points to his cousin Jesus and says "There He is! The Lamb of God.!"

The thief of the year we hope will soon be a memory. But may your joy remain, because, according to Teilhard deChardin, the priest archaeologist: *"joy is the infallible sign of God's presence."*

God love you and give you His peace.



St. Mark's Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls, hats and scarves, made by St. Mark's Knitters, for the children of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Asbury Park. Blankets were also made as Christmas gifts for the Kindergarten.

Wrap Yourself or Your Loved One in a Prayer Shawl

St. Mark's Prayer Shawl Ministry, a part of Social Concerns is offering beautiful hand made shawls blessed by our priests.

If you, a family member, or neighbor, are sick, lonely, grieving or would appreciate the embrace of a warm shawl, please call Donna at the rectory at 732-449-6364 ext.100.

If you know someone who doesn't have access to the internet and would like a copy of the bulletin, please reach out to the Rectory at 732-449-6364.

Any parishioner who has not been able to attend Mass and would like to have a Eucharistic Minister bring Holy Communion to them, please contact Donna at the rectory, 732-449-6364 x100 or email donna@stmarkseagirt.com



Congratulations!



Congratulations to our parishioner, Cathy Shalloo, on receiving the **Garden Club of New Jersey's Merit Award of Honor**. The award recognizes her contributions in the areas of youth development, protecting the environment, community leadership, civic beautification and philanthropy. To many she is known as the "Ladybug Lady".




Please join us on Friday's for Adoration immediately after 11:00 AM Mass with Benediction at 1:45 PM. It will also be broadcast on livestream @ stmarkseagirt.com

St. Mark's Altar Rosary Society

St. Mark's Altar Rosary Society will be reciting the rosary after the 11am mass on the first Monday of each month.

We invite those that cannot make it to church, to join us from home in the recitation of the rosary. In this way we continue to honor our Blessed Mother and follow her directions to continue praying for an end to abortion and all the intentions of her Immaculate Heart.





Horario de Misas para Diciembre y Enero

Martes, Diciembre 24 1:00 PM

- Misa de la Natividad del Señor

Miércoles, Diciembre 25 2:00 PM

- Solemnidad de la Natividad del Señor- Misa del Día.

Miércoles, Enero 1 2:00 PM

- Solemnidad de Santa María Madre de Dios y Misa de Año Nuevo.

Para más información llamar a rectoría (732) 449-6364 ext. 104.

Iglesia de "San Marcos" Apostolado Hispano

Misa Dominical: Domingo 5:00 p.m.

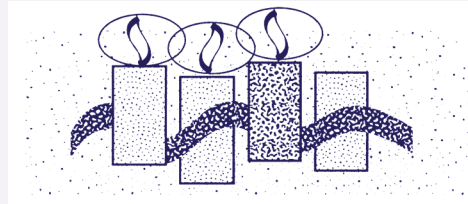
Misa de Semana: Martes 6:00 p.m.

Msgr. Sean P. Flynn, Pastor
Rev. José Fernández-Banguess, Sacerdote Residente
josefernandez@stmarkscagirt.com
Teléfono: (732) 449-6364 ext. 122.

Horario de oficina en Español:
Lunes, Miércoles y Viernes 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
Andrea Martínez, Apostolado Hispano
liz@stmarkscagirt.com
Teléfono: (732) 449-6364 ext. 104.
Fax: (732) 449-1646

Directora del Ministerio de Religión
Diana Zuna Nieves
diana@stmarkscagirt.com
Teléfono: (732) 449-6364 ext. 105

Tercer Domingo de Adviento ~ Diciembre 13, 2020



Primera lectura: Isaías 61, 1-2. 10-11.

El espíritu del Señor está sobre mí, porque me ha ungido y me ha enviado para anunciar la buena nueva a los pobres, a curar a los de corazón quebrantado, a proclamar el perdón a los cautivos, la libertad a los prisioneros, y a pregonar el año de gracia del Señor. Me alegro en el Señor con toda el alma y me lleno de júbilo en mi Dios, porque me revistió con vestiduras de salvación y me cubrió con un manto de justicia, como el novio que se pone la corona, como la novia que se adorna con sus joyas. Así como la

tierra echa sus brotes y el jardín hace germinar lo sembrado en él, así el Señor hará brotar la justicia y la alabanza ante todas las naciones.

Salmo Responsorial: Lc 1, 46-48. 49-50. 53-54.

Mi espíritu se alegra en Dios, mi salvador.

Mi alma glorifica al Señor y mi espíritu se llena de júbilo en Dios, mi salvador, porque puso los ojos en la humildad de su esclava.

Mi espíritu se alegra en Dios, mi salvador.

Desde ahora me llamarán dichosa todas las generaciones, porque ha hecho en mí grandes cosas el que todo lo puede. Santo es su nombre y su misericordia llega, de generación en generación, a los que lo temen.

Mi espíritu se alegra en Dios, mi salvador.

A los hambrientos los colmó de bienes y a los ricos los despidió sin nada.

Acordándose de su misericordia, vino en ayuda de Israel, su siervo.

Mi espíritu se alegra en Dios, mi salvador.

Segunda lectura: 1 Tesalonicenses 5, 16-24.

Hermanos: Vivan siempre alegres, oren sin cesar, den gracias en toda ocasión, pues esto es lo que Dios quiere de ustedes en Cristo Jesús. No impidan la acción del Espíritu Santo, ni desprecien el don de profecía; pero sométanlo todo a prueba y quédense con lo bueno. Absténganse de toda clase de mal. Que el Dios de la paz los santifique a ustedes en todo y que todo su ser, espíritu, alma y cuerpo, se conserve irreprochable hasta la llegada de nuestro Señor Jesucristo. El que los ha llamado es fiel y cumplirá su promesa.

Aclamación antes del Evangelio: Isaías 61, 1.

R. Aleluya, aleluya.

El Espíritu del Señor está sobre mí.

Me ha enviado para anunciar la buena nueva a los pobres.

R. Aleluya.

Evangelio: Juan 1, 6-8. 19-28.

Hubo un hombre enviado por Dios, que se llamaba Juan. Éste vino como testigo, para dar testimonio de la luz, para que todos creyeran por medio de él. Él no era la luz, sino testigo de la luz. Éste es el testimonio que dio Juan el Bautista, cuando los judíos enviaron desde Jerusalén a unos sacerdotes y levitas para preguntarle: “¿Quién eres tú?” Él reconoció y no negó quién era. Él afirmó: “Yo no soy el Mesías”. De nuevo le preguntaron: “¿Quién eres, pues? ¿Eres Elías?” Él les respondió: “No lo soy”. “¿Eres el profeta?” Respondió: “No”. Le dijeron: “Entonces dínos quién eres, para poder llevar una respuesta a los que nos enviaron. ¿Qué dices de ti mismo?” Juan les contestó: “Yo soy la voz que grita en el desierto: ‘Enderecen el camino del Señor’, como anunció el profeta Isaías”. Los enviados, que pertenecían a la secta de los fariseos, le preguntaron: “Entonces ¿por qué bautizas, si no eres el Mesías, ni Elías, ni el profeta?” Juan les respondió: “Yo bautizo con agua, pero en medio de ustedes hay uno, al que ustedes no conocen, alguien que viene detrás de mí, a quien yo no soy digno de desatarle las correas de sus sandalias”. Esto sucedió en Betania, en la otra orilla del Jordán, donde Juan bautizaba.