

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR CHRISTMAS WEEKDAYS

Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

#### MONDAY 1/2

First John 2:22-28  
John 1:19-28

#### TUESDAY 1/3

First John 2:29--3:6  
John 1:29-34

#### WEDNESDAY 1/4

First John 3:7-10  
John 1:35-42

#### THURSDAY 1/5

First John 3:11-21  
John 1:43-51

#### FRIDAY 1/6

First John 5:5-13  
Mark 1:7-11

#### SATURDAY 1/7

First John 5:14-21  
John 2:1-12

#### Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:

Monday, Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen; Wednesday, Elizabeth Ann Seton; Thursday, John Neumann; Friday, André Bessette; Saturday, Raymond of Penyafort

#### PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Confirmation preparation class begins on Wednesday, January 4, and will meet every Wednesday evening in the classroom in the back of the church until the end of May. This class is for anyone high school aged or beyond who has been baptized and has received First Holy Communion. To register, call Kathy Cage at 760-934-4688.

#### A PRAYER FOR SNOW

From you and from the wealth of your abundance, O Lord, comes the clouds, the mighty wind, the snow, and the cold. On the days prescribed for winter, you paint the mountains and texture the hillsides with the frozen wonder of snow. Each tiny crystal you shape and form in exquisite beauty and find a place for it among the pines of the high country. Be pleased, Almighty and Eternal God, to send snow upon these, your mountains in Mammoth and June. Look kindly upon your servants who work tirelessly to support their families in the lodges and resorts, and our friends the boarders and skiers, and help us out. Amen.

#### FIRST FRIDAY MASS & EUCHARISTIC DEVOTION THIS FRIDAY

Every First Friday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM in St. Joseph Church, Mammoth Lakes.

#### PRAYERS

Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, Antonio Salinas, Josefina Flores, Jim Rothe, John Wallis, James Patrick Hawkins, Beatrice Tomko, and for the repose of the soul of Tabe Griffin

#### DAILY MASS

Weekday Mass is celebrated Monday through Saturday in St. Joseph's Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don't ring the bell. Everyone is welcome to stay after for coffee and fellowship.



# THE MONO COUNTY CATHOLIC

*Before the mountains were born, the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity you are God. Psalm 90:2*

January 1, 2012

Mary Mother of God



*So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.*

Luke 2:16-19

#### SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, MONO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

P.O. Box 372,  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
Phone: 760-934-6276

Rev. Paul Boudreau, pastor

#### CONFESSIONS

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, y en español a las tardes del domingo de 5:00 a 5:15; and upon request before mass at Our Savior of the Mountains and Infant of Prague missions.

**SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE**  
Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church –  
Saturday Vigil 6:00 PM  
Sunday Mass: 8:00 AM  
La Misa en Español: 5:30 PM  
Lee Vining:  
Our Savior of the Mountains Mission -  
Sunday Mass 10:00 AM  
Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission -  
Sunday Mass 12:00 Noon

FIRST READING: Numbers 6:22–27

The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace! So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Apart from a few nasty curses in Deuteronomy 27:12–26, and some other instances of "rebound curses"—cursed be those who curse you!—the law of the Pentateuch prescribes mostly blessings. Even professional cursers had a hard time making their imprecations stick against the Israelites. In one of the most delightful stories in the Bible, Balak, the king of Moab, hires the sorcerer Balaam for a large sum of money to curse the Israelites, who are threatening to overrun Moab. So Balaam gets on his ass and heads up the mountain to get a good shot at the tribes of Jacob. God, meanwhile, sends an angel with a sword to block his way. Balaam doesn't see the angel, but his ass does and refuses to go farther. So Balaam beats the ass with a stick, whereupon the ass turns around and protests to Balaam, the only instance in the Bible of a talking ass! Then, even though Balaam tries to curse the Israelites, he ends up blessing them, much to the consternation of Balak, who was now out a whole lot of cash. (Numbers 22:1–24:25)

In the story about Rebekah finagling a blessing from Isaac for her favorite son Jacob, the son worries about a curse if the ruse is discovered. "Let any curse against you, son, fall on me!" she tells him in Genesis 27:13.

God uses angels and the love of a mother to protect Israel from curses and instructs Moses and Aaron to offer rich blessings.

SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4–7

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. . . . So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir, through God.

In John 8:35, Jesus offers this maxim: "A slave does not remain in a household forever, but a son always remains." Jesus asks Peter in Matthew 17:25–26, "From whom do the kings of the earth take tolls? From their

throne, killed his brother, and stole one of his father's girlfriends to boot. The prodigal son of the Lord's parable was received back into the household with celebration, even though the son had proved to be thoroughly untrustworthy with his father's wealth and returned only to get a square meal.

And that's the point. Under the law, that is the Commandments, we have been accountable for every thought, word and deed. And we have failed miserably through our own fault. We face the ultimate penalty for our lack of moral perfection. "The wages of sin is death," Saint Paul writes in Romans

them about this child. . . . And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

A father's love for his son is beyond the law, but a mother's love for her children is beyond reason. Nothing, not even death, can quench a mother's love. Even God seems to yield to its power.

The story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath unfolds during a time of severe famine in Israel. Yet the widow gave Elijah her last morsel of food when he was hungry, food that was meant for her son. In return, the prophet provided her with miraculous food that lasted her and her son for a year. When the son got sick and stopped breathing, Elijah prayed to the Lord and God revoked the son's sentence of death. (1Kings 17:10–24) Elisha the prophet prayed to God for the dead son of the Shunammite woman who had shown him kindness, and God restored the boy to life, a reversal beyond all reason. (2Kings 4:8–37)

Mary, the mother of Jesus, understood reversal. Her song in Luke 1:46–55, the *Magnificat*, celebrates the great reversal of the kingdom when "the mighty are cast down from their thrones and the lowly are lifted up; the hungry are filled with good things and the rich are sent away empty." She herself experienced the paradox in her own body: she was the virgin who became the mother, the woman who gave birth to God on Earth.

So when the shepherds, the lowliest people in the land, the bottom of the food chain, the lowest rung on the socio-economic ladder, came and saw the infant proclaimed by the angel to be Christ the Lord wrapped in rags and lying in a feed trough, they understood.

And she, the mother of this paradox, put all those things in her heart to treasure them and ponder them and used them as reference points for being the mother of the Word made flesh as that word grew into manhood and began to announce the Kingdom of God.

## El Símbolo de la Iglesia

Aunque en ciertas partes del mundo se conmemora hoy el Día Mundial de la Paz, en los Estados Unidos el Misal Romano nos invita a enfocar nuestra atención una vez más en la figura de María, la Madre de Jesús, la Madre de Dios. María es el símbolo de la Iglesia que anuncia la paz a toda la humanidad; una paz que comienza con Jesús en el corazón de los creyentes. Como María atesoró en su corazón la Palabra revelada y nunca tuvo miedo de compartirla, así debemos hacer todos. Muchos se preguntan qué nos traerá este año nuevo. La verdadera pregunta debe ser: ¿Qué compromiso haremos nosotros en este año nuevo?; ¿un cambio de corazón?; ¿nuestra participación en el servicio a los más necesitados? La opción es nuestra.



sons or from foreigners?" Peter answers, "From foreigners." So Jesus says, "Then the sons are exempt."

In the Hebrew mind, sons are always heirs and never slaves, never rejected, always exempt, always free. They receive their inheritance no matter what. In the story of the prophet Samuel, the wicked sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, remained in Eli's household till the day they died. King David mourned bitterly over the death of his son Absalom, despite the fact that Absalom had tried to usurp the royal

6:23. Then he goes on to write, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." A gift! We have been given a gift. Ransomed from the law, we are no longer slaves. We are free!

GOSPEL: Luke 2:16–21

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told