

Second Sunday of Advent

HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS

John the Baptist preached from the desert. The desert not far from Jerusalem is extremely rugged, where steep hills and deep valleys are common across a barren landscape. When John quoted Isaiah in today's Gospel, this rough terrain stirred the imagination of John's listeners. John proclaimed that these hills and valleys are to be made level, to provide a smooth path for God to enter.

John's listeners recognized that the height of hills and the depth of valleys are similar to human attitudes and relationships: heights of personal pride and depths of discouragement and fear. Hills and valleys evoked how people treat each other, with some people raised high and others brought low. They suggested how social structures embody and harden these tendencies with large-scale systems of military, political, or economic oppression. John proclaimed that God was about to alter this social landscape through the work of Jesus.

EARTH-MOVING

Transforming the human landscape, like the task of smoothing the desert hills and valleys, is an enormous undertaking, truly the work of God. Yet God looks for partners in this transformation. John the Baptist, and Jesus afterward, called followers to participate in God's work, and to begin with repentance. We the Church respond to this call today, and acknowledge our ongoing need for God's mercy and forgiveness. Our Advent preparation for Christmas includes opening our hearts to God's forgiveness, so that Jesus might come to take residence there.

We join in God's earth-moving project by repenting of how we block God's path with resentments and fears. When we are brought low in our lives, we seek God's help, and God will enlist the help of others. When we realize that we reside on mountains of advantage or privilege that place others in valleys, we are to repent and to change how we live. When we bring healing and justice to others, we are sharing in God's earth-shaking work, and preparing a straight pathway for our God.

Today's Readings: Bar 5:1-9; Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Phil 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6

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ALTURAS Y PROFUNDIDADES

Juan el Bautista predicó desde el desierto. Aquel desierto que no está lejos de Jerusalén es extremadamente escabroso, donde colinas empinadas y valles profundos son comunes en todo ese paisaje desértico. Cuando en el Evangelio de hoy, Juan cita a Isaías, este terreno escabroso estimula la imaginación de quienes lo escuchan. Juan proclamó que estas colinas y valles se aplanarían, para proporcionar un camino parejo para que Dios entre.

Quienes escucharon a Juan reconocieron que la altura de las colinas y las profundidades de los valles eran similares a las relaciones y actitudes de las personas: alturas del orgullo personal y profundidades del miedo y desaliento. Colinas y valles evocan cómo las personas tratan unas a otras, con algunas personas altamente elevadas y otras menospreciadas. Ellas sugieren cómo las estructuras sociales representan y endurecen estas tendencias con una larga escala de sistemas opresores militares, políticos o económicos. Juan proclamó que Dios estaba a punto de transformar este paisaje social por medio de las obras de Jesús.

MOVIMIENTO DE LA TIERRA

Transformar el paisaje humano, como la tarea de aplanar las colinas y valles desérticos, es una tarea inmensa, verdaderamente el trabajo de Dios. Sin embargo, Dios busca compañeros en esta transformación. Juan el Bautista, y después Jesús, ambos invitaron a personas a seguirlos para colaborar en el trabajo de Dios, empezaron con el arrepentimiento. Nosotros, la Iglesia, respondemos hoy a esta invitación y reconocemos nuestra necesidad constante del perdón y de la misericordia de Dios. Nuestra preparación de Adviento para la Navidad incluye apertura de nuestro corazón para el perdón de Dios, para que Jesús pueda venir y habitar en él.

Nos unimos al proyecto de Dios para mover la Tierra arrepiéndonos de cómo obstruimos el camino de Dios con resentimientos y miedos. Cuando somos menospreciados en nuestras vidas, buscamos la ayuda de Dios y Dios consigue la ayuda de otras personas. Cuando nos damos cuenta que vivimos en montañas de ventajas o privilegios que pone a otras personas en los valles, debemos arrepentirnos y cambiar cómo vivimos. Cuando llevamos alivio y justicia a otras personas, estamos compartiendo el trabajo de Dios para sanar la Tierra y preparar un camino recto para nuestro Dios.

Lecturas de hoy: Bar 5:1-9; Sal 126 (125):1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Flp 1:4-6, 8-11; Lc 3:1-6

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Please Pray for the Sick

Prayer List Updates



| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Baby Gracie Bernal | Frances Ramirez | Petra P. Chavez |
| Benito A. Perales | Alex Hernandez | Sister Louise - OLLU |
| Francisco Angel Perales | Jesse Diaz | Aurora Perez |
| Anselmo A. Perales | John Ruiz | Frances Lozano |
| Mario Andres Perales | Pastor Stuart Julee | Alfredo M. Moreno |
| Martha Lucy Vega & Children | Victoria Cepeda | Celina Herrera |
| Jesse Vega | Mario Moreno | Yolanda Verastegui |
| Jesse Mario Vega | Arturo M. Moreno | Amy Gomez |
| Orlando L. Vega & Children | Annamarie Vasquez | Virginia & Jose Ponce, Jr. |
| Roxsandra Gallardo | Roland Martinez, Sr. | Daniel Rogers |
| Paul Sifuentes | Roland Martinez, Jr. | Santos Aguilar |
| Lucy Clare Treviño | Olivia Ibarra | Olivia Lopez |
| David Santoyo | Baby Violet Flores | Hortencia Rodriguez |
| Lupita Gomez | Connie Flores | San Juanita Sanchez |
| Irene Perez | Philip Saldaña | Douglas Montey |
| Katelynn Rae Ramirez | Linda Davila | Delia Riojas |
| Louie & Estefana Reyes | Elva Benavides | Cecilia Espinoza |
| | Marco Mermea | Estela De La Vega |
| | Robert Campos | |

We thank God for the healing of so many sick parishioners. Please be courteous and call the Parish Office if your loved one is no longer suffering or sick. Thank you.

YOUR STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

November 24 & 25, 2018

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Thanksgiving Mass 10:00 AM | -\$ 226.00 | (118) |
| 5:00 PM | -\$ 994.00 | (096) |
| 8:00 AM | -\$ 459.00 | (067) |
| 10:00 AM | -\$ 935.00 | (110) |
| 12:00 NOON | -\$ 616.00 | (133) |
| Religious Education | -\$ 356.96 | 2nd Collection |
| 2018 Gift of Giving | -\$ 166.50 | |
| Mail In | -\$ 76.00 | |
| TOTAL | -\$ 3,869.96 | |

2018 GIFT OF GIVING

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Contributions 11/24-25, 2018 | \$ 166.50 |
| RUNNING BALANCE TOTAL | \$16,838.93 |

Announcements

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 8 - HEALING AFTER MASS

5:00 p.m. † Aurora Campos - Family

Sunday, December 9 - *HEALING AFTER 8 & 10 MASS

*8:00 a.m. † Ernestina & Guadalupe Huerta - Children

† Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño

† Maria J. Terrazas - Angie Canales

† Librada Cadena - Grace Salinas

In Thanksgiving Las Guadalupanas

*10:00 a.m. † Magdaleno Meza - Robert & Rosie Gallegos

† Margaret & † Martin Burrell - Daughter

† Daniel C. Arzola - Family

† Ryan Sanchez - Sanchez Family

Gift of Life Ralph Rodriguez - Mom & Brothers

12:00 p.m. † Albert F. Hinojosa

Monday, December 10

12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 11

12:00 p.m. Baby Violet Flores

Wednesday, December 12

8:15 a.m. † Maria Jaramillo - Rose Rodriguez

† Guadalupe Cadena - Grace Salinas

† Aurelio Banda - Wife & Children

7:00 p.m. † David De Los Santos - Mom

Thursday, December 13

12:00 p.m. † Jeannie Ybarra

Friday, December 14

12:00 p.m. † Arturo De La Vega

Saturday, December 15

5:00 p.m. † Dolores Verastegui - Hector & Diana

† Ignacio & Beatrice V. Gomez - Virginia Valdez

† Eusebio Arocha - Family

† Tillie Hernandez - Mary

Gift of Life Arturo Parra - Family

Sunday, December 16

8:00 a.m. † Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño

† Juan Silva - Familia

† Hilda Valdez - Gloria

10:00 a.m. † Margaret & † Martin Burrell - Daughter

† Daniel C. Arzola - Family

† Gregorio Ramirez - Family

† Susie Meza - Robert & Rosie Gallegos

† Nico Gutierrez - Friend

12:00 p.m. For All Holy Souls in Purgatory

In Loving Memory

We pray for the souls of our dearly departed who have passed from our parish community:



Sanctuary Light
† Jacinta Weddel



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners:

I would like to thank each and everyone of you who attended reconciliation service, participated in the Mass of the Immaculate Conception, and attended the Advent Talk and music by David Kauffman this past week. We are preparing for the second coming of the Lord. Jesus Christ who was born in Bethlehem of Judea. He became a man and took our human conditions in order for us to be saved. He died on the cross and gave us life everlasting. He promised us to return and take us all home to be with his Father, our Father, forever. As we prepare for Christmas, these next four weeks let us anticipate that second coming of the Lord in our lives. May His presence transform us and make us better people. May His presence also bring us together as the people of God rooted in love, kindness, forgiveness and compassion. We pray that the kingship of Jesus Christ of humility, understanding, service, acceptance, mercy and love characterize this Advent Season.

Christmas Gift of Giving is open for any one or more families in need of assistance this Christmas. Feel free to acquire the application form after each mass in the foyer or speak to me in person for more information. You may also refer a family with children that may benefit from this Christ Gift of Giving. I thank each one of you for your generosity and continued support for the needy of our community.

I am proud to announce to you that we have secured three major project in our community for the purpose of enhancing the infrastructure of our Church. The projects are: 1) new ramps in the formation house, 2) eight videos surrounding the perimeters and interior of the church and 3) interior acoustical panels. The ramps will facilitate the entrance in the Formation House especially for those struggling to climb the stairs. The videos will improve the security of our property and make us safer. The acoustical panels will have better control of the sound and allow the community to hear the Word of God better. We hope these additional projects will improve the infrastructure of our community and expect them completed by Christmas. Thank you for your generosity in accomplishing these projects.

Each of my parishioners is cordially invited to join me next summer on my annual pilgrimage to Italy from June 10th thru June 20th, 2019. We will be visiting Venice, Florence, Padua, Assisi and Rome. Experience firsthand the opportunity to visit beautiful Basilicas, ancient Roman ruins, the Vatican Museum and an audience with Pope Francis. A brochure is readily available on request at the church office.

May God bless you always,

Father Fidèle Okitembo Dikete, Pastor
fr.fidele@stjohnberchmans.com

Announcements

www.stjohnberchmans.com

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — Take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God (Baruch 5:1-9)

Psalm — The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy (Psalm 126).

Second Reading — I am confident that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil 1:4-6, 8-11).

Gospel - The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth (Luke 3:1-6).

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 5:17-26
 Tue: Is 40:1-11; Ps 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13; Mt 18:12-14
 Wed: Zec 2:14-17; Judith 13:18-19; Lk 1:1-39
 Thu: Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9-13; Mt 11:11-15
 Fri: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
 Sat: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80:2-3, 15-19; Mt 17:9-13
 Sun: Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18

Events of the Week ~ December 9 - 16, 2018

Sunday, December 9

7:30 a.m. Divine Mercy - Church
 8:00 a.m. **Spanish Mass** - Church
 10:00 a.m. **Mass** - Church
 12:00 p.m. **Mass** - Church
 2:00 p.m. **ACTS TOY BINGO** - Cafeteria

Monday, December 10

12:00 p.m. **Communion Service** - Chapel

Tuesday, December 11

12:00 p.m. **Mass** - Chapel
 6:30 p.m. ACTS Core Meeting - Formation House

Wednesday, December 12

8:15 a.m. **Children's Mass** - Church
 9:15 a.m. Rosary Makers - Offsite
 6:30 p.m. Mañanitas
 7:00 p.m. **Bilingual Mass**

Thursday, December 13

12:00 a.m. **Mass** - Chapel
 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts - Cafeteria
 6:30 p.m. Baptism Parent Meeting - Formation House
 7:00 p.m. Youth Ministry - Formation House

Friday, December 14

12:00 p.m. **Mass** - Chapel
 7:00 p.m. Christmas Concert (All Choirs)- Church

Saturday, December 15

5:00 p.m. **Mass** - Church

Sunday, December 16

7:30 a.m. Divine Mercy - Church
 8:00 a.m. **Spanish Mass** - Church
 10:00 a.m. **Mass** - Church
 12:00 p.m. **Mass** - Church



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Please join us every Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in our Chapel. Exposition of the Holy Eucharist is the REAL presence of our Lord and Savior. Just as you can't be exposed to the sun without receiving it's rays, neither can you come to Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament without receiving the divine rays of His Grace, Love and Peace.

CHURCH CLEANING MINISTRY

Our parish is always in need of a few good hands every Saturday morning to help us clean our beautiful church. It takes a lot of work and assistance from many individuals to prepare our church for Mass. We thank you for your commitment to our place of worship and to our community.

Cleaning Schedule of Ministries

December 15, 2018 — CYO

YOUR STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Weekend of December 1 & 2, 2018

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 5:00 PM | -\$1,223.00 | (059) |
| 8:00 AM | -\$ 513.50 | (067) |
| 10:00 AM | -\$1,345.14 | (145) |
| 12:00 NOON | -\$1,173.28 | (180) |
| Children's Basket | -\$ 40.00 | |
| Children's Mass | -\$ 40.30 | |
| Capital Improvements | -\$ 621.26 | 2nd Collection |
| 2018 Gift of Giving | -\$ 216.35 | |
| Mail In | -\$ 210.00 | |
| TOTAL | -\$5,382.83 | |

SECOND COLLECTION

December 9, 2018 - Retirement Fund for Religious

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED
 SUPPORT OF OUR CHURCH**

2018 GIFT OF GIVING

Contributions 12/1-2, 2018 \$ 216.35
RUNNING BALANCE TOTAL \$17,055.28



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

All requests must be sent by email to osantoyo1104@gmail.com and will be finalized for approval by Father Fidele. We ask that you submit your requests at least two (2) weeks in advance for placement in the bulletin.



NEW TO OUR PARISH AND WANT TO REGISTER AS A NEW PARISHIONER?

If you are interested in registering as a new parishioner at St. John Berchmans Church, please contact our Parish Office at 210-434-3247 to fill out a registration form.

Announcements

www.stjohnberchmans.com



SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT: HOPE

We light a second purple candle on the second Sunday of Advent to represent the hope of Christ coming to the world.

This week, we ask Him to move us to action, so that we can prepare ourselves for both His coming at Christmas and His Second Coming, He offers Himself freely, but we must freely accept His offer in order to attain salvation.

God's plan for humanity unfolded in the town of Bethlehem, the birthplace of the Messiah, joyously fulfilling a long-awaited promise. Today we confidently wait for the Messiah's triumphant return.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It's that time of year again! If you would like to order a Christmas Poinsettia in memory of your loved one, please call the Parish Office at 210-434-3247 and ask for Mrs. Rosa Moreno. The altar will be decorated with the poinsettias and they may be picked up in the office after Christmas.

The cost per poinsettia is \$10.00 and we will sell only 65 poinsettias. Thank you!



SALESIAN SISTERS CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE 2018

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9
1:00 PM-5:00PM**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 10
9:00 AM - 12:00 NOON**

Unique Item Crafts, Raffle prizes, Home Décor, Home-made cookies, pecan pies, peanut brittle, and much more.

Phone Contact: 210.432.1919

Where: Provincial House, 6019 Buena Vista Street, San Antonio, TX 78237

UPCOMING IMPORTANT CHURCH EVENTS:

⇒ **ST. JOHN BERCHMANS ACTS TOY BINGO**

Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in the School Cafeteria. \$7.00 per card (15 regular games)
Donations for toys are greatly appreciated and you may bring them to the parish office. Thank you!

⇒ **VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018**

School Mass - 8:15 a.m.
Mañanitas - 6:30 p.m.
Bilingual Mass - 7:00 p.m. (Reception to follow)

⇒ **CHRISTMAS CONCERT - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2018**

All Choirs Concert - 7:00 p.m.



ADOPT-A-SENIOR CHRISTMAS STOCKING STUFFER EVENT

Saturday, December 15th from 9am - 3pm at the Guadalupe Community Center
1801 W. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd.

Spread cheer and volunteer! Stuff stockings and distribute gifts to our Senior Community!
For more information, call Volunteer Services at 210-222-1294.

AWAITING THE SALVATION OF GOD

The world does not seem big enough to contain the jubilation of the first reading. In the Gospel reading, the Roman empire isn't big enough, either. The great powers of Rome are named and made to stand waiting for the arrival of God's salvation. And we find Paul meditating joyfully on what really matters.

According to Baruch, the city of Jerusalem is like a person standing on tiptoe looking for God's salvation, which is coming from the east. Those who were led away on foot, heads down, now come back, a proud people. Why, the very way is smoothed out. The path is lined with fragrant, lush trees.

It can't get any better than this, can it? Well, yes, it can. For a voice calls out in the desert. Here is the beginning of the salvation of God. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Can I properly discern what is of value and then act according to those values?