



# Come, Lord Jesus!

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023 VOL. XC NO. 101



**December**  
**Every Thursday**  
**Memorial Mass**  
**for the enrollees**  
**in the CLJ!**  
**Memorial Burse**

**December 3**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

**December 8**  
**The Immaculate**  
**Conception of the Blessed**  
**Virgin Mary**

**December 10**  
**Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 17**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

**December 24**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 25**  
**The Nativity of the Lord**

**December 31**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus,**  
**Mary and Joseph**

The Holy Family – the family of Joseph, Mary and the Child Jesus model holiness in family life for us. Let us see how.

Joseph is the righteous head of the family. He does everything right in the sight of God. Joseph lives in the presence of God. He is in constant communication with him. He is single-heartedly devoted to God. He lets nothing come between God and him. He is open to God's inspirations and obeys him immediately – no matter how difficult: for example, he obeys the command to leave Bethlehem in the middle of the night for Egypt. This involves traveling to unknown territory for about 300 miles, which is a journey of 10 – 12 days. Joseph asks no questions and demonstrates no resentment or complaint. He simply obeys. He relies on divine providence. He takes seriously his assignment of head of the Holy Family; he is protector and provider for Mary and the divine child. As soon as he is well settled in Egypt, God tells him to leave for the Holy Land again. Joseph obeys God – no matter how much sacrifice is required. Joseph does not live for pleasure as we often do; he lives to please God and do his will. He has a mission to fulfill, and he accomplishes it. Is it not from Joseph that Jesus learned, "My meat is to do the will of him who sent me" (Jn 4:34)? Joseph does not make excuses or consider the task too difficult. His spiritual orientation makes it easier for him.

Being head of the family is a call to holiness of life and great selflessness. There is no room for selfishness; openness to God's will expressed in life's changing situations is required. Adamancy in clinging to pre-made plans and clinging to one's own will causes tension and obstructs God's will and plan. A self-willed person is forfeiting his call to holiness and detachment from the things of this world as well as his own self.

We observe the Holy Family to be very closely united. Although Mary is far advanced in her pregnancy, her great love for Joseph and the divine child will prompt her to make the long, hard journey with him to Bethlehem – some 80-90 miles away, on a beast of burden. How uncomfortable and painful that must have been! But love made it possible.

We see the strong, chaste love holding Joseph and Mary together in raising Jesus. It is that strong, binding married love that fortifies them to raise the promised one who would be Israel's glory and a light of revelation to the Gentiles.

May our families follow this model of holiness and single-hearted devotion to God.

*Father Conley Bertrand*





# Hail Mary, Full of Grace

“The most Blessed Virgin Mary was from the first moment of her conception by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin” (CCC 491). The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains: “The ‘splendor of an entirely unique holiness’ by which Mary is ‘enriched from the first instant of her conception’ comes wholly from Christ: she is ‘redeemed, in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son.’ The Father blessed Mary more than any other created person in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places; and chose her ‘in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love’” (CCC 492).

We, on the other hand, were conceived with original sin. And even if baptism takes away original sin and gives us sanctifying grace, we are still inclined to commit actual sin. Not only was Mary conceived without original sin, she was not in the least inclined to sin. She was so full of grace, her total tendency was toward God and his will; she committed no personal sins.

God sent a special angel to declare to all of us how favored Mary was. He tells us that She was “*full of Grace*” and that God was “with her”. Moreover, the angel tells us that Mary “*found favor with God.*” God was very pleased with her. Her response to God’s grace and will was, “*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.*” Her whole person was always in total movement toward God; there was never in her any movement toward sin.

Mary has been saved by the grace of Jesus more perfectly than anyone else. She was very much aware of this when she said, “*He who is mighty has done great things for me*” (Lk 1:49). Just as God created the first woman, Eve, without sin as a companion to the first man, so in the new creation of grace, he creates a new woman, Mary, to be the helpmate of the new man, Christ. In both cases, God did this freely through no merit of theirs.

In the case of Mary, however, God gave much more grace so as to uplift a fallen world – that Mary might be rendered a worthy companion and Mother of Jesus who is infinitely holy. She would cooperate with him perfectly to bring the world back to God.

Jesus received his human nature from Mary. If she who formed him had a defective nature with a tendency to sin, he in turn would have received these defects and weaknesses. But this was not the case at all – Jesus was the perfect, sinless Son of God. Mary, his Mother, who gave him his being as well as formed him from infancy, must herself be perfect: “*By their fruits you will know them.*”

Immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve, God promised that one day there would be total enmity between the woman and the devil, between her offspring and his. This promise began to be fulfilled when the woman, Mary, was conceived without sin; unlike Eve, she would have nothing to do with the devil and sin. The prophecy tells us that her son would strike at the serpent’s head; and although the devil would strike at her son’s heel and wound him in his passion and death, through his obedience and resurrection, he will win complete victory over the devil.

Jesus observed his mother standing under the cross next to him; he addresses her and names her “woman”; he wants to show us that she is the New Eve whose son smashed the head of the serpent. She and her son fulfill God’s promise of perfect enmity with the devil. Their victory over sin foretells our own ultimate victory also if we join forces with them over evil.

*Father Conley Bertrand*





# St. Benilde Catholic Church Anniversary Mass





# *Spiritual Fitness Workshop for New Leaders*



## *St. Agnes Catholic Church Jefferson, LA*



The gift of generosity springs from our union with a generous God whose liberality, magnificence, and munificence are without measure. There is no end to his generosity as we see it poured out abundantly over us and over all creation. And we are so enriched by this merciful God in endless copious gifts that we are filled to overflowing unto others. We are forced – we cannot but give, so superabundantly have we been given to. That is why Jesus does not hesitate to say, *“Give, and it shall be given to you. Good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over, will they pour into the fold of your garment. For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you”* (Lk 6:38). Freely you have received, freely give (see Mt 10:8). The spirit partakes of God’s own infinitude. Rather than diminish when it is shared it increases all the more. *“In the measure you give you shall receive, and more besides”* (Mk 4:24). This is the nature of the spirit. Moreover, giving is loving, and loving is being born of God so that we are given knowledge of God (see 1 Jn 4:7) which is to experience the joy of God in the abundance of eternal life. That is why Jesus could say, *“There is more happiness in giving than receiving”* (Acts 20:35).



**Algiers, LA:** Drema Moss, Steven Price,

**Diboll, TX:** Andi Santana

**Duson, LA:** Raymond Mercier

**Grand Prairie, LA:** Kacie Lee

**Jefferson, LA:** Charmaine Bergeron

**Metairie, LA:** Rita Pierre, Susan Beloat,  
Jacob Schwetzer

**Morse, LA:** Lois Meche

**Ragley, LA:** Sha'ron Grace Neel

**River Ridge, LA:** Carolyn Thaller

### **RETURNING MEMBER**

**Fenton, LA:** Annie Janice

## **NEW GROUPS!**

**Metairie, LA :** Walter J. Pertuit, Jr.- **Leader**  
Lesley Reitmeyer, Emily Brenes,  
Sam Lovecchio, Mary Lovecchio,  
Debbie Federer, Ron Bertucci, Emily Bertucci,  
Ann Becker

**Welsh, LA :** Amy Stanford - **Leader**  
JoAnn Benoit, Rachel Benoit, Kim Briscoe,  
Elaine Camp, Ann Campbell, Dianne Hebert,  
Brent Elliott, Shaina Elliott, Laurie Fear,  
Sonya McNabb, Jacquetta Navarre

**Welsh, LA :** ShunThierry- **Leader**  
Eddwena Thierry, Shun Thierry, Jr., Gabriel Thierry,  
Liam Thierry, Grasen Thierry, Abigail Thierry

**Lake Charles, LA :** Laura Young - **Leader**  
Cynthia Robertson, Clare Prejean, Mary Foreman,  
Della Vaughan, Denise Collett, Brenna DeMary



## **Gift Bags Received During the month of October 2023**

**Thank you for your generosity!**

Abbeville	Grand Prairie	Opelousas
Algiers	Gretna	Orlando FL
Basile	Harvey	Patterson
Baton Rouge	Houma	Paulina
Bayou Vista	Jeanerette	Pierre Part
Bell City	Jefferson	Pine Prairie
Borger, TX	Jennings	Prairie Ronde
Bossier City	Judice	Ragley
Breaux Bridge	Kenner	Richard
Broussard	Kinder	Scott
Buda, TX	Lacombe	Slidell
Cankton	Lafayette	St. Amant
Carencro	Lake Charles	St. Martinville
Carlyss	Lawtell	Sugartown
Cecilia	Leesville	Sulphur
Coteau	Lufkin TX	Terrytown
Delcambre	Marrero	Vidrine
Dry Creek	Maurice	Ville Platte
Duson	Mermentau	Washington
Erath	Metairie	Westwego
Esther	Milton	Youngsville
Eunice	Morgan City	
Fenton	Morse	
Forked Island	New Iberia	
Franklin	New Orleans	

*Welcome New Groups  
from Our Lady of Seven Dolors!*



Oct. 24- Nov. 22, 2023

## Memorial Burse Donations

Deacon Edward Daniel Foster  
Sally Lane  
Judy P. Lapeyrouse  
Bernadine LeBlanc  
Loretta Lejeune  
Sally Ann Locus  
Paul Messersmith  
Marilyn Myers Shuff  
Caleb Silvestrini  
Greg Soileau  
Harold Suire  
Velma Vaccarella  
Brett Walker



## Condolences

To member Lindsay Silvestrini of Cankton, LA on the death of her son, Caleb Joseph Silvestrini.

To member Cindy Courville of Eunice, LA on the death of her father, John B. Lejeune.

To leader Marla David of Lafayette, LA on the death of her mother, Sally Ann Locus.

To the members of "Roses Planted Near Running Waters" in Lafayette, LA on the death of their member, Sally Lane.

To member Dot Fontenot of Ville Platte, LA on the death of her son-in-law, Greg Soileau.

To member Cathy Dupre of Bayou Vista, LA on the death of her brother, Paul Messersmith.

To member Jane Vaccarella of Bayou Vista, LA on the death of her sister-in-law, Velma Vaccarella.

To member Julia Hepler of Bayou Vista, LA on the death of her aunt, Velma Vaccarella.

To the members of "Christ Lives In Me" group in Jeanerette, LA on the death of their former member, Loretta Lejeune.

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Come, Lord Jesus!  
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