



Embracing a Spirituality of Listening

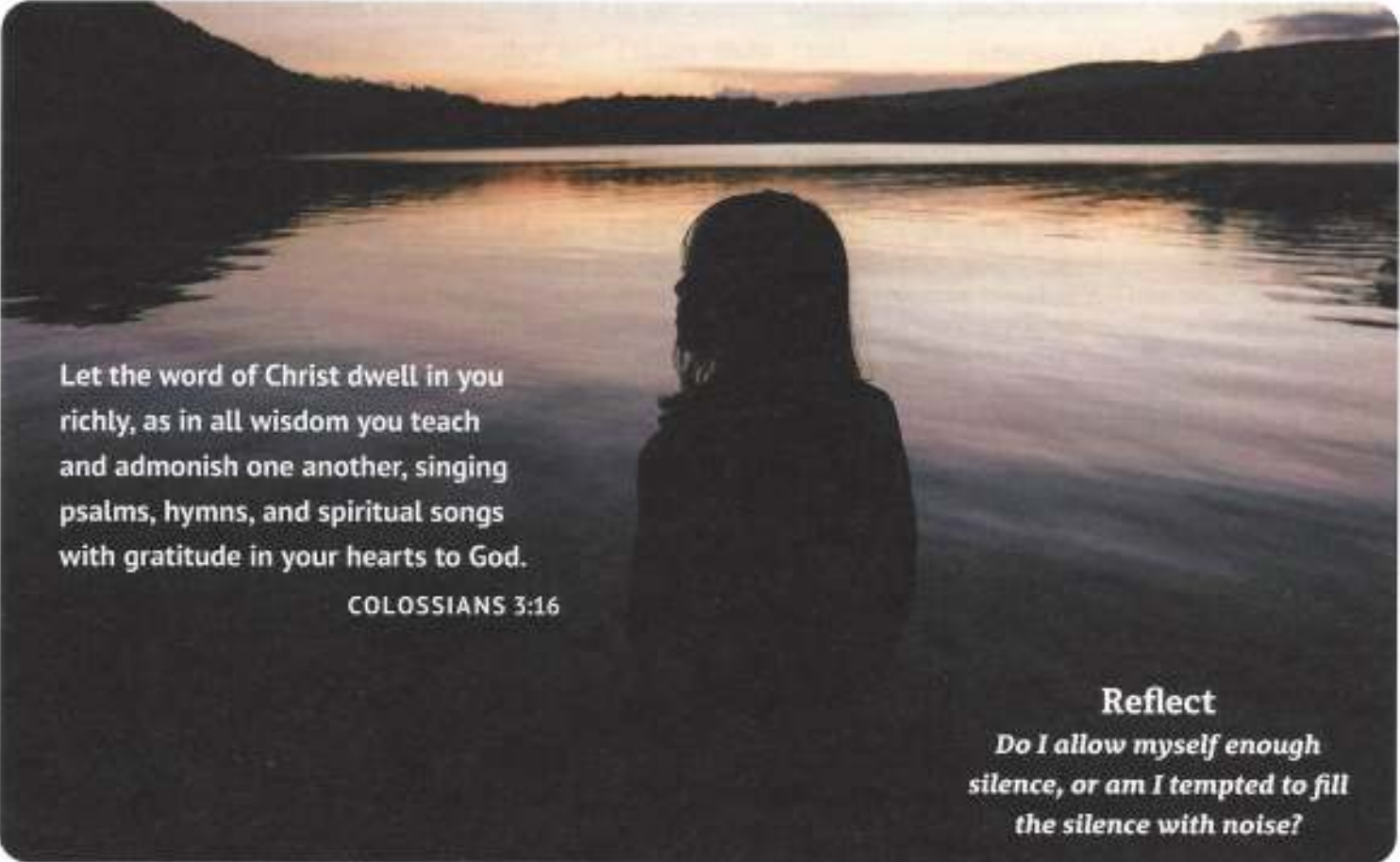
ANN M. GARRIDO

The most treasured prayer of Jesus' people has long been and remains the Shema: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is God. The Lord is One." Jewish spirituality is grounded not in seeing or touching or tasting, but in hearing. No one exemplifies fidelity to this way of being in the world more than Joseph, as evidenced in today's gospel. Joseph is one who listens to what God's messenger says to him and immediately acts on it. He responds to the call to flee with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Then, he responds to the call to return home with his family to Israel. As many have noted, Joseph never speaks in Scripture, but he certainly listens, and he certainly acts on what he hears.

Christmas is perhaps the noisiest season of the year. At gatherings of family and friends with festive music in the background, it often feels as if we are shouting over one another to be heard. It is a season when it can be hard to have deep conversations, even with God. Indeed, it can be such a busy season that sometimes our regular prayer practices fall by the wayside. But, if we do not make space in our daily lives to listen, might we miss messages that are important, even urgent, for us to hear, as in the case of today's gospel? Messages that require immediate response? What would it look like to carve out a bit of silence in this holiday season, to be like Joseph and reground yourself in a spirituality of listening? ●



SCAN TO
LEARN ABOUT
AUTHOR
ANN M.
GARRIDO

A photograph of a person with long hair, seen from behind, silhouetted against a sunset over a calm lake. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, and the water reflects the colors. The person is looking out over the water towards the horizon.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

COLOSSIANS 3:16

Reflect

*Do I allow myself enough
silence, or am I tempted to fill
the silence with noise?*

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/Christmas Break
As the CCD students are taking a Christmas break, Fr. Thaddeus likes to wish them and the families a grace filled Holiday Season and a very merry, safe New Year 2026

St. Barbara Daily Mass Intentions for the Week of December 29, 2025

Monday	12/29			† No Mass
Tuesday	12/30	9:00 am	STM Site	† Bill Hawley
Wednesday	12/31	5:00 pm	HT/New Years Eve	† Bob McCook
Thursday	01/01	9:00 am	STM/New Years Day	† For the Parishioners
Friday	01/02	9:00 am	STM Site	† No Mass

St. Barbara Mass Intentions for the weekend of January 3-4, 2026

Saturday	01/03	4:00 pm	ST. Thomas More Site	† Kathy Riva
Sunday	01/04	9:00 am	Holy Trinity Site	† For the Parishioners

Honoring The Holy Family

On this, the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas, we honor the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In honoring them, we also honor all families, big or small, and in honoring all families, we honor the family of God, the Church. But most especially, we focus in on the hidden, day-to-day life of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

What was it like to live day in and day out in the household of St. Joseph? What was it like to have Jesus for a son, Mary as a wife and mother, and Joseph as a father and husband? Their home would have certainly been a sacred place and a dwelling of true peace and unity. But it would have also been so much more.

The family home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph would have been, in numerous ways, just like any other home. They would have related together, talked, had fun, worked, eaten, dealt with problems, and encountered everything else that makes up daily family life. Of course, the virtues of Jesus and Mary were perfect, and St. Joseph was a truly "just man." Therefore, the overriding characteristic of their home would have been love.

But with that said, their family would not have been exempt from daily toil, hurt and challenges that face most families. For example, they would have encountered the death of loved ones, St. Joseph most likely passed away prior to Jesus' public ministry. They would have encountered misunderstanding and gossip from others. They would have had to fulfill all daily chores, earn a living, put food on the table, attend gatherings of family and friends and the like. They would have lived normal family life in every way.

This is significant because it reveals God's love for family life. The Father allowed His Divine Son to live this life and, as a result, elevated family life to a place within the Trinity. The holiness of the Holy Family reveals to us that every family is invited to share in God's divine life and to encounter ordinary daily life with grace and virtue.

(Excerpted from catholic-daily-reflections.com)



Church Announcements

New Years Schedule for 2026 is as follows:

New Years Eve Mass— 5pm at HT site

New Years Day Mass / Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy day of Obligation)— 9am at STM site

A Heartfelt Big Hand to all those who:

- *Gave to the toy drive
- * Decorated outside and inside of our churches to make them look beautiful for Christmas
- *Volunteer their time, talent and treasure to support our fundraising works
- * Made church contributions for 2025

Please note: if you haven't already picked up your 2026 envelopes which are in back of the churches. Let the office know if you do not see yours. Also, those wanting a 2025 contribution letter please contact the church office. Thank You & God Bless!

Why is January 1st celebrated as New Year?

The first time January 1st came to be considered as the beginning of the new year was back in 45 BC. Before that, the Roman calendar began in March and consisted of 355 days. It was Roman Emperor Julius Caesar who reformed the calendar after coming to power. He instituted January 1st as the first day of the year, partly to honor the month's namesake: Janus, the Roman god of beginnings, whose two faces allowed him to look back into the past and forward into the future. However, large parts of Europe did not accept it till well into the mid-16th century. It was only after Pope Gregory reformed the Julian calendar and standardized January 1st as the first day of a new year that it slowly became acceptable. The start of a new year is an excellent time to make positive changes, which is why many people write down their resolutions for the coming year.

(excerpted from hindustabtimes.com)

Latest Offering's

December 21st Weekend

St. Barbara Parish

Total Collections:

\$3,291.00

Retirement Fund \$665.00

St. Barbara Fundraising

Pick three tickets are now available at \$20 per ticket; the drawing will be on Friday Jan. 9, 2026 in the evening.



Next Confessions

Confession will be

Sat. January 3rd

10:30am-11:15am

HT site in the

Confessional

Dear Padre,

A friend of mine took his life. He was a very staunch Catholic. His wife wanted to know if he could be buried or have a Mass in the Catholic Church.

Yes, your friend should most certainly receive a Catholic funeral and burial. "We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives" (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2283).

A person who is suffering with a mental illness or disorder, certainly a prerequisite for suicide, may not have the necessary mental freedom to choose something that is understood as grave or mortal. In other words, he or she does not have the necessary requirements for full and free consent of the will.

Not that long ago, suicide was often misunderstood. Thankfully, today we understand the havoc and suffering of mental illness, and that a person can be a victim, even if it might look like he or she is not. The great suffering of those who take their own lives must not be dismissed or discarded. The family members and friends of a person who suffers suicide should also not be judged but should only receive compassion and understanding. They, too, are victims, in the fullest sense of the word and in the truest understanding of what it means to be a fragile human being. ●

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



ANTONELLA ULLARI / CANTOLICA

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



Young people of our time, like those of every age, are a volcano of life, energy, sentiments, and ideas. It can be seen from the wonderful things they are able to do, in so

many fields. However, they also need help in order for this great wealth to grow in harmony and to overcome what...can still hinder their healthy development.

ADDRESS, ROME, MAY 15, 2025

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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

Monday

December 29
Octave of Christmas
1 Jn 2:3-11
Lk 2:22-35

Tuesday

December 30
Octave of Christmas
1 Jn 2:12-17
Lk 2:36-40

Wednesday

December 31
Octave of Christmas
1 Jn 2:18-21
Jn 1:1-18

Thursday

January 1
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Nm 6:22-27
Gal 4:4-7
Lk 2:16-21
Friday
January 2
Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church
1 Jn 2:22-28
Jn 1:19-28

Saturday

January 3
Christmas Weekday
1 Jn 2:29-3:6
Jn 1:29-34

Sunday

January 4
The Epiphany of the Lord
Is 60:1-6
Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6
Mt 2:1-12