

**Are We Preparing a Place or Keeping Him Outside?**

A few years ago, a family prepared their house for a very special guest. They cleaned the front room, arranged the sofa, and even placed fresh flowers on the table. Everything looked perfect. But when the guest arrived and asked gently, "May I wash my hands?" there was an awkward silence. The bathroom was messy, the water tap was broken, and the door was quickly shut. The guest was welcomed but only to a certain extent. That simple moment reveals something very human. We like to welcome people where it is comfortable and hide the places that feel unfinished, broken, or embarrassing. Today's question touches that same reality of the heart: are we preparing a place for Jesus or are we welcoming him only to the front room of our lives while quietly keeping some doors closed? Jesus once said, In my Father's house there are many dwelling places... I go to prepare a place for you. Think about that. Jesus prepares a place for us in heaven, while here on earth, he asks us to prepare a place for him in our hearts. The problem is not that we have no space. The problem is that our hearts are already occupied. Many of us are busy people. Our hearts are filled with schedules, worries, ambitions, resentments, and distractions. None of these are evil by themselves. But when they take first place, Jesus is left waiting at the door. We say we believe, we attend Mass, we pray but deep inside, Jesus becomes a visitor, not a resident. Look at the story of Bethlehem. There was no room for Jesus in the inn. It was not because people were cruel. It was because they were busy. The rooms were full. And so the Savior of the world was placed in a manger. Even today, Jesus is often pushed to the margins of our lives not rejected, just postponed. Preparing a place for Jesus does not mean doing extraordinary things. It means making intentional choices. It means forgiving when it is easier to hold a grudge. It means choosing honesty when lying feels convenient. It means turning off the noise so we can hear his voice. Like clearing space in a crowded room, it may feel uncomfortable at first, but it creates peace. Sometimes we fear that if we truly let Jesus in, he will demand too much. But Jesus does not enter to take away our joy; he enters to give us deeper joy. He does not come to condemn; he comes to heal. When Jesus enters a heart, he brings light—and light always reveals what needs cleaning, not to shame us, but to free us. Think of a child who runs home after making a mistake. A loving home is not a courtroom; it is a place of safety. In the same way, our hearts are meant to be a safe place for Jesus—not perfect, but honest. So dear friends today, let us examine ourselves gently. Are we preparing a place for the Lord through prayer, humility, and love? Or are we keeping him outside with excuses, fear, and delay? Jesus is not far away. He is near, waiting patiently. All he asks is a place not a palace, just a heart willing to open. May we not be too busy, too afraid, or too distracted to make room for the One who has already made room for us in his heart.

Amen.
Fr. Joseph Puthen

Saturday, December 20

5:00 p.m. † Johnnie Howell by Jesse Howell & family
 † Oscar Martin by Paulette Howell
 † Onofre Lopez by M/M Manuel Garcia
 † Rogelio Salinas, Jr. by the Salinas family
 † Victoria Hinojosa (18th anniv) by the family

Sunday, December 21

8:00 a.m. PARISHIONERS
 9:30 a.m.(E) † Jaime Villarreal (birthday) by the family
 † Angelita P. Cantu (5th anniv) by the family
 † Raymundo & Nicolas "Nicki" Cantu & Omar Longoria by the Cantu family
 11:15 a.m. † Bryan Rey Garza by the family
 † Maria Falcon by Robert & Elizabeth Morales
 † Patricia B. Munoz by the family
 † Marginia Garza by the family
 † Estella Benavidez (2nd anniv) by Nathan & Dominique Rodriguez

Monday, December 22

NO COMMUNION SERVICE

Tuesday, December 23

7:00 a.m. † Connie V. Ruelas on the 1st anniversary & Alfredo Vasques (35th anniv) by the family

Wednesday, December 24

5:00 p.m. † Clara Negri by the family
 7:00 p.m.(E) †

Thursday, December 25

10:00 a.m. PARISHIONERS

Friday, December 26

NO COMMUNION SERVICE

Saturday, December 27

5:00 p.m. † Delfina Salazar & Francisca Mendez by Gil Salazar
 † Norma C. Garcia (anniv) by the family
 † Rene Villa by the family
 † Chester Wilson (birthday) by the family
 † Cynthia Jo Cantu Coursolle (15th anniv) by the family

Sunday, December 28

8:00 a.m. PARISHIONERS
 9:30 a.m.(E) † Lisandro & Olivia Longoria by Martin Cuellar
 11:15 a.m. † Victor & Antonia Gonzalez by the family
 † Raymond R. Costley by Deacon Richard & Mary Costley
 † Albert Rosas, Jr., Gerardo Rosas & Benita Jolene Rosas by Erica & family

**Parish Tithes and Offerings December 13 & 14****Sacred Heart Parish**

Regular Collection: \$2743.07

Online Giving: \$645.00

Second Collection: \$715.00

St. Anne Mission

Regular Collection: \$262.00

Second Collection: \$121.00



VOCATIONAL CROSS



5:00 p.m. Mass

Dec 20-Dec 27 Edna Balderas
Dec 27-Jan 3 Claudia Cantu
Jan 3-Jan 10 Mary Costley

8:00 a.m. Mass

Dec 21-Dec 28 Connie & Arturo Garcia
Dec 28-Jan 4 Grace Charles
Jan 4-Jan 11 Enedelia Saenz

11:15 a.m. Mass

Dec 21-Dec 28 Pam Cabrera
Dec 28-Jan 4 Gilbert & Dominique Alegria
Jan 4-Jan 11 Rick & Cindy Salinas

St. Anne Misson

9:30 a.m. Mass

Dec 21-Dec 28 Pete Rodriguez
Dec 28-Jan 4 Dora Barrera
Jan 4-Jan 11 Connie Perez

Prayers Before Mass

Schedule for Saturdays at 4:25 pm

DEC 06 Dora Garza
13 Martha Ruiz
20 Mary Costley, Dora Garza
27 Esmeralda Hinojosa



Altar Society Schedule

For the Month of December:

Having the privilege of cleaning this month

Cleaning the altar & robes:

Mari L. & Patti Ann

Cleaning the side altars:

Irene E. & Enedelia S.



**Knights of
Columbus**

Family of the Month

Eric & Rita Ramos



Dec 21-Jan 3

The Sanctuary Candle in the Church is burning for:

Melvin Lammons

By the family

The Sanctuary Candle in the Guadalupe Chapel is burning

for:

Israel & Annie Cortez

By their children

The Sanctuary Candle in the Schoenstatt Chapel is burning

for:

Brianna Guerra

By the family

The Sanctuary Candle in St. Anne Mission is burning

for:

Odelia Rodriguez

By the family



Prayer Blanket Ministry



This ministry will be making blankets for people in our parish who are seriously ill. These blankets will be blessed and given to everyone on our list. Prayer is very powerful and we ask everyone in our parish to pray for these individuals on the prayer list:

12-21-25

Mateo Carbajal
Alicia Zarate

12-14-25

San Juanita Perez
Agueda A. Garza
Antonio Eden Escobar
Rosalinda Escobar

12-7-25

Alberto Villarreal
Diana Barrera
Yolanda & Jesus M. Longoria
Lily Garcia
Nori Garcia
Ofilia J. Chavera
Estella Ansualda

11-30-25

Bobby Pulido
Grace Zepeda
Dolores Abrego

11-23-25

Robert Lopez
Zoe Sanders