



Judged or Invited?

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2) is the message preached by Jesus after the arrest of John the Baptist. It is important to place this message in context. Jesus is not repeating the preaching of the Baptist. His message is unique and compelling.

Look closely at what Jesus is saying. Do not automatically fill in the blanks with the memories of every sermon you have heard. Try to hear Jesus' words again, for the first time. Is the emphasis on "repent," or is the emphasis on the announcement, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Does it make any difference?

Repeat these words and change the emphasis each time. Play with the words. Let the words play with you. Notice how you respond. Notice what makes a difference. Notice how you react, and, most of all, notice whether you feel invited or you feel judged.

The Baptist made no bones about it. You are being judged: "Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10). Jesus, on the other hand, seems not to judge but to invite: "for the

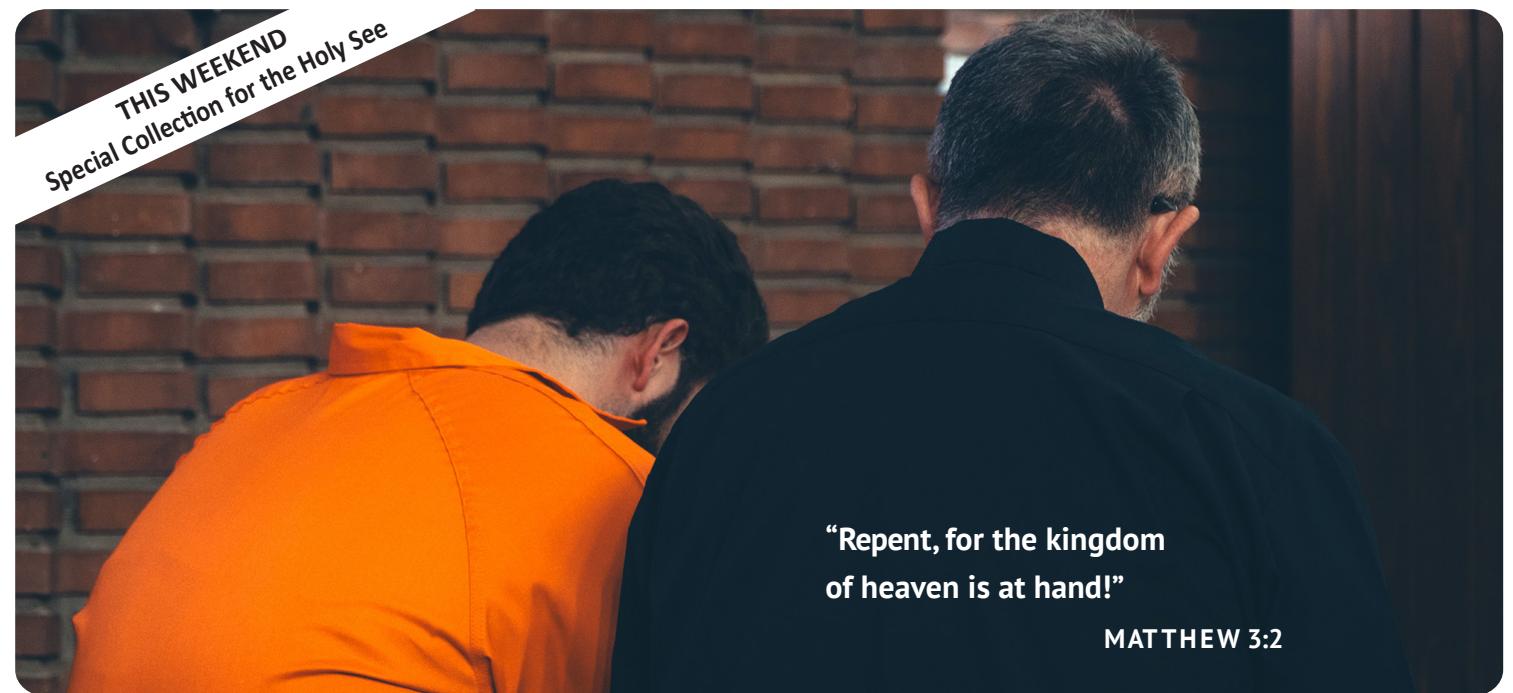
kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). In the invitation, we are challenged to see in a different way. Use different skills. Refrain from automatic judgments. Seek to understand but, most of all, to accept and to love. ●



LEARN ABOUT
THE AUTHORS
OF OUR PARISH
COMMUNITY

Reflect

**What does "repent" mean to me?
A threat or an invitation?**



**"Repent, for the kingdom
of heaven is at hand!"**

MATTHEW 3:2



ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

53 South Road, Paget PG 03 | P.O. Box HM 727, Hamilton HM CX

Pastor: Reverend Joseph F. H. Morley, Vicar General • Cell: 705 0236

Email: stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com

Weekend Masses: Vigil: 5:00pm, Sunday: 10:15am
Saturday 7:00pm (Neo-Catechumenal Mass).

Baptisms: by appointment 3 weeks in advance
Weddings: by appointment 6 months in advance

www.facebook.com/stmichaelpaget & "LIKE" us | Diocesan Webpage: www.romancatholicbermuda.bm

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Mass Schedule & Intentions

We welcome our parishioners and visitors who have come to St. Michael's to worship this weekend.
May you be blessed by your presence here today.

MINISTRIES ...

JANUARY 24/25th - THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Laura DeFrias EM: Susan Shreeve
10:15AM Lector: Willie Forbes EM: Pat Robinson
Collection: Karen Marsh

JANUARY 31/ February 1st - THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Kathy Anderson EM: Fred Anderson
10:15AM Lector: Cherry Ramdass EM: Willie Forbes
Collection: Carlos DeFrias

MASS INTENTIONS ...

JANUARY 24/25th - THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM For St. Michael's Parishioners
10:15AM World Peace

JANUARY 31/ February 1st - THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM For Deceased Members of St. Michael's
10:15AM World Peace

Thank you for your generosity.



Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

WHEN MAKING YOUR ONLINE TRANSACTION, BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND "COLLECTION" AS YOUR MEMO ON YOUR BANKING TRANSACTION.

Pastor's Point ...

Dear Parishioners,

What is Ordinary Time?

The rhythm of the liturgical seasons reflects the rhythm of life — with its celebrations of anniversaries and its seasons of quiet growth and maturing.^[1]

Ordinary Time, meaning ordered or numbered time, is celebrated in two segments: from the Monday following the Baptism of Our Lord up to Ash Wednesday; and from Pentecost Monday to the First Sunday of Advent. This makes it the largest season of the Liturgical Year.

In vestments usually green, the color of hope and growth, the Church counts the thirty-three or thirty-four Sundays of Ordinary Time, inviting her children to meditate upon the whole mystery of Christ — his life, miracles and teachings — in the light of his Resurrection.

If the faithful are to mature in the spiritual life and increase in faith, they must descend the great mountain peaks of Easter and Christmas in order to "pasture" in the vast verdant meadows of tempus per annum, or Ordinary Time.

Sunday by Sunday, the Pilgrim Church marks her journey through the tempus per annum as she processes through time toward eternity.^[2]

For a penetrating look at how the seasons of the year interlock with the seasons of our lives read Dr. Jeffrey Mirus' article *Seasons: The Lesson of Life*.

Scripture and the Liturgy

In her revision of the Liturgy, the Church has sought to reestablish the preeminence of Sunday, that feast day par excellence, over every other feast day.^[3]

Recognizing, too, that Our Lord is really present when Sacred Scripture is read during the Liturgy, she has opened up the "treasures of the bible so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's Word."^[4]

To encourage her children to have a "warm and living love for Scripture,"^[5] the Church has enlarged the Sunday Lectionary so that the various books of the New Testaments are read roughly from beginning to end over a period of weeks, and the synoptic Gospels are read in a 3 year cycle Year A — Matthew; Year B — Mark; Year C — Luke.



Old Testament readings and Psalms are chosen to correspond to the Gospel passages and to bring out the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New. The revised weekday lectionary for Ordinary Time complements the Sunday lectionary with its 2-year cycle of readings presenting all the major portions of the Bible, and a 1-year cycle for the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Feast Days

While insisting that the feasts that commemorate the mysteries of salvation take precedence, the Church nonetheless includes the celebration of the feast days of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints in the liturgical calendar.

"By inserting into the annual cycle the commemoration of the martyrs and other saints on the occasion of their anniversaries, 'the Church proclaims the Easter mystery of the saints who suffered with Christ and with him are now glorified.' (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 102) When celebrated in the true spirit of the liturgy, the commemoration of the saints does not obscure the centrality of Christ, but on the contrary extols it..."

"The intrinsic relationship between the glory of the saints and that of Christ is built into the very arrangement of the liturgical year, and is expressed most eloquently in the fundamental and sovereign character of Sunday as the Lord's Day."^[6]

—Continued on page 4

WORDS OF LIFE -

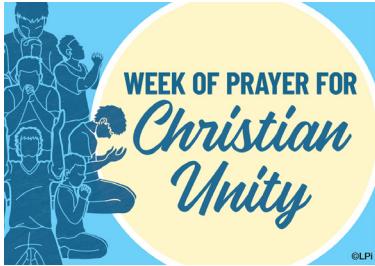
Many people are unaware that someone they know personally is silently suffering from participation in abortion. If a friend confided in you tomorrow that she had an abortion, would you be able to respond in a way that brings her closer to healing? Learn how in "How to Talk to a Friend Who's Had an Abortion": <http://bit.ly/friend-had-abortion>

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities "How to Talk to a Friend Who's Had an Abortion"

Bishops Corner . . .

Dear Fellow-Catholics,

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place each year from the 18th to the 25th of January. This year's celebration takes Ephesians 4:4 as its central text which includes the words "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling." This Week extends an invitation to draw upon this shared Christian heritage and to delve more deeply into our fellowship in Christ, which unites Christians worldwide.



For 2026, the prayers and reflections for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church. These resources draw upon centuries-old traditions of prayer and petitions used by the Armenian people, along with hymns that originated in the ancient monasteries and churches of Armenia, some of which date as far back as the fourth century.

Link to the resources: <https://tinyurl.com/ywurad25>

I believe that it is also the best moment to let you know that the number of Christians exposed to persecution and at risk of suffering violence worldwide rose again reaching a record 388 million. Of these 388 million, 201 million are women or girls; while 110 million are minors under the age of 15. "Open Doors" has just published the World Watch List 2026, and its latest report on persecuted Christians around the world. "Open Doors" is a global membership organisation with 25 national bases. They share one mission: to support persecuted Christians worldwide and strengthen what remains.

Have a peaceful weekend and a good week!

+ Wes J. Newhall

Bishop Wes

Dear Padre,

Why can't a Protestant receive the Eucharist at a Catholic Mass?

United by baptism, fellow Christians are our brothers and sisters in the Lord. As such, they are always welcome at Catholic Mass, but they do not ordinarily participate in holy Communion. "Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to holy Communion" (Code of Canon Law, 844 §4).

When Catholics receive Holy Communion, they firmly believe the bread and wine are transformed into the Real Presence of Christ. In the Eucharist, we become part of the body of Christ and share in holiness and unity with one another. Our "Amen" to "The Body of Christ" and "The Blood of Christ" means, "Truly, so be it!"

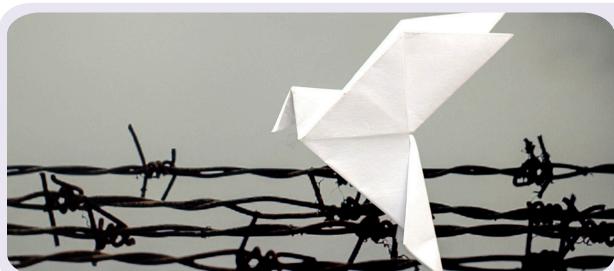
It indicates that we affirm our belief in this mystery, which is fundamental to our Catholic identity. If non Catholics receive the Eucharist but do not embrace this identity and same belief, it may disrespect Catholics who do, as well as disrespect their own identity in the denomination to which they belong.

However, at Mass, fellow Christians can join their prayers with Catholics in praising God. Together, we also pray that the divisions which separate us will finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (John 17:21). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org



CARLOS DANIEL / CATHOPIC



A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Dear brothers and sisters, all too much violence exists in the world and our societies. Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking, and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect. Above all, they need the witness of...those who have suffered injustice and violence [and] resist the temptation to seek revenge.

ADDRESS TO THE "ARENA OF PEACE," ROME, MAY 30, 2025

What is Happening in Our Diocese?

St. MICHAEL'S

- **SYNODAL BIBLE STUDY** - is inspired by the method of SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION used during the Synod on Synodality. It is leading a small group using the texts from the Sacred Scriptures in a structured format emphasising: listening, discernment, and community, fostering a deeper connection with scripture and with each other. This NEW BIBLE STUDY will be on Thursdays starting on January 15th at 3:00pm in the Pastor's Office at St. Michael's Church. Just park behind the Church and make sure to bring your CATHOLIC BIBLE. This is FREE and is open for anyone in the diocese interested with everything else provided. Any questions please contact Fr. Joe at 705-0236.
- EMMAUS Bible Study: Resumes on January 13th at 3pm•
- Neocatechumenal Way Eucharist celebration - Saturdays at 7:00pm

St. THERESA'S

- **The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** 18th to the 25th of January 2026, the Christian world will celebrate with the theme of "One Body, One Spirit." On Sunday, 25th of January, at 11:30am Mass, Bishop Nick will be our Guest Preacher for this occasion.
- During the winter season St. Theresa's Cathedral will be locked at 4:00pm from Monday to Friday.
- Daily Mass is celebrated at 7:30am.
- Noon Day Mass in St. Theresa's Cathedral: The 12:10pm Mass is celebrated each Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

St. ANTHONY'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated Tuesday - Friday at 8:30am

St. PATRICK'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated at 8:00am
- The Rosary is recited every, WEDNESDAY at 10:00am
- No Adoration on Thursday December 25th
- A mass in Tagalog takes place on, THE SECOND FRIDAY of the month at 7:00pm.

St. JOSEPH'S

- A Filipino mass is celebrated every, THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH at 11:00am

STELLA MARIS

- A Filipino mass is celebrated on the LAST Wednesday OF THE MONTH at 7:00pm

ST. THERESA'S GIFT SHOP

Opening hours - 10:00am-2:00pm.

Tuesdays and Saturdays. Come and see what we have.



Catholic Schools
United in Faith and Community

Mount Saint Agnes Academy, Bermuda's only Catholic school, celebrates Catholic Schools Week from January 25–February 1 with the theme "United in Faith and Community." At MSA, faith and learning go hand in hand as we form servant leaders, faith-filled disciples, and enriched citizens.

We thank you for your support. Look for us at Masses across the Island on January 31 and February 1! www.msa.bm

Vatican Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments

We wish to inform you that the Vatican Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments has issued a note reminding the faithful of the Church's guidelines regarding Holy Communion by intinction, that is, by dipping the consecrated host into the consecrated wine.

The guidelines state that only the Minister of the Sacrament (priest, deacon or a properly instituted Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion) may dip the host, and that then the communicant must receive Communion on the tongue. This means that self-intinction and the distribution of an intincted host in the hand are not permitted.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **The Peace and Social Justice Committee** will be showing the movie "Cabrini" on Friday, February 6th at 7:30pm in St. Theresa's Hall. Refreshments will be provided and all are welcome. Please RSVP your attendance to peaceandsocialjusticeorcc@logic.bm .
- **MSA: Information Session Grades 1 - 11** on Wednesday, February 4th at 5:30pm. To sign up please see the flyer with the QR Code located at the back of the church or email admissions@msa.bm .

Special Collection for the Holy See:

As a bond of unity and charity with churches throughout the world, Canon Law 1271 annually requires bishops in dioceses worldwide to financially help the apostolic works of the Holy See through a special collection.



In Bermuda, this collection will take place on THIS weekend, January 24/25th. Please use the special envelopes provided for your donation, or make a contribution online.

Thank you for your stewardship!

Pastor's Point - Continued

The Easter Mystery Celebrated in Ordinary Time

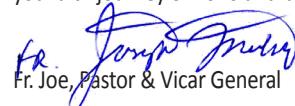
Parents are challenged to keep the Easter mystery alive[7] in their families throughout the season of Ordinary Time; to focus on the mysteries of Christ which the Church sets before them in the weekly Mass readings and to apply those readings to their daily lives.

In this way, faith will bear fruit within their homes, intensifying through the fertile weeks of Ordinary time until its conclusion, the crowning feast of Christ the King.

Joyful Expectation at Year's End

At the close of every Liturgical Year may we look forward with renewed hope to Christ's coming again in glory to reign as Lord forever. For it is Jesus Christ we seek when we strive to live the Liturgical Year with the Church. He is the "Lord of time; he is its beginning and its end; every year, every day and every moment are embraced by his Incarnation and resurrection, and thus become part of the 'fullness of time'."[8].

May this brief understanding of the part of the Liturgical Calendar deepen your faith journey of 2026 and beyond. God bless,


Fr. Joe, Pastor & Vicar General

NOTE WELL - the footnotes are not included in an effort to save on space & this article is from CATHOLIC CULTURE Jan. 21, 2025 off the internet.

Our Sunday Readings



The Light Returns

ISAIAH 8:23 – 9:3

Reading closely

1. How do you imagine life in this region?
2. What imagery does Isaiah use?
3. Do you think people believed Isaiah?
4. How might this prophecy have changed people?

Living the word

5. What are you hoping for?
6. Have you ever experienced a glorious change?
7. In what ways can you inspire hope in others?

THE FIRST READING

The darkness

Two of the twelve tribes of Israel, Zebulun and Naphtali, settled in Galilee. During the eighth century BC the Assyrians conquered the region. Prophets like Isaiah saw the Assyrian invasion as God's way of punishing his people for failing to obey his law (v.23a).

The Assyrians were merciless. Isaiah describes the defeated Israelites as oxen yoked together and as slaves beaten with rods (v.3). The land was filled with darkness.

The coming light

Isaiah prophesies that God will free the land and its people from their pagan overlords. On this day the people will be ecstatic, like farmers who get a bumper crop or warriors who collect the wealth of their defeated enemy (v.2). Times will be as good as those described in Judges 7, when the Israelites defeated the Midianites (v.3).

Galilee, land of Gentiles

Even after the Assyrian Empire fell, Galilee was viewed as impure because of its large Gentile (non-Jewish) population. Most Gentiles, however, lived either in cities on the Mediterranean coast or along the Sea of Galilee. The rest of Galilee consisted mostly of small Jewish villages like Nazareth.

Archeological research shows that many Galilean Jews, though poor, tried to live their Jewish faith. Because they were poor and uneducated, however, these Jews were looked down upon by many of the Jews who lived in or near Jerusalem.

MATTHEW 4:12-17

1. How might Jesus feel about the arrest of John the Baptist?
2. Why might Jesus like Capernaum for his home base?
3. What effect might the quotation from Isaiah have on Matthew's hearers?
4. What all might Jesus be thinking and feeling as he begins his own ministry?

MATTHEW 4:18-23

5. What do you think life is like for fishermen?
6. Why do you think Jesus chooses these particular men as disciples?
7. How might each of the men react when Jesus calls him?
8. Why do you think these men are willing to follow Jesus?
9. What all might the men's family and friends think about their decision to leave?
10. Do you think anyone else wants to follow Jesus, too, but doesn't?
11. What do you think it's like for the fishermen to see Jesus heal people?
12. What must you leave behind in order to keep following Jesus? What will you miss? What will you be glad to leave behind?

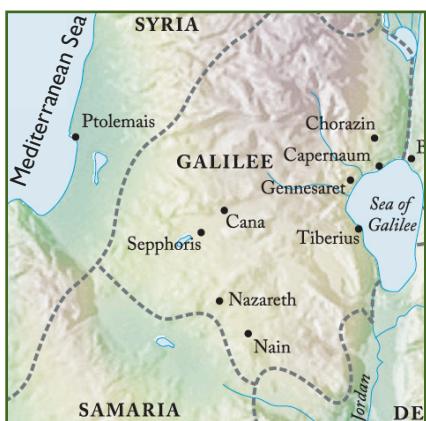
THE GOSPEL READING***Justifying the geography***

Jews expected their (Jewish) leaders to come from Jerusalem or the surrounding region of Judea. John the Baptist undertook his ministry there. No one

thought poor, unruly Galilee could produce a thoughtful, competent leader.

Since Jesus spent most of his life in Galilee, it's no surprise that the leaders of Jerusalem

question his authority. Matthew quotes Isaiah in order to show that Jesus fulfills God's promise that good things will come forth from that region.

***Jesus starts his ministry***

After John the Baptist is arrested, Jesus steps into the spotlight. He moves from Nazareth to Capernaum, a larger town on the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum will be home base for Jesus and his followers as they travel throughout Galilee.

Like John, Jesus urges people to repent because God's kingdom is coming. The difference is that Jesus is the one through whom it comes.

Jesus nets his first catch

Disciples choose their master, not vice versa. Jesus hasn't yet done anything to recommend him to the Galilean fishermen, yet at his command they leave their family and livelihood and become traveling preachers. These men will help Jesus build up what we now call the church.

Teaching, preaching, and healing

Verse 23 points ahead to the next two sections of the Gospel in which Jesus teaches and then heals people as he brings about God's kingdom.

- His teaching informs people how they are to live within God's kingdom
- His preaching (or proclamation) is the good news that through him the fullness of God's kingdom is coming
- His miracles reveal that God's light has begun to shine throughout Galilee

PRAYER

by Cardinal Timothy Manning

O Holy Spirit of God,
take me as your disciple.
Guide me, illuminate me, sanctify me.
Bind my hands that they may do no evil.
Cover my eyes that they may see evil no more.
Sanctify my heart that evil may not dwell within me.
Be my God. Be my guide.
Wherever you lead me, I will go.
Whatever you forbid, I will renounce.
And whatever you command me,
in your strength I will do.
Lead me into the fullness of your truth. Amen.