

# Holy Spirit Catholic Church



## Parish Mission

"To be the light of our World by: Praying and Celebrating as a Eucharistic Community, serving those in need with unconditional love & generosity."

## PARISH VISION

"To be welcoming, multi-cultural and multi-generational Roman Catholic Faith Community, rooted in Scripture and Tradition, nourished by the Sacraments and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the light to our world by: Praying and celebrating as a Eucharistic Community, Instructing children and adults in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Serving the less fortunate with unconditional love & generosity and protecting human life in all its stages."

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT & THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



DECEMBER 22, 2024



### MASS TIMES

Monday	8:30am
Tuesday	8:30am
Wednesday	7:00pm with Novena of the Miraculous Medal
Thursday	8:30am
Friday	8:30am
Saturday	5:00pm Vigil Mass
Sunday	8:30am & 11:00am

### CONFESSIONS

Wednesday	6:20pm-6:50pm
Saturday	4:00pm-4:50pm

### ADORATION

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri	9:00am-3:00pm
Wed	9:00am-7:00pm

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

11665 Fort Caroline Rd Jacksonville, FL 32225  
Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:30pm  
P: (904) 641-7244

### CONTACT US

[www.holyspiritchurchjax.org](http://www.holyspiritchurchjax.org)  
[info@holyspiritchurchjax.org](mailto:info@holyspiritchurchjax.org)



## SERVICE MINISTRY CONTACT

Adoration	Ben & Perlita Lipat	904-236-0439
Altar Servers	Jennifer Cabrey	904-993-9500
Altar Society	Linda Davis	904-329-2714
Angels of Mercy	Kathie Garrett	904-565-1859
Annulments	Ann Hergenroether	904-591-8004
Another Chance Fellowship Group for Cancer Survivors	Paulette Daniel	904-233-1488
Bible Study	Ron Coleman	904-234-4743
Choir-Saturday 5pm	Phil Militante	904-620-8841
Choir-Sunday 8:30am	Bob Vigliano	904-476-4240
Choir-Sunday 11:00am	JoJo Munoz	904-422-1764
Coffee & Donuts Ministry	Dwayne & Allison Stanton	321-333-8237
Garden Ministry	Donna Martin & Jean Camperson	610-751-4815
Healing Prayer Ministry	Jeff & Vickie Slade	904-449-1447
Homebound Ministry	Jackie Ranck	904-641-7244
Hope & Consolation	Pam Andres	904-571-5998
Hospitality	Sandy Coleman	904-613-2993
Knights of Columbus	Bob Winters	513-659-4085
Legion of Mary	Ligaya Kirkland	904-923-0999
Light of Jesus Family	Melone Brackett	904-514-5061
Men's Club	Dave Garrett	904-565-1859
Offertory Counting Cmte.	Diane Davis	904-641-7244
Parish Nurse and Health Ministry	Rosita Inman	inmanrosita@gmail.com
Prayer Blanket Ministry	Kathy Lehane	904-477-0808
Quilts for Vets	Maria Kendrick	904-626-1288
Religious Store	Kathie Garrett	904-565-1859
Respect Life Coordinator	Joey Sims	615-653-8965
Rosary Ministry	Marti Pounder	904-252-7966
Scouts-Boys & Cubs	Linda Byer	904-483-6113
Society of Divine Mercy	Fred Althoff	904-229-7604
St. Paul Street Evangelization	Susan Riker	904-610-0649
St. Vincent de Paul Society:	Hal Gibson	904-955-2454
St. Vincent de Paul Society:	Help Center	904-312-3242
Website	Regin Varghese	regin@holyspiritchurchjax.org
Wine & Cheese	Maria Cartolano	904-610-5674

### SACRAMENTS

#### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

**Baptism Class — Registration required:** Classes are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm in the FLC. You **MUST** be registered parishioner for at least 6 months.

Baptisms — 2nd and 4th Sunday after the 11AM Mass or during any of the weekend Mass liturgies is also available.

#### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Wednesday—6:20pm & Saturday—4:00pm or by appointment

#### SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the Month **after** the 8:30am Mass. You may also call the church office to make an appointment. We also have dedicated Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to bring Holy Communion to the sick and the homebound.

#### SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

Couples must contact Father John Peter & Cheryl Bergman at least 8 months in advance.

## CLERGY

### Pastor

Fr. John Peter Arul, MSFS      johnarul@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Deacon, Coordinator of Sacristans

Patrick Goin      pgoin@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Deacon, RCIA Coordinator

Ray Stiles      rstiles@holyspiritchurchjax.org

## PARISH STAFF

### Business Manager

Jim Davis      jedd1803@aol.com

### Office Manager

Vickie Slade      vslade@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Office Receptionist

Cristine Tuano      ctuano@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Facilities Maintenance Manager

John Gomez      jgomez@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Coordinator of Religious Education

Colleen Gomez      cgomez@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Youth Ministry

Jane Collins      jcollins@holyspiritchurchjax.org

### Communications Director

Armon Antolin      jaantolin@holyspiritchurchjax.org

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Parish Finance Council

Nick Winiewicz      nbwz@bellsouth.net

### Parish Pastoral Council

John Wondracek      wondracek6@gmail.com

### Parish Stewardship Council

Ron Coleman      ron-coleman@comcast.net

## LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

### Coordinators of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Todd & Kathy Nennich      todd.nennich@gmail.com

### Coordinator of Lectors

Marti Pounder      holyspiritlectorministry@gmail.com

### Coordinator of Ushers

John DeLeon      jag\_02109\_1999@yahoo.com

### Wedding Coordinator

Cheryl Bergman      clbergman@comcast.net



## HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Pre-K - 8th grade

P: 904.642.9165 | F: 904.642.1047

### Principal

Ms. Patricia Curley      PCurley@hscatholicschool.com

### Office Manager/Assistant to the Principal

Kim Klapkowski      kklapkowski@hscatholicschool.com

### Bookkeeper

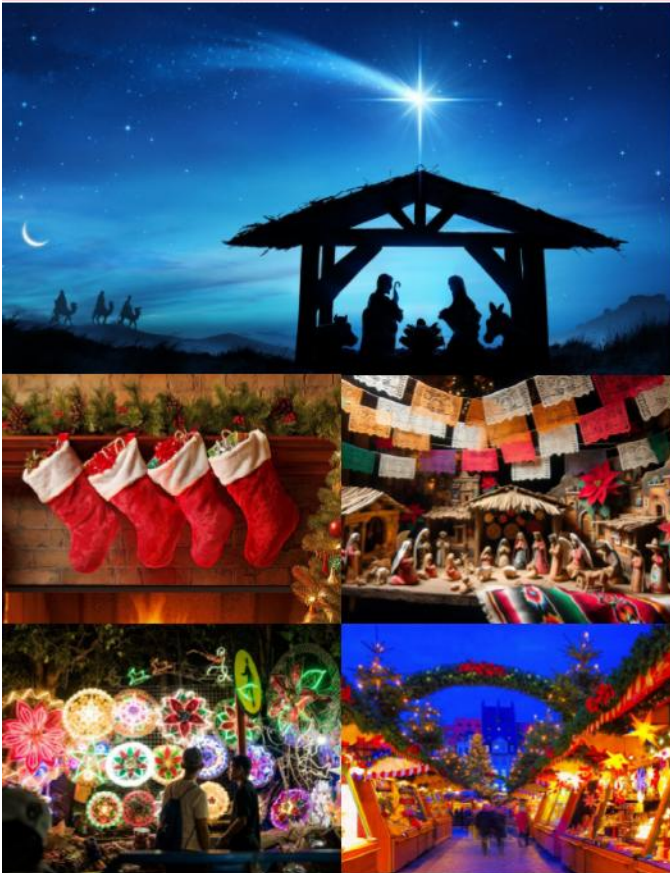
Noreen Bennett      nbennett@hscatholicschool.com

### BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS

For any possible submissions to the bulletin, please email them to **bulletin@holyspiritchurchjax.org** by the preceding Monday.

# WEEKLY SCHEDULE

# MASS INTENTIONS



## **Sun Dec 22**

Mass—8:30am, 11:00am  
 Coffee & Donuts—9:30am (FLC)  
 Bible Study—9:30am (FLC)  
 Life Teen—12:30pm (FLC)

## **Mon Dec 23** (church office closes @ 12PM, no adoration)

Mass—8:30am  
 Legion of Mary Meeting—5:00pm (FLC)

## **Tue Dec 24** (church office closed, no adoration)

Mass—5:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm

## **Wed Dec 25** (church office closed, no adoration)

Mass—9:00am, 11:00am

## **Thu Dec 26** (church office closed, no adoration)

Mass—8:30am  
 Fransalian Meeting—11:00am (FLC)

## **Fri Dec 27** (church office closes @ 12PM, no adoration)

Mass—8:30am

## **Sat Dec 28**

Confessions—4:00pm  
 Mass—5:00pm

## **Sun Dec 29**

Mass—8:30am, 11:00am  
 Coffee & Donuts—9:30am (FLC)  
 Bible Study—9:30am (FLC)  
 Life Teen—12:30pm (FLC)

<b>Sat</b>	Dec 21	5:00pm	+ Dorothy Keller By: Mathews Family  + Dustin James By: Mary Ann & Jeff James (MSFS Mass Intentions)
<b>Sun</b>	Dec 22	8:30am	For Holy Spirit Parishioners  In Thanksgiving By: Cynthia Deocampo (MSFS Mass Intention)
		11:00am	+ Gapasin Family, Mauro, Esmeria, Fernandito, Emerlinda, and Romalynn
<b>Mon</b>	Dec 23	8:30am	+ Jimmy Quartarero By: Ellen Quartarero  For Aurelia Loyola for her birthday By: Mom & Dad (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Tue</b>	Dec 24	5:00pm	For Holy Spirit Parishioners
		7:00pm	For Holy Spirit Parishioners
		10:00pm	For Holy Spirit Parishioners  For John & Alice Deleon on their wedding anniversary By: Alice Deleon (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Wed</b>	Dec 25	9:00pm	For Holy Spirit Parishioners
		11:00pm	For Holy Spirit Parishioners  In thanksgiving By: Bajao Family (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Thu</b>	Dec 26	8:30am	+ Jack Flannagan By: Family  For Toby Newton's deliverance & healing (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Fri</b>	Dec 27	8:30am	+ Jowell Loyola By: Parents  For deliverance, healing & protection of David Jeremy By: Mom (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Sat</b>	Dec 28	5:00pm	+ Wayne Mathews & Fred Gaida By: Mathews Family  For Gerardo Montenegro, Jr.'s healing and protection By: Doris Herrera (MSFS Mass Intention)
<b>Sun</b>	Dec 29	8:30am	For Holy Spirit Parishioners  For Toby Newton's deliverance & healing (MSFS Mass Intention)
		11:00am	+ Fatima Chambers By: Brian Chambers

# STEWARDSHIP

# PRAYERS FOR THE SICK



## Sacrificial Offering For December 15, 2024

Offertory	\$9,009.00
FLC Debt Reduction	\$2,940.00
Emergency Fund	\$305.00
School	\$811.00
Online Giving	\$3,929.00

## Thank you for your constant generosity in taking care of our Holy Spirit Parish!

Being a steward means that one:

- ⇒ Receives God's gifts gratefully
- ⇒ Cherishes and tends God's gifts responsibly
- ⇒ Shares God's gifts in love and justice
- ⇒ Returns God's gifts with increase.

Please consider making a one-time gift or sign up for recurring e-giving to help support our Parish.

### Donate online:

Text the word "GIVE" to 501-273-3327 Or follow the QR code:



Let's pray for those who are sick in our Holy Spirit community:

Alexis Chase  
 Anne Barrow  
 Catherine Lopez  
 Darlene Jones  
 Donald Smith  
 Elizabeth Owens  
 Flor Valerio  
 George Parnaby  
 Haley Allen  
 Jack Kaye  
 James Monroe  
 Jim McVety  
 Joseph Craney  
 Laurie Armstrong  
 Lynn Bonifacio  
 Mary Glorioso  
 Melaine Miller  
 Nancy Murray  
 Patricia Bayer  
 Rhonda Scott  
 Sandy Anderson  
 Thomas Lang  
 Tom Harbot  
 Troy Williams  
 Wyatt Freeman

Angela Maconaha  
 Bill McCoy  
 Celine Register  
 Devon Wells  
 Donald Sipler  
 Ervin Joseph  
 Gene A. Taylor  
 Gwen Scott  
 Henry Kendrick  
 Jake Jacobson  
 Jean Luke  
 Joanne Hughes  
 Ken Fabre  
 Luke Monroe  
 Mariann Ulatowski  
 Max White  
 Nancy Arbelo  
 Noah Besvold  
 Patty King  
 Rusty Bonifacio  
 Steve Rash  
 Tillie Lightfoot  
 Trey Campbell  
 Wesley Shaeffer

If you have a loved one that is sick or battling an illness, please call the church office to let us know so that we may include them in our list of prayer.

Let us also pray for our clergy:  
 Fr. John Peter Arul, MSFS  
 Dc. Pat Goin  
 Dc. Ray Stiles



Please pray for those in our community in the military.

## SECOND COLLECTIONS:

TBD: TBD

# PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

Let's pray for those in our Holy Spirit community that have passed away recently:

Elizabeth Camperson    David Rachal  
 Lillie Ruth Blue        Jean Osinski  
 Dc. Tom Alayu

If you have a loved one that has recently passed away during this month, please call the church office to let us know so that we may include them in our list of prayer.



*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

*May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.  
Amen.*

# FELLOWSHIP AND PRAYER

## Notice for the Holidays

Due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays there will be changes in church office hours and adoration hours.

### ADORATION Hour Changes:

No adoration from Dec. 20, 2024-Jan 5, 2025

*(Exception: There will be adoration on Dec. 31 @ 4PM before that evening Mass, in thanksgiving for the year.)*

**Regular Adoration hours will resume on Jan. 6, 2025**

### Church Office Hour Changes:

Dec. 23: closes early @ 12PM

Dec. 24 & 25: closed all day

Dec. 27: closes early @ 12PM

Dec. 31: closes early @ 12PM

Jan. 1, 2025: closed all day



**All other days for the next two weeks will have the regular office hours from 9:00am—4:30pm.**

Thank you for your understanding!

## THANK YOU, CHRIS RICE!

Chris Rice, the Holy Spirit Maintenance Supervisor, grew up at St Paul's Catholic Church at the Beach. He is the youngest of 9 children. Chris graduated from Bishop Kenny in 1981 and attended College at FSCJ. He was an avid altar server and a religious education teacher while helping many priests along the way with small chores. Chris has one son who has helped in the past with maintenance of our grounds as well. Chris enjoys spending time with his family, surfing and bike riding.

Chris started here at Holy Spirit in 1989. Having worked with 6 priests, 4 Principles, he still graces our grounds daily. Chris does the landscaping, fertilizing, pressuring washing and irrigation care, on church grounds, school and at the rectory. He also does our light maintenance around our campus.

Chris is known as "Chris of all trades." You ask him to help with something and before you know it, its gets done. Whether it's the light bulb to change, a plant to get watered, an air conditioner filter to change, or even changing a car battery, he gets it done! Chris has been a true asset to our parish for the past 35 years.

Congratulations on your retirement, Chris, and thank you for 35 years of dedicated service and commitment!



# Holy Spirit Catholic Church Christmas and New Year Masses

*Wishing you A Merry  
Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!*

## CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

Dec. 24, 2024, Tuesday

5:00pm - with Children's Christmas  
play

7:00pm

(\*11:15pm - **Christmas Cantata**)

## CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASS

Dec. 24, 2024, Tuesday

10:00pm

## CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Dec. 25, 2022, Wednesday

9:00am

11:00am

## NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS

Dec. 31, 2024, Tuesday

5:00pm

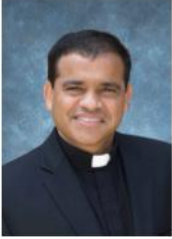
## NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES

Jan. 1, 2025, Wednesday

10:00AM



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are in the last leg of our Advent journey preparing our hearts and minds to welcome once again our Savior, Jesus Christ. On this Sunday, Our Blessed Mother shows us the path to true devotion and service, especially when she hears that her cousin Elizabeth is Pregnant, she leaves in 'Haste' to visit and spent some blessed moment with her. Mary's visit offers us great hope, for which we all long is built upon the foundation of little, simple, ordinary things, such as kindness, graciousness, welcome, patience, honesty, hospitality and compassion. Like Mary, may we come to see that our willingness to do little things for one another with great love and enthusiasm - to display "loving courtesy" - is the first step in our ultimate vocation: to give birth to the Great Promise of God's love for all people - Jesus Christ.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

Today, we celebrate Christmas, the birth of Jesus, the incarnation of God's Word of love. We proclaim and affirm, once again, that we are a privileged people, a people blessed and graced by God's unconditional love revealed in Jesus. As we celebrate Christmas, we contemplate the deepest and the most profound presence of God in our life. We contemplate the depth of God's Love and compassion for us his children.

Christmas Proclaims that we are born in an age of faith - may be weak faith, shallow faith, irrational faith, superstitious faith - But Faith with all its limitations. Christmas reminds us that we are fortunate heirs of devoted ages of faith. We have a heritage of faith. We have roots - we have connections with believers before us and around us and far away and near! Above all, we have this profound and intimate connection with our God. Our God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. He is "Emmanuel", God-With-Us." We are blessed and "Graced" and privileged to know "Emmanuel", "God with us." When fears threaten to overwhelm us or keep us from being authentic witnesses of the Gospel, knowing "God-with-us" transforms our fears and failings into courageous faith.

I pray that you have the most profound experience of Emmanuel, "God-with-us" wherever you may be and whatever you may be doing. And may that experience be your hope and your strength. May all you do in this season bring you and your family lasting joy!

Be grateful for today and every day, for the miracle of life, for the amazing grace and blessing of your history, for the men and women who gave you spirit and tradition for today, especially grateful for the birth of Jesus and the hope that He proclaimed. I pray that you have a Holy, Blessed and Joyful Christmas, filled with the love of God and the true life which He offers to us and may He grant us all His richest blessings in the New Year.

Loving Holy Spirit Family, Thank you for your generosity, faithfulness and commitment to our parish and to one another. I pray that the Newborn Baby Jesus, bless you and keep you safe in His love and I wish you "Merry Christmas and to all your loved ones".

Peace and Blessings,  
Fr. John Peter Arul, MSFS

"A God who became so small could only be  
mercy and love."  
~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux



# AROUND OUR PARISH & SCHOOL



## A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR MARRIED COUPLES:

Couples.....want to give each other something really special this Christmas? How about a gift filled with Romance and Excitement? That's just the beginning of what you will receive on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Sign up today to attend an upcoming

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on Feb 14-16 in Tallahassee, or April 4-6 in Titusville, or July 25- 27 in St. Johns.

For more information or for other scheduled weekends visit our website at [wwme.org](http://wwme.org) or e-mail: [Applications@FLCN-wwme.org](mailto:Applications@FLCN-wwme.org) Or contact Walt & Viv Paskowski at [waltviv.wwme@gmail.com](mailto:waltviv.wwme@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL MINISTRY

Thank you for supporting our St. Vincent de Paul Society in their service to the needy and underprivileged of our area.

WE CAN STILL USE MORE OF THESE ITEMS:

**Dry Goods: Oatmeal, Cereal, Powdered Milk, Spaghetti, Mac & Cheese, 1 or 2lb rice**

**Canned: Jelly, Canned Vegetables, Canned Meat, Soup, Spaghetti Sauce, Canned Fruit**

*Please place donations in the large brown wooden box in the vestibule of the Church and please make sure the drawer door stays closed. Thank you!*



# NEW JOB OPENING

## PARAPROFESSIONAL, PRESCHOOL TEACHER ASSISTANT (PT)

Holy Spirit Catholic School is looking for a Pre-K teacher aide:

**8:00AM-12:00PM Mon-Fri**

Interested applicants must complete an application at <https://hr.dosafl.com/careers>

listing for "**Holy Spirit Catholic School**".

Direct questions to [PCurley@hscatholicschool.com](mailto:PCurley@hscatholicschool.com)

\*beginning January 2025



## ATTENTION

The Diocese of St. Augustine treats all allegations of sexual misconduct seriously and deals with all allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. To Report Abuse, call the police or the Department of Children and Families at 800-962-2873. Or call the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at (904) 208-6979 or email [inquires@dosafl.com](mailto:inquires@dosafl.com). To report abuse by a bishop, call (800) 276-1562 or visit [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org).





# AROUND THE DIOCESE



## FMDOSA SIMBANG GABI 2024 SCHEDULE

Diocese of Saint Augustine Florida | December 15 - 23 7:00 pm

### WESTSIDE

### DATES

### SOUTHSIDE

15 - Sunday

**BLESSED TRINITY** - 10472 Beach Blvd. | Jacksonville, FL 32246 (Combined)

**MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN**  
9401 Staples Mill Drive  
Jacksonville, FL 32244

16 - Monday

**ST. PAUL**  
523 Pablo Avenue  
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250

**SACRED HEART**  
5752 Blanding Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32244

17 - Tuesday

**CHRIST THE KING**  
742 Arlington Road N.  
Jacksonville, FL 32211

**ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA**  
1649 Kingsley Avenue  
Orange Park, FL 32073

18 - Wednesday

**ST. JOHN PAUL II**  
127 Stonemason Way  
Ponte Vedra, FL 32081

**MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN**  
9401 Staples Mill Drive  
Jacksonville, FL 32244

19 - Thursday

**RESURRECTION**  
3383 University Blvd. N.  
Jacksonville, FL 32277

**ST. MATTHEW**  
1773 Blanding Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32210

**EPIPHANY**  
1905 SW Epiphany Ct  
Lake City, FL 32025

20 - Friday

**HOLY SPIRIT**  
11665 Fort Caroline Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32225

**MOST HOLY REDEEMER**  
8523 Normandy Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32221

21 - Saturday

**RESURRECTION**  
3383 University Blvd. N.  
Jacksonville, FL 32277

**SAN JUAN DEL RIO**  
1718 State Road 13  
St. Johns, FL 32259

22 - Sunday

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**  
2400 Mayport Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32233

23 - Monday

**ST. JOSEPH** - 11757 Old St. Augustine Road | Jacksonville, FL 32258 (Combined)

# AROUND THE PARISH



From Word on Fire

here is just something about a baby. If a baby is introduced into a crowded room, everyone will want to see him. Conversations will stop, smiles will spread across people's faces, arms will reach out to hold the child. Even the crustiest and most curmudgeonly denizen of the room will be drawn toward the baby. People who, moments before, had been arguing with one another will be cooing and making funny faces at the infant. Babies bring peace and joy; it's just what they do.

The central and still unnervingly strange message of Christmas is that God became a baby. The omnipotent Creator of the universe, the ground of the intelligibility of the world, the source of finite existence, the reason there is something rather than nothing—became an infant too weak even to raise his head, a vulnerable baby lying helpless in a manger where the animals eat. I am sure that everyone around the Christ child's crib—his mother, St. Joseph, the shepherds, the Magi—did what people always do around babies: they smiled and cooed and made funny noises. And they were drawn more closely together precisely by their shared concern for the child.

In this we see a stroke of divine genius. For the entire length of the history of Israel, God was endeavoring to attract his chosen people to himself and to draw them into deeper communion with one another. The whole purpose of the Torah, the Ten Commandments, the dietary laws outlined in the book of Leviticus, the preaching of the prophets, the covenants with Noah, Moses, and David, and the sacrifices offered in the temple was simply to foster friendship with God and greater love among his people. A sad but consistent theme of the Old Testament is that, despite all of these efforts and institutions, Israel remained alienated from God: Torah ignored, covenants broken, commandments disobeyed, temple corrupted.

Babies bring peace and joy; it's just what they do.

So, in the fullness of time, God determined, not to intimidate us or order us from on high, but rather to become a baby, for who can resist a baby? At Christmas, the human race no longer looked up to see the face of God, but rather down into the face of a little child. One of my spiritual heroes, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, was known as "Thérèse of the Child Jesus." It is easy enough to sentimentalize this designation, but we should resist that temptation. In identifying herself with the infant Christ, Thérèse was subtly endeavoring to draw everyone she met out of themselves and into an attitude of love.

Once we understand this essential dynamic of Christmas, the spiritual life opens in a fresh way. Where do we find the God we seek? We do so most clearly in the faces of the vulnerable, the poor, the helpless, the childlike. It is relatively easy to resist the demands of the wealthy, successful, and self-sufficient. In point of fact, we are likely to feel resentment toward them. But the lowly, the needy, the weak—how can we turn away from them? They draw us—as a baby does—out of our self-preoccupation and into the space of real love. This is undoubtedly why so many of the saints—Francis of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungary, John Chrysostom, Mother Teresa of Kolkata, to name just a few—were drawn to the service of the poor.

I'm sure that most of those who read these words will gather with your families for a Christmas celebration. Everyone will be there: Mom and Dad, cousins, uncles and aunts, perhaps grandparents and great-grandparents, some friends who find themselves away from home. There will be lots of food, lots of laughter, plenty of lively conversations, most likely a fierce political argument or two. The extroverts will be having a splendid time; the introverts will find all of it a little more challenging. I would be willing to bet that at most of these gatherings, at some point, a baby will be brought into the room: the new son, grandson, great-grandson, cousin, nephew, what have you. Could I urge you this year to be particularly attentive to what that baby does to everyone, to notice the magnetic power he has over the entire motley crew? And then I would invite you to remember that the reason you are gathering at all is to celebrate the baby who is God. And finally, permit yourself to be attracted by the peculiar magnetism of that divine child.



# AROUND OUR PARISH

## CHILDREN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Christmas Nativity Play



DECEMBER 24 @ 4:30

We are in need of children volunteers to be part of our Christmas Nativity Play for our Christmas Eve Mass. All costumes and directions will be provided.

If they want more information or to confirm participation, they may call me at 904-641-7244 or 614-312-2773 or my email - [cgomez@holyspiritchurchjax.org](mailto:cgomez@holyspiritchurchjax.org).

## NEW PARISHIONER WELCOME DINNER

January 18, 2025 @ 6PM in the FLC

Parishioners that have registered since August are welcome or those who missed the last dinner.

**Please call the church office to register @ (904) 641-7244**



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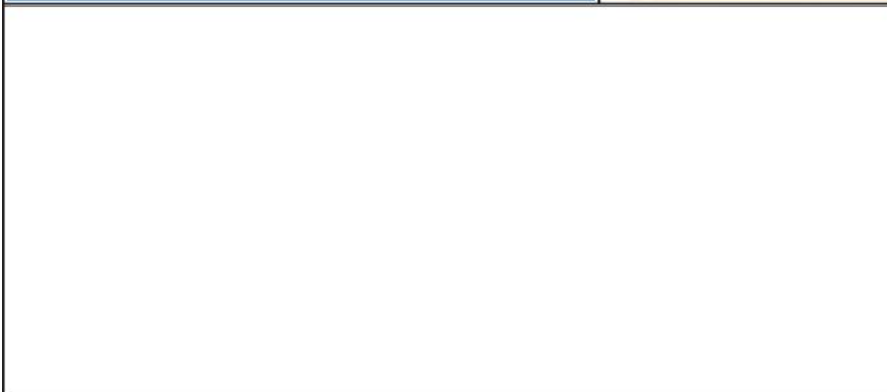
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