



The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus."

MATTHEW 1:20-21



Close Enough!

MIGUEL DULICK

It is the fourth Sunday of Advent. When Christmas is this close, one takes that final leap. Isaiah is centuries from Christmas, but he cannot wait! He sees the "sign" as clear as day: "the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son" (Isaiah 7:14). And how about that Son! None other than "Emmanuel" himself—God-With-Us! Paul, too, is bursting at the seams! Inspired by what he calls "the obedience of faith" (Romans 5), he is excited to see the gospel thriving even among the Gentiles. For him, the "Spirit of holiness" is a gift offered to all—Christmas every day, you might say.

Speaking of "obedience of faith," Joseph is the perfect example. The word "obey" comes from the same root as "to hear," and Joseph has almost supernatural ears! Matthew, the former tax collector, tells "how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" in today's gospel reading like a bookkeeper—the Holy Spirit in Column A, Joseph in Column B, with Mary in the middle.

But when an angel whispers to Joseph at night, his dream comes true: "he took his wife into his home." Everything is set for Emmanuel!

So, the Bible is brimming with Christmas, that is, "God-With-Us," from end to end. And when a virgin can conceive, are any of us exempt from "birthing" Jesus in our midst? Even when a "happy holiday" seems impossible in the midst of war or violence or poverty, when our ears hear only silence, let's sing Christmas carols every day! ●



SCAN TO
LEARN ABOUT
AUTHOR
MIGUEL
DULICK

Reflect

How am I at listening? Can I find new insights in old stories that I think I know so well?

ST. BARBARA PARISH

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St. Thomas More Site

302 Chestnut Street
Dalzell IL



Holy Trinity Site

Parish Office

212 S Main Street
PO BOX 159
Cherry IL

Adoration Room at STM Site

Open Daily from 9 am-6 pm

Confession Info

Saturday morning, alternating
between STM Site & HT Site
in the Confessional between
10:30 am-11:15am

Church Office Info

Pastor: Father Thaddeus Tran

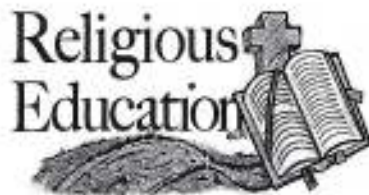
Pastoral Assistant: Melissa Pasillas

Office Hours at HT: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-1pm

Ongoing Parish Fundraising: STM Rav/Tort. Sale | call 815-252-2215 (leave name/phone #/order) \$9.00/bag

Emergency Number: 779-248-2164

Email: Melissahtc@outlook.com



CCD Classes

Sunday, December 21st— January 4th NO CCD Classes
As the CCD students are taking a Christmas break, Fr. Thaddeus likes to wish them and their families a grace-filled Holiday Season and a very merry, safe New Year 2026

St. Barbara Daily Mass Intentions for the Week of December 22, 2025

Monday	12/22			† No Mass
Tuesday	12/23	9:00 am	STM Site	† Bernard Schwamberger
Wednesday	12/24	5:00 pm	STM/Christmas Eve	† Phill Maggio
Thursday	12/25	9:30 am	HT/Christmas Day	† For the Parishioners
Friday	12/26	9:00 am	STM Site	† No Mass

St. Barbara Mass Intentions for the weekend of December 27-28, 2025

Saturday	12/27	4:00 pm	ST. Thomas More Site	† For the Parishioners
Sunday	12/28	9:00 am	Holy Trinity Site	† Michael Campbell

Emmanuel - God's Embodied Love

For centuries, the Israelites had prayed for a Messiah. They prayed for the Savior, and every time there was a bad moment in their history, they believed it would be opportune for Him to come to rescue them from that hardship.

God in His love became human because He wanted to save us – a promise that was made when the first disobedience occurred. We recognized the selfishness of humanity from the very first moment of our sinning. God again showed His love for us, not only in creating us, but by promising that He would come to earth as man – something that is just unbelievable. He did not just come to be our companion – He came to save us. That redemption is what the Incarnation is all about.

So when we call Him "God With Us", Emmanuel, He is just not present as a little baby. He is with us in the Eucharist. He is with us in flesh and blood, not only for us to adore, but for us to partake.

Such a central part of the Nativity story is the embodied nature of Christ's love. In coming to earth, Christ made God's love visible in an entirely new way. That is why traditions like putting up a creche in your house can be such a wonderful reminder of Christ's Incarnation.

That is really what the miracle of the Incarnation is: "God becoming tangible to us as humans," feeling what we feel, experiencing human life in all its joys and sorrows, and we need to know that as a people to go on to express our faith. The beautiful mystery of the Incarnation may be difficult to explain, but we can make it known to others by loving them – by embodying the love of Christ, just as He embodied love in becoming incarnate for us.

(Excerpted from nationalshrine.org)



Announcements

2026 Envelopes: are ready to be picked up in the back of both church sites. Don't forget to pick yours up. If you don't see your name contact the church office.

Parishioners: per new diocesan policies, please write your check to St. Barbara Parish. Also, we have SP church stain glass windows cards available for \$25/box. These cards are like "collector's items." If you like to purchase these cards please contact the office.

Christmas Flower Donation in Memory of.....

Gerilyn Anson
Deceased Bacidore Family
John Balma
Bartoli & Goryl Family
Irie Bonnell Family
Michael Campbell
Laura Copoch
Frank Sr. & Mary Domkuski

Mary Ann & Jerilyn Dunteman
The Fonderoli Family
Joyce Gillan
Alan Hahn
Ivan & Gladys Hassler
Ron & Joyce Hoscheid
Wes & Rita Hoscheid
The Joseph Klein Family
Nina Tunget

Richard Lewis
Phil Maggio
Arden Marini & Darlene Krueger
Lucille & Leroy Pinter
Wayne Pinter
Angelo & Violet Pozzi
Brad & Jackie Ratkiewicz
Betty & Ron Stariha
Vincent & Alicia Remus

Latest Offering's

December 14th Weekend
St. Barbara Parish
Total Collections:
\$1,991.65

We wish you a Merry Christmas

The Christmas Schedule for 2025 is as follows:

Christmas Eve Mass 5pm at STM site	Christmas Day Mass 9:30am at HT site
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Next Confessions

Confession will be
Sat. December 27th
STM site in the
Confessional

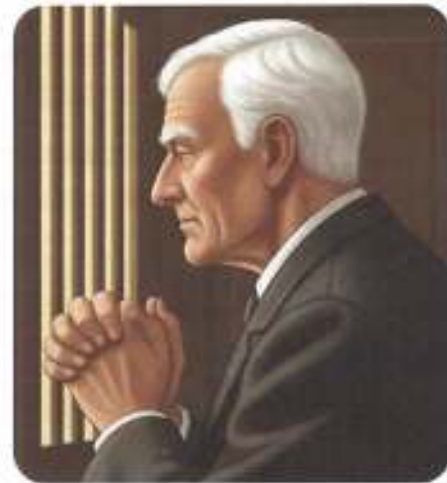
Dear Padre,

I went to confession, and then, months later, my priest was removed for alcoholism and theft. Is my confession still worthy?

Your confession is not dependent on the worthiness or the unworthiness of the priest. Your confession is made to Jesus; the priest is a witness who pronounces the words of absolution that Jesus intended in the sacrament.

"From the moment that a sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church, the power of Christ and his Spirit acts in and through it, independently of the personal holiness of the minister" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1128).

The question of the efficacy of the sacrament and the unworthiness of the minister who performs the sacrament in the name of the Church is not new. During the time of persecution, in the early centuries of the Church, some people, including priests and bishops, avoided martyrdom by offering the required oblation to Caesar. Later, they repented and returned to the Christian community, a community that included the surviving family and friends of the men and women who were martyred. The question was asked, and with some animated energy, "How could these ministers who sinned to save their own lives now represent the Church?" The answer, arrived at with patience and discernment, is that the minister is only the representative of the sacrament, not the source of the sacrament. Jesus is faithful, even when his ministers have been unfaithful. ●



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Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



I think it is important for all of us to learn how to listen more, to enter into dialogue. First and foremost, with the Lord: always listen to the word of God. Then also listen

to others, to know how to build bridges, to know how to listen without judging, not closing the doors [and] thinking that we have all the truth and no one else can tell us anything.

HOMILY, ROME, MAY 11, 2025

Monday

December 22
Advent Weekday
1 Sm 1:24–28
Lk 1:46–56

Tuesday

December 23
Advent Weekday
Mal 3:1–4, 23–24
Lk 1:57–66

Wednesday

December 24
Advent Weekday
2 Sm 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16
Lk 1:67–79

Thursday

December 25
The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Is 52:7–10
Heb 1:1–6
Jn 1:1–18 or 1:1–5, 9–14

Friday

December 26
St. Stephen, the First Martyr
Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59
Mt 10:17–22

Saturday

December 27
St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
1 Jn 1:1–4
Jn 20:1a, 2–8

Sunday

December 28
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
Sir 3:2–6, 12–14
Col 3:12–21 or 3:12–17
Mt 2:13–15, 19–23

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.