



## Will You Notice the Shoot?

ANN M. GARRIDO

**T**oday's first reading from the prophet Isaiah offers a familiar Advent image: the shoot sprouting from the stump of Jesse. The verses immediately preceding speak of God walking through the forest with an ax: "The tall of stature shall be felled, and the lofty ones shall be brought low" (Isaiah 10:33). But now, amidst all the destruction, a tiny sign of new life emerges, and the Spirit of God descends upon it, bearing many gifts—wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, awe, delight.

So often, when we scroll through the news, our attention is captured by violence and war and the "mighty" who make great noise when they fall. "Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees," echoes John the Baptist in today's gospel. If we are looking for where God's Spirit can be found, however, Isaiah reminds us we will need to look elsewhere. We will need to attend to the quiet, fragile resurrections taking place below the surface when it appears as if all has been lost. If we seek wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, awe, and delight, we will need to look where the little ones of the earth are found. We must have our eyes open for the shoots.

The gospels emphasize that Jesus was one such little one. Although the glory days of his people seemed to have come to a crashing close, they have not. In him, we glimpse the truth that life is stronger than death. We see that the future has not been erased, no matter how terrible the past. In him, we find our hope. ●

### Reflect

*Are my eyes open to the small signs of God's work  
in the world, or am I too distracted to notice?*

A shoot shall sprout from  
the stump of Jesse, and  
from his roots a bud shall  
blossom.

ISAIAH 11:1



SCAN TO  
LEARN ABOUT  
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# 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: Melissahc@outlook.com



### CCD Classes

Sunday, December 7th— Children's Mass 9am @ HT for K-8th Grade  
K-5th grade class (10:00am-11:00am)

Sunday, December 14th - 6th - 8th Grade (10:00am-11:30am)

### St. Barbara Daily Mass Intentions for the Week of December 8, 2025

Monday	12/8	5:30 pm	STM / Holy Day of Obligation	† For the Parishioners
Tuesday	12/9	9:00 am	STM Site	† Richard Mariani
Wednesday	12/10	5:30 pm	HT Site	† Alan Hahn
Thursday	12/11	9:00 am	HT Site	† Daisy Kopek
Friday	12/12	9:00 am	STM Site	† Clifford Sondgeroth

### St. Barbara Mass Intentions for the weekend of December 13-14, 2025

Saturday	12/13	4:00 pm	St. Thomas More Site	† For the Parishioners
Sunday Fonderoli	12/14	9:00 am	Holy Trinity Site	† Myra Carlson/Laurence Nuco

## Immaculate Conception – What A GREAT GIFT!

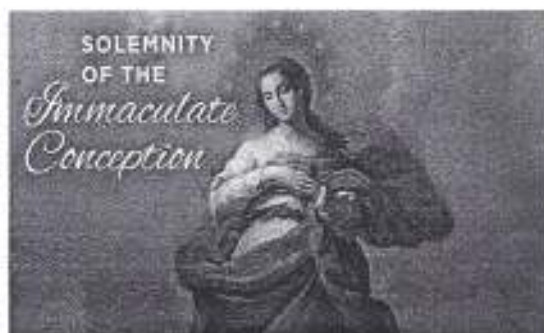
Today, we honor the glorious and miraculous Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Mother, and it is fitting that we see it as an act of God's profound mercy. Why is that so? What is it about this solemnity that is so closely linked to mercy?

Mercy is a gratuitous gift of God. By "gratuitous" we mean that it is not merited or earned. Mercy is not owed to us by God. If it were, it would not be mercy, it would be our right. But we have no right to mercy. It is freely given by God and it is given in abundance.

As for this glorious Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, it's important to look at it as a gratuitous gift from two perspectives. First, the "Immaculate Conception" means that when God created the Blessed Virgin Mary, He created her without sin. This was done through what we call a prevenient grace. This grace given her is an act of God's perfect and gratuitous mercy. She did not earn it or merit it; rather, God in His goodness chose to create her without Original Sin so as to have a suitable instrument by which His Son could come into the world. Mary, for her part, embraced this gift and chose to remain sinless throughout her life by a continual act of her free will.

Second, in creating our Blessed Mother immaculately, God did not keep her to Himself. He was not selfish with her. Instead, He chose to make this perfection of His creation our own Mother. The Immaculate Mother Mary is now our spiritual Mother in the order of God's grace and mercy. This, also, is an act of perfect gratuitous mercy on the part of our loving God. We do not deserve such a spiritual Mother and Protectress, but we have her and she is always there interceding for us and bestowing many graces from God upon us as a perfect mother would.

Blessed Mother, who was conceived without original sin, pray for us.  
(Excerpted from catholic-daily-reflections.com)



## Announcements

### Immaculate Conception Mass

This coming Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, is the feast of The Immaculate Conception, which is a Holy Day of Obligation. There will be a 5:30pm Mass at STM.

### Christmas Decorating

It's that time of year again for volunteers to come together to help decorate our Churches for Christmas. Decorating may begin after December 20<sup>th</sup>. People who would still like to make a Christmas flower donation, please don't forget to take a Christmas flower envelope at the back of each Church.

### 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. If you have any questions please contact Carol Lauer or the office.

### Annual Retirement Fund for Religious Collection

There will be a second collection next weekend for the Religious Retirement Fund.

### Latest Offering's

November 30<sup>rd</sup> Weekend

St. Barbara Parish

Total Collections:

\$590.00

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too late!!



### Next Confessions

Confession will be  
Sat. December 13<sup>th</sup>  
STM site in the  
Confessional



# Dear Padre,

## Do non-Catholics go to heaven?

Yes, they do, because of the grace of God at work in his people. To suggest otherwise would seem to imply that Catholics somehow have a “golden ticket,” or some kind of right that simply does not exist.

The Incarnation of Jesus healed the division between heaven and earth, a division established by the “sin of Adam” and confirmed by our own lives of sin. Through his passion, death, and resurrection, all has been restored to the manner that the Father first envisioned through his Creation. The division was between humanity and divinity, not between religious practices and divinity. Catholics believe and celebrate that God accepts all people of a good heart and a good spirit. God is not blinded by the labels that sometimes blind his people to the bigger reality.

When Catholics, or people of any religion, proclaim exclusivity and specialness, particularly when it concerns eternal life, all people should be very cautious about what they assume. To assume a certain type of arrogance—to yourself and to your belief and life of faith—that excludes others or separates another as “not one of us” simply has no place in the kingdom of God. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org)



PASCAL HUOT / SHUTTERSTOCK

### Monday

December 8  
*The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
Gn 3:9–15, 20  
Eph 1:3–6, 11–12  
Lk 1:26–38

### Tuesday

December 9  
*Advent Weekday*  
Is 40:1–11  
Mt 18:12–14

### Wednesday

December 10  
*Advent Weekday*  
Is 40:25–31  
Mt 11:28–30

### Thursday

December 11  
*Advent Weekday*  
Is 41:13–20  
Mt 11:11–15

### Friday

December 12  
*Our Lady of Guadalupe*  
Zec 2:14–17  
or Rv 11:19a;  
12:1–6a, 10ab  
Lk 1:26–38 or  
Lk 1:39–47

### Saturday

December 13  
*St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr*  
Sir 48:1–4, 9–11  
Mt 17:9a, 10–13

### Sunday

December 14  
*Third Sunday of Advent*  
Is 35:1–6a, 10  
Jas 5:7–10  
Mt 11:2–11

### Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*With the light and the strength of the Holy Spirit, let us build a Church founded on God's love, a sign of unity, a missionary Church that opens its arms to the world, proclaims the word, allows itself to be made “restless” by history, and becomes a leaven of harmony for humanity.*

HOMILY, ROME, MAY 18, 2025

