

# Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul And the Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel

18th Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, Archbishop of Philadelphia*



**December 19, 2021**

## **Parish Mission Statement**

With Jesus Christ as our Head and Foundation, the Cathedral Parish of Saints Peter and Paul forms a vibrant Roman Catholic community in Center City and serves all those who come to the Cathedral Basilica, the Mother Church of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Our parish community professes our Catholic Faith, ministers to others and welcomes all, as rooted in the Word of God and the celebration of the Sacraments of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

*Adopted by the Parish Council, August 10, 2021*

**Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill**  
**Rector**

**Reverend Monsignor Arthur E. Rodgers**  
**Rector Emeritus**

**Reverend Matthew K. Biedrzycki**  
**Parochial Vicar**

**Reverend Monsignor Louis A. D'Addezio**  
**Priests in Residence**

**Deacon Jesús M. Burgos**  
**Permanent Deacon**

**Sister Eleanor McCann, R.S.M.**  
**Pastoral Associate**

**Sister Mary Luchia, P.V.M.I.**  
**Parish Evangelization**

**Sister Mary Raphael Paradis, R.S.M.**  
**Outreach Coordinator**

**Charlene Angelini**  
**Director of Cathedral Parish Music**

**Mark Loria**  
**Principal Organist**

The Cathedral Shop is open  
Wed. 10:30 AM - 2:00 PM / Sat. 11:00 AM - 5:15 PM  
Sun. 10:30 AM - 6:30 PM / 215-665-9032

## **MASS SCHEDULE**

**Sunday:** 5:15 PM Anticipated Mass on Saturday  
8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM in Basilica  
12:30 PM Spanish in Cathedral Chapel  
Sta. Misa en español, en la Capilla  
6:30 PM in Basilica

**Weekdays:** 7:15 AM, 12:05 PM in Cathedral Chapel

**Saturdays:** 12:05 PM in Cathedral Chapel

**Holy Days:** See website

## **SACRAMENT OF PENANCE SCHEDULE**

**Sunday:** 9:00 AM and 5:30 PM in Basilica  
12:00 PM (español) en la Capilla

**Weekdays:** 11:30 AM in Basilica

**Saturday:** 4:15 PM in Basilica

Please contact the Parish Office to arrange for the:  
**SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE,  
SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK,  
AND HOLY COMMUNION OF THE SICK  
AND HOMEBOUND**

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul   
@CathedralPhila 

Parish Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
1723 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 • 215-561-1313  
[www.cathedralphila.org](http://www.cathedralphila.org) • [info@cathedralphila.org](mailto:info@cathedralphila.org)  
Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel <https://www.saintkatharinedrexelshrine.com/>

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 19, 2021

*"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.  
May it be done to me according to your word." LK 1:38*  
**R. Alleluia, alleluia**



## December 18 Saturday

### Late Advent Weekday

12:05 Jtalo & Teresa Pagliacci  
5:15 Peg, Gene, Maureen Janda,  
Sean Fisher and Uncle Joe

## December 19 Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 For the People of the Parish  
9:30 Anthony & Carmela  
Cardona  
11:00 Frank Bruni  
12:30 Ester Torres  
6:30 Carmela Bursillo

## December 20 Monday

### Late Advent Weekday

7:15 Intentions of Paul O'Reilly  
12:05 David Waldvogel

## December 21 Tuesday

### Late Advent Weekday

#### St. Peter Canisius

7:15 Margaret M. McClintock  
12:05 James Mace Thompson

## December 22 Wednesday

### Late Advent Weekday

7:15 Theresa Braccio Kelly  
12:05 Thomas P. Janzer

## December 23 Thursday

### Late Advent Weekday

#### St. John of Kanty

7:15 Helena & Dick Mocry  
12:05 Albert Anthony Contrucci

## December 24 Friday

### Late Advent Weekday

7:15 Candida Ferry

### Christmas Eve

5:00 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant  
7:30 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant

## December 25 Saturday

### The Nativity of the Lord

12:00 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant  
8:00 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant  
10:00 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant  
12:00 Intentions of the Priest Celebrant

## December 26 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8:00 For the People of the Parish  
9:30 James Bressi  
11:00 Veronica Quinn and Family  
12:30 Sebastian Rodríguez  
6:30 Vera I Wark

Dear Parishioners,

*This is the Fourth Sunday of Advent!* Traditionally, this Sunday is observed with Mary, the Mother of God. Mary, with her *fiat* at the annunciation, conceives the Son of God in her blessed womb. This remarkable moment in the divine plan of salvation and in the life of the Blessed Virgin becomes a similar moment in every one of us. With our worthy reception of Holy Communion at Mass, we too give residence to the Son of God in our hearts and in our lives. As the whole Church looks to the celebration of the Christmas Mystery, with the Word becoming flesh, so that he can take flesh in us with every Holy Communion, may we be filled with tremendous gratitude for so great a Gift. May Saint Elizabeth's words to her cousin be true for each of us, "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled" (Luke 1: 45). *Nothing Compares to Being There*—with its focus on the irreplaceable need to be *in person* for the celebration of Holy Mass—reminds us that only *in person* can we eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ and so have him dwell truly within us in his Eucharistic Mystery.

*Please see the schedule for the Masses for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, Saturday, December 25, 2021, a Holy Day of Obligation, found elsewhere in this edition of the Parish Bulletin.* During these last few days of Advent, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is available in the Basilica, Monday through Friday beginning at 11:30 AM. Plan today to make a good Confession for Christmas!

*I encourage all of you to display the Nativity Scene in your home—in some cases it may only be a Christmas card with the picture of the Birth of the Lord—and let it be an occasion to reflect on the great gift of Christmas.* Reflect on how the Infant Savior brings to each of us the light of the Father's immense love and the promise of our redemption and salvation. God comes to us so that we can come to God. When you are in the Basilica, please take some time to stop and pray at our parish Nativity Scene and trust in the nearness of the Savior to you and to all those you remember in prayer.

*Keep Christmas alive!* Christmas Day, this Saturday, December 25, 2021, has a special octave or eight day celebration, which concludes on Saturday, January 1, 2022, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Christmas Time lasts through to Sunday, January 9, 2022, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, with the great Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord celebrated in the United States on Sunday, January 2, 2022. The world around us shuts down Christmas in some instances on December 26. As Christians, we are encouraged to keep the whole of Christmas Time alive with all of its festive character—including the decorations and carols. This is so that we may keep in our minds the great Mystery of Christmas. Jesus, the Son of God, takes on our humanity shares with us his divinity. This Mystery will never be understood fully by us. However, if we allow ourselves the whole of Christmas Time to ponder it and celebrate it, the more fully we will live from it.

*Next Sunday, the second collection will be directed to the support of the various ministries of the Cathedral Parish.* You can mail your Sunday offerings to the Cathedral Parish Office or make use of the many ways to give electronically. Please see <http://cathedralphiladelphia.org/donate/>. Thank you so very much for your goodness and generosity to the Cathedral Parish.

I wish all of you, our parishioners and visitors, a happy and holy Christmas. May the newborn Savior fill you with his grace! Count on my prayers and those of all our priests, especially at Christmas Mass.

Father Dennis Gill, Rector



### Prayer for your fourth week of Advent

Dear Lord, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts. As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives. Our hearts are open to you Lord. Amen.

Adapted from DynamicCatholic.org

### Recent Celebrations of the Sacrament of Baptism at the Cathedral Basilica



*Lola Milan Yakubov  
Jaritza Liseth Lara  
Penelope Anna Zielinski  
Ian Alexander Matias  
Gabriella Lee Guthrie*

*Let us keep the newly baptized in our prayers.*

### Recent Celebrations of the Sacrament of Marriage at the Cathedral Basilica



*John Yong & Elizabeth Fleurette Mielowocki Gilmore  
Bryan Charles & Dana Elizabeth Stone Lembo  
Evan John & Kelley Elise Butler Wenger  
Sean Michael & Julia Rachel Martosella Semenetz  
Edwin & Carina Leticia Garcia Romero  
Eli & Xochitl Melissa Juarez Ceron  
Jemarjo Lopez & Dianne Lane Gabia Ventura  
Jake Robert & Adriana Petrongolo Brauckmann  
Anthony John & Erin Morgan Logue Astorga, II*

*Let us keep these newlyweds in our prayers.*



### PRAYER PARTICIPATION GENEROSITY

Let us prepare our hearts during this time of Advent to welcome the Messiah. His mother, Mary, the woman of the YES, made the plan of God her own without reservation.

Let us ask Mary to become a clear light for our steps and the highest model for our inspiration. The spirit of giving is most evident during the Advent season. Please consider a gift to the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul through your will or a planned gift.

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Pray for us.*

*And let us remember to always pray for each other!*

**The offertory collection for Sunday 12/12/2021 will be posted on a future edition of the parish bulletin.**

**We hope that your generosity will exceed \$10,000 this week.** Thank you!

Please consider a gift to support the good works of our Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul.

- You are invited to become a member of our parish family and take part in our ministries, programs, events, and worship. Please speak with Father Gill, Father Biedrzycki, Deacon Burgos or Sr. Eleanor McCann after any Sunday Mass and one of them can help you register
- **Planned Gifts** – call and leave a message for Rose at 215-561-1313, so she may discuss with you long-term ways that may be best for you such as annuities, life insurance, stock, estate planning and memorial gifts
- **Text to Give** anytime, especially for your Sunday Mass offering – text “Cathedral” to 215-709-9955
- **Venmo us @cathedralbasilica**
- **Donate on-line** at <http://cathedralphila.org/donate/> or scan this QR code:



### What's Happening at the Parish Outside the Liturgical Schedule

**Dec. 23** Perpetual Novena to Saint Katharine Drexel, following the 7:15 AM and 12:05 PM Masses.

**Dec. 23 & Dec. 30** No Catechetical Session, NR, 7PM

### New Year's Mass Schedule

<https://cathedralphila.org/christmas-and-new-years-schedule/>

**CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE PREVIOUS BULLETIN**

***Please remember these parishioners and friends of the Cathedral Parish in your prayers/ Ora por los enfermos:***

Mary Goudsward, Nancy Rice, Edward McCarty, Paige Bednarsky, Loyalty, Lucila C. Castor, Mark Louie Castor, Judy Miller, Marie Rizzi, Daniel Damon, Nancy, Jacqueline and her intentions, Anthony Pelle, Jr., Baby Ava Hope, David Blue, Jeannette Argir, Judy Day, Wally Dalton, Baby Benjamin Summers, Eileen Maher, and those in nursing homes or hospitals and all the sick.

***To add or remove parishioners, friends or family members to the prayer list, please send an email to: [sr.mrparadis@archphila.org](mailto:sr.mrparadis@archphila.org), or call Sister Mary Raphael, Parish Outreach Coordinator, at the Cathedral Parish Office, 215-561-1313 Monday through Thursday. Por favor envíe un email o llame a la oficina parroquial para añadir o remover los nombres de la lista de personas que estén enfermas.***



## ***Declaración de la Misión de la Parroquia Catedral de los Santos Pedro y Pablo***

Con Jesucristo como nuestra Cabeza y Fundamento, la Parroquia Catedral de los Santos Pedro y Pablo forma una vibrante comunidad Católica Romana en el centro de la ciudad y sirve a todos aquellos que vienen a la Catedral Basílica, la Iglesia Madre de la Arquidiócesis de Filadelfia. Nuestra comunidad parroquial profesa nuestra fe católica, ministra a los demás y da la bienvenida a todos, enraizada en la Palabra de Dios y la celebración de los sacramentos de Jesucristo, nuestro Señor y Salvador.

*Adoptado por el Consejo Pastoral  
Parroquial, agosto 10, 2021*

## **BOLETIN INFORMATIVO**

Oficina para Católicos Hispanos

**CLICK HERE**

<https://oficinahispanacatolica.org/wp-content/>

## **Misa Televisada en Español**

En UNIVISIÓN 65 - Todos los domingos a las  
**6:30 AM**

**La Santa Misa Grabada en línea**

## **SACRAMENTO DE LA RECONCILIACIÓN**

Los domingos a las 12:00 PM en la Capilla

## **EVENTOS DE INTERES**

Para ver los eventos que se llevarán a cabo en  
la Catedral Basílica de los Santos

Pedro y Pablo visite:

<https://cathedralphila.org/category/events/>

## **Presencia** EL MISTERIO DE LA EUCARISTÍA



¿Por qué es tan especial la Eucaristía para los católicos? Aun cuando a simple vista solo parece ser pan y vino, es en realidad la "fuente y cumbre" de la vida cristiana. Presencia: El Misterio de la Eucaristía explora la verdad y la belleza de la presencia real de Cristo en la Eucaristía, desde sus orígenes en la Sagrada Escritura, hasta su profundo rol en la vida de la Iglesia y sus miembros. Es el crescendo de la Historia de Salvación.

Visite [FORMED.org](https://formed.org) o vaya a  
<https://watch.formed.org/presencia>

Visítanos, dale «me gusta» y comparte con nosotros en el mundo virtual en la página «Arquidiócesis de Filadelfia - Católicos Hispanos»: [www.facebook.com/HispanosPhilly](https://www.facebook.com/HispanosPhilly)

## **REFLEXIÓN DEL PÁRROCO**

Estimados feligreses,

*¡Este es el cuarto domingo de Adviento!* Tradicionalmente, este domingo se observa con María, la Madre de Dios. María, con su Fiat en la anunciación, concibe al Hijo de Dios en su vientre bendito. Este momento notable en el plan divino de salvación y en la vida de la Santísima Virgen se convierte en un momento similar en cada uno de nosotros. Con nuestra digna recepción de la Sagrada Comunión en la Misa, también nosotros damos residencia al Hijo de Dios en nuestros corazones y en nuestras vidas. Mientras toda la Iglesia espera la celebración del misterio de Navidad, con el Verbo hecho carne, para que pueda encarnarse en nosotros con cada Sagrada Comunión, y que estemos llenos de inmensa gratitud por tan gran don. Que las palabras de Santa Isabel a su prima sean ciertas para cada uno de nosotros: "Bendita tú que creías que se cumpliría lo que te había dicho el Señor" (Lucas 1, 45). *Nada se Compara con Estar Ahí*, con su enfoque en la necesidad insustituible de estar *en persona* para la celebración de la Santa Misa, nos recuerda que solo *en persona* podemos comer y beber el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo y así que Él habite verdaderamente dentro de nosotros en su Misterio Eucarístico.

*Por favor, consulte el horario de las Misas para la Solemnidad de la Natividad del Señor, sábado 25 de diciembre del 2021, un Día de Precepto, que se encuentra en otra parte de esta edición del Boletín Parroquial.* Durante estos últimos días de Adviento, el Sacramento de la Penitencia y la Reconciliación está disponible en la Basílica, de lunes a viernes a partir de las 11:30 AM. ¡Planifique hoy para hacer una buena confesión para Navidad!

*Los animo a todos a exhibir el Nacimiento en su hogar —en algunos casos puede ser solo una tarjeta de Navidad con la imagen del Nacimiento del Señor— y que sea una ocasión para reflexionar sobre el gran regalo de la Navidad.* Reflexione sobre cómo el Niño Salvador nos trae a cada uno de nosotros la luz del inmenso amor del Padre y la promesa de nuestra redención y salvación. Dios viene a nosotros para que podamos acercarnos a Dios. Cuando esté en la Basílica, tómese un tiempo para detenerse y orar en el Nacimiento de nuestra parroquia y confiar en la cercanía del Salvador a usted y a todos aquellos que recuerda en oración.

*¡Mantenga viva la Navidad!* El día de Navidad, este sábado 25 de diciembre del 2021, tiene una celebración especial de la octava u ocho días que concluye el sábado 1 de enero del 2022, la Solemnidad de María, la Santa Madre de Dios. El tiempo de Navidad dura hasta el domingo 9 de enero del 2022, la Fiesta del Bautismo del Señor, con la gran Solemnidad de la Epifanía del Señor celebrada en los Estados Unidos el domingo 2 de enero del 2022. El mundo que nos rodea cierra la Navidad en algunos casos el 26 de diciembre. Como cristianos, se nos anima a mantener viva la época navideña con todo su carácter festivo, incluidas las decoraciones y los villancicos. Esto es para que podamos recordar el gran Misterio de la Navidad. Jesús, el Hijo de Dios, asume nuestra humanidad y comparte con nosotros su divinidad. Este misterio nunca será entendido completamente por nosotros. Sin embargo, si nos permitimos toda la Navidad para reflexionar sobre ella y celebrarla, viviremos más plenamente de ella.

*El próximo domingo, la segunda colecta estará dirigida al apoyo de los distintos ministerios de la Parroquia Catedral.* Puede enviar sus ofrendas dominicales a la oficina parroquial de la Catedral o hacer uso de las muchas formas de donar electrónicamente. Consulte <http://cathedralphila.org/donate/>. Muchas gracias por su bondad y generosidad con la Parroquia Catedral.

Les deseo a todos ustedes, nuestros feligreses y visitantes, una feliz y santa Navidad. ¡Que el Salvador recién nacido te llene de su gracia! Cuento con mis oraciones y las de todos nuestros sacerdotes, especialmente en la Misa de Navidad.

Padre Dennis Gill, Rector

## Spiritual Direction

Offered by: Sister Eleanor McCann, RSM, Parish Pastoral Associate

### Part 4: What is a typical session like?

You may make an appointment for any Tuesday or Thursday by calling the Rectory Office: 215-561-1313. The meetings take place in a private area in the rectory. After introductory comments, the directee shares his or her reason for the visit. This engenders dialogue for further information for the director. Eventually the personal faith life of the directee comes into play. Some questions that help to bring this forward include the following:

**Am I able to describe my relationship with God? What stands between God and me?**

**What area of my life causes concern to me? How might I discuss this with God?**

**Is something in my heart or "gut" giving me a nudge to move in a certain direction?**

**What might be my question (s) for the director?**

*The directee seeks truth in God and comes forward for spiritual guidance.*

*Would this be a meaningful practice for you?*

### Communion for the Sick



The priests of the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul are prepared to serve the spiritual needs of our Catholic brothers and sisters who live in Residences such as **Atria, Kennedy House, Penn Center House, Riverside Presbyterian, Watermark, Spring Garden Towers, and anyone else who may be confined to their homes.** Therefore, if you are aware of anyone who would like a priest to visit and administer the Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of the Sick, and Holy Communion, please let us know. There is no better way that we can emulate Jesus Christ than by sharing his love with all whom he places in our paths, especially the sick and the aged who long for his healing presence.

Please pass the above requested information on to us by calling the **Parish Office at 215-561-1313**. Be assured of the love, concern, and prayers of your priests at the Cathedral, and in your goodness, pray for us that we may always be channels of Christ's love and peace to others. God bless you always and in all ways.

## CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

### CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL AND SHRINE OF SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

#### CONFESSIONS FOR CHRISTMAS 2021

Sundays of Advent

9:00 AM, 12 Noon (in Spanish in the Chapel),  
and 5:30 PM in the Basilica

Monday through Friday, at 11:30 AM in the Basilica

Saturdays of Advent 4:15 PM in the Basilica

#### Resources for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

can be found on the website of the ODW,  
[http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/  
archdiocesan-guidelines/](http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/archdiocesan-guidelines/)

#### MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS 2021

**Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord,  
December 25**

**A Holy Day of Obligation**

**Friday, Christmas Eve, December 24, 2021**

**5:00 PM Solemn Vigil Mass ([live streamed](#))  
and 7:30 PM Vigil Mass in the Basilica**

**Saturday, Christmas Day, December 25, 2021**

**12:00 AM Midnight**

Solemn Mass in the Basilica

**8:00 AM, 10:00 AM – Solemn Mass, and**

**12:00 PM Noon – Solemn Mass in the Basilica.**

There is no evening Mass.

#### MASSES FOR SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

**Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph  
December 26, 2021**

*Follows the regular Sunday Mass schedule*

**Sunday, December 26, 2021**

8:00 AM Mass, 9:30 AM Mass,

11:00 AM Solemn Mass, 12:30 PM Mass

(in Spanish in the Cathedral Chapel)

and 6:30 PM Mass in the Basilica

*Confessions on Sunday, December 26, 2021*

*9:00 AM, 12 Noon (in Spanish in the Chapel)  
and 5:30 PM in the Basilica*



### MASS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Sunday, January 9, 2022 at 2pm**

**Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul**

The **Office of Catechetical Formation** invites catechists through out the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to participate in the annual Mass for Religious Education which will be celebrated by **Archbishop Nelson Pérez** in the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. At the conclusion of the liturgy, the Archbishop will present anniversary awards individually to parish religious education catechists and Directors of Religious Education. With great joy we extend our congratulations on your nomination by your Pastor and Director of Religious Education for a catechetical award which honors your years of dedication. For more information go to <https://phillyocf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Save-the-date-priest-mailing.pdf>

## CATECHETICAL SESSION FOR ADULTS

-Adult faith formation-

### A Review of Participation at Mass

Thursday, January 6, 2022, 7:00 PM

Meeting in the Neumann Room

The weekly catechetical session is primarily for the adults among us who are preparing to receive the Easter Sacraments. However, **anyone** interested in the topic for better understanding and faith formation is most welcome to attend. Anyone, especially our parishioners, seeking more information on the reception of the Sacraments or assisting as a sponsor, please call the Parish Office at 215-561-1313 or email Father Dennis Gill at [fr.dgill@archphila.org](mailto:fr.dgill@archphila.org)



A Come & See Weekend is a perfect opportunity for high school men who are considering a vocation to come to St Charles Borromeo Seminary to see what seminary life is like and explore the possibility of their own call to the priesthood.

We begin with Mass on Saturday morning (11 AM) and the weekend ends Evening Prayer on Sunday (5:30 PM).

For more information about this event, please contact Fr. Friel, Vocation Director, at 610-667-5778 or Susan Matour, Associate Director, at [smatour@archphila.org](mailto:smatour@archphila.org).

**Please register for the January 22-23, 2022 Weekend NO LATER than January 12, 2022 by clicking [https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eif6sdn6515797fc&oseq=&c=&ch=)**

**[oeidk=a07eif6sdn6515797fc&oseq=&c=&ch=](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eif6sdn6515797fc&oseq=&c=&ch=)**

## EVANGELIZATION

*"...A body you prepared for me..."*  
*Advent Series (Pt. 4)*

There are still a few days of left of Advent in which we may prepare well for the anniversary of Jesus' coming in the flesh at Christmas. Over the past several weeks we have considered several ways to prepare well for Jesus' coming. To date, we have looked at the importance of making a good confession, of prayer and of almsgiving. The last way we may prepare well for Christ's coming is by fasting.

Fasting in its simplest form involves abstaining from food or drink. Today, many of us probably think of fasting as something we only take part in during the season of Lent or in preparation for some medical procedure or diet plan. This is unfortunate. Fasting in times past was a much more regular part of the life of every Catholic.

In days past, the traditional day of fasting was Friday in commemoration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. It was observed primarily by abstaining from meat. We still see this practice in Lent. In Lent this fast was joined by a more rigorous restriction on eating as well (for example, the Fast of Good Friday with some modifications was observed throughout the whole of Lent except for Sundays).

As the obligations around fasting were relaxed the emphasis on offering some penance for sins on Friday. Catholics are still supposed to satisfy the penitential observance of Friday in some other way. When Jesus speaks to his disciples in the Gospel about fasting, he does not say "**If** you fast...do X, Y & Z..." Rather he says: "**When** you fast..." St. Thomas Aquinas notes that by fasting one trains the body against sin, frees the mind to more easily contemplate higher things and finally to satisfy for sins.

We might think of the benefit of fasting for our souls as being analogous to the effort we put into cleaning our house in anticipation of guests for Christmas Dinner. We want to prepare a worthy place for them to enjoy this meal together. If there is junk all over the place and it is clear nothing was prepared for them, they may get the impression they are as welcome as they thought.

In the tradition of the Church, a day or days of fasting and abstinence would precede great feasts so believers might more worthily celebrate the mysteries of Jesus' life. Christmas Eve, was traditionally one such day as this. This week it may be good to offer up some small fast in anticipation of Jesus' coming at Christmas. Pass up on breakfast or lunch and offer the money you may have spent to someone in need. You might simply offer up the pangs of hunger you suffer for a soul in need as well. Little offerings like these can help cleanse the soul of sin and make it a warm and welcoming place for the King of Kings who is to come!

*Come, Lord Jesus, Come.*

Fr. Matthew Biedrzycki

## UPCOMING MASS IN THE EXTRAORDINARY FORM

Sung Latin Mass for the Epiphany of Our Lord  
Thursday, January 6, 2022 @ 7:00PM  
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul

Latin Mass Resources: <http://catholiclatinmass.org/>

<sup>1</sup>Mt 6:16  
<sup>2</sup>Summa II-II Q.147, a1