

# St. John of the Cross



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## Our Parish COMMUNITY

- December 28, 2025
- The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (A)
- Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 / Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 / Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23



## Good News!

**December 28, 2025**

*The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (A)*

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 / Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 / Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

ANN M. GARRIDO

**The most treasured prayer of Jesus' people** has long been and remains the Shema: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is God. The Lord is One." Jewish spirituality is grounded not in seeing or touching or tasting, but in hearing. No one exemplifies fidelity to this way of being in the world more than Joseph, as evidenced in today's gospel. Joseph is one who listens to what God's messenger says to him and immediately acts on it. He responds to the call to flee with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Then, he responds to the call to return home with his family to Israel. As many have noted, Joseph never speaks in Scripture, but he certainly listens, and he certainly acts on what he hears.

Christmas is perhaps the noisiest season of the year. At gatherings of family and friends with festive music in the background, it often feels as if we are shouting over one another to be heard. It is a season when it can be hard to have deep conversations, even with God. Indeed, it can be such a busy season that sometimes our regular prayer practices fall by the wayside. But, if we do not make space in our daily lives to listen, might we miss messages that are important, even urgent, for us to hear, as in the case of today's gospel? Messages that require immediate response? What would it look like to carve out a bit of silence in this holiday season, to be like Joseph and reground yourself in a spirituality of listening? ●

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### Mass Schedule

**Saturday:** 6:00 PM  
**Sunday:**  
7:30 AM & 11:00 AM ~ English  
6:00 PM ~ Spanish  
**Daily Mass:**  
Mon., Tues., & Fri. ~ 8:00 AM  
Thurs.(Sp.) ~ 6:00 PM  
**1st Saturday Mass:** 8:00 AM  
  
**Adoration**  
**Thurs.~ Spanish—6:30PM**

### Reconciliation

**Thursday:** 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM  
**Saturday:** 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM  
**Sunday:** 5:30 PM  
  
Please contact Fr. Patrick by phone or email if you need to make an appointment for **Confession** or **Anointing of the Sick**.

### Parish Office Hours

**Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs:**  
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM  
1:00 PM - 4:30 PM  
  
**CLOSED FOR LUNCH**  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
  
**OFFICE IS CLOSED**  
**Fri, Sat, & Sun.**

# Worship, Prayer, & Ministries

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

Sat.-27	6:00PM	† Durwood Hatch (Heavenly birthday) by the Hatch Family In remembrance of † David & San Juanita Gaza's 45th wedding anniversary by the Gaza Family In thanksgiving to Jesus and la Virgen de Guadalupe for my life, blessings, family and the rain by Raquel S. Jimenez Birthday blessing for Michael Bartosch by Sharon Bartosch
Sun.-28	7:30AM	† Larry Bruns by His Family
	11:00AM	† Patricia Hanger & † David Stout by Karol Kocurek
	6:00PM	† Jose Rosario Becerril por Maria Ordóñez Las familias de la parroquia
Mon.-29	8:00AM	For nurses and first responders
Tues.-30	8:00AM	For strong marriages
Wed.—31	6:00PM <i>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Vigil</i>	† Allen Migura (13th anniv.) by Migura Family
Thurs.-1	7:30AM <i>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</i>	† Charles & † Eloise Houlihan by Jana Robinson
	11:00AM	For all mechanics
	6:00PM(SPA)	<i>La misa está abierta y disponible.</i>
Fri.-2	8:00AM	For unwed mothers

## Masses for January 3 & 4

Sat.-3	6:00PM	† Feliciano Borrego, Jr., by Dolores Borrego † David Gaza (10th anniv.) by San Juanita Gaza † Catarina Pena (Heavenly birthday) by Romanos Family † Charles Skrobarczyk (Heavenly birthday) by Skrobarczyk Family
Sun.-4	7:30AM <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i>	† Consuelo Gamez (3rd anniv.) by Erasmo and Luz Paiz † Cyndi Garcia (10th anniv.) by the Forbes Family
	11:00AM	Living and Deceased Members of the St. John of the Cross Altar Society
	6:00PM	Las familias de la parroquia

The sanctuary light is for birthday blessings for

**Christian Ochoa Jones**  
(30 years)

By Liza Ochoa



**Sanctuary light and altar flowers** ~ The sanctuary light and / or the altar flowers may be sponsored in honor of or for the repose of the soul of a loved one, for special intentions, or in celebration of special occasions like birthdays or wedding anniversaries.

The sanctuary light is \$20 / weekend.

The altar flowers are \$80/ weekend.

Please contact the office for more information.

The parish office is closed for the Christmas holidays and will reopen Monday, January 5, 2026.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



## Ministry Schedule for Mass

### Ministry Schedule

December 31, 2025

**6:00PM**

**Lector:** Pablo Alaniz

**EM:** Sharry Stipp, Luis and Nora Romanos



January 1, 2026

**7:30AM**

**Lector:** Rick Svetlik

**EM:** Margie Svetlik, Maria Miller, Luz Paiz  
**11:00AM**

**Lector:** Jeri Alaniz

**EM:** Diana DeAnda, Don and Kim Rokohl, Volunteer

**6:00PM (Spanish)**

**Lector:** Maria Esmeralda Castro  
**EM:** Paulin Becerril, Joachin Ordóñez

January 3, 2026

**6:00PM**

**Lector:** Liza Ochoa

**EM:** Luis and Nora Romanos, Mary Villarreal  
**Head Ushers:** Carlos Alanis, San Juanita Gaza

January 4, 2026

**7:30AM**

**Lector:** Quinton Smithwick

**EM:** Margie Svetlik, Laura Gwosdz, Jose Isaías  
**Head Ushers:** Bart and Maria Miller

**11:00AM**

**Lector:** Diana Aguilar

**EM:** Diana DeAnda, Don and Kim Rokohl, Karol Kocurek

**Head Usher:** Tinker Villarreal

**6:00PM (Spanish)**

**Lector:** Maria Graciela Ordóñez  
**EM:** Joachin Ordóñez, Jesus Perez

**Head Usher:** Paulin Becerril

## PRAYER LIST

We continue to pray for the needs of those in our parish:

**Maria Bernal, Elias Bernal, Jr., Art Forbes, Angelica Frees, Cindy Lopez, James Matheny, Antonio Medrano, Oscar Ortiz, Jr., Johnny Soliz, and Christina Tipton**

*The names of newly added persons will remain for three weeks. Contact the Parish Office if names need to be added to the prayer list.*

*Praying for expecting mothers and their babies:*

**Theresa Laurienti, Ricki Rodriguez Choat, and Amanda Smithwick**



## Praying for our Military

**We remember these service personnel in each 'Mass for the Families of the Parish'**

**Air Force:** Preston Holliday, Alayah Moore, Deborah Thomas

**Army:** Father Jim Craig, Madeleena Delaney, Celine De Los Santos, Allen McDonald, Jacob Madrid, Eduardo Perales, Robert Ponce, Fernando Ramos III, Anthony Rios, and Tyree Winstead

**Coast Guard:** Corey Bunton and Joshua Salinas

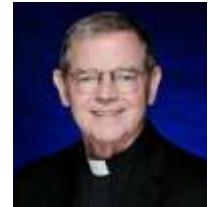
**Marines:** Aurora Alarcon, Hunter Frees, and Andre Rodriguez

**Navy:** Cory Elyasevich, Diane Martinez, and Noah Vasquez

# A Note From Our Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

The first celebration after Christmas is the Solemnity of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. First and foremost, we remember that Jesus was born into a family. Mary, His mother, and Joseph, His foster-father, cared for Him from the first moments of His birth. And there are so many beautiful depictions of the baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph that you may have similar photos of your own children or grandchildren. Sweet smiling babies in cute outfits often wrapped in a warm blanket gently snuggled in the arms of an adult.



And while these images bring us joy and happiness, we must try to look beyond them into the innumerable moments and hours of sacrificial love that a baby brings into the family and the world. Because right after that beautiful smiling face, the baby often contracts that face into a grimace of pushing followed by an odiferous smell of a full diaper. And even as an uncle to five nieces and five nephews, I have changed many a diaper for all of them using plenty of baby wipes. One nephew seemed to enjoy the experience so much that after putting on the new diaper, he would immediately soil it again and we would have to start all over. It wasn't the changing of the diaper a second time, it was that smile and giggle as if he knew exactly what he was doing. And many parents learn very early with the baby not to wear any clothes that are new, or with an important significance, as baby spit-up does not wash out but leaves a truly permanent stain. My niece spit up at her Baptism on my sister's new rose-pink suitcoat and to this day, she must wear a brooch to cover that stain on the jacket. And so, there is the most essential and ever-present face cloth to wipe away the drool during teething, the ever snotty and dripping nose, and the frequent and untimed spit-up. And as Jesus is truly human and divine, even if Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God, I have always imagined Mary and Joseph having to deal with those same issues with raising Jesus. Did you ever think of how many of Jesus' diapers Mary had to change? But, the giftedness of the baby's smile, their sound sleeping on your chest, and that warmth and connectedness so often outweigh the sacrifices of feeding, burping, washing, and diaper changing.

Parenthood may be the mere biological generation of a new generation of human beings, but becoming a mother, a father, and a child(ren) in a family is emotional self-giving of one's self for the good and needs of an innocent totally dependent individual. To be truly a family, the individual members of the circle of people willingly laydown themselves for the others in the family. Think of families of adoption who choose to be in a permanent loving relationship with and for each other. And as is a South Texas reality, those who have no blood or marital relationship to the "biological" family, but that have been a present at family meals, birthdays, and other celebrations for so long and so many times, we just accept them as an extra brother, or sister, or "primo" or "tio" or "tia". It reflects the true reality that "family" is not biological, but the emotional bonds of loving and being loved, sacrificing of themselves for the well-being and happiness of another, and the ongoing continuity of the family circle from generation to generation.

So, on the Feast of the Holy Family I always take time to reflect on my grandparents, MJ & "Miss Kitty" (Katherine) and their eight children - my dad and my uncles and aunts, my parents – Louis and Mary, my stepmother Jean and stepsisters, my five siblings and their spouses, my ten nieces and nephews and their spouses, my great-nieces and great-nephews, and a soon to be great-great-niece (or nephew?), and how I am truly connected to them and blessed in them. On this Feast of the Holy Family, I also reflect on my extended families by "love and adoption"! There are my parish families. In every parish most of the women often have become my "extra mother" saying that I am too skinny, or look tired, or asking about my health. And I have become "a brother" to many of the men of the parish sharing a beer and a sports event. Another family is my priest brothers. Being a priest in a diocese I am joined to a "fraternity or brotherhood" of priests, many of whom have become like true brothers to me. Many are older and have passed on, but they were mentors to me when I was a young priest giving me advise and sometimes protection – like a "father or uncle or older brother". And then there are several brother priests for which I have been the "older brother" sharing my experiences, giving advice, and encouraging them when they have been having doubts and difficulties. Sometimes I even reflect on seven men who I have directly helped during their seminary journeys to their ordinations almost like a "very proud father full of joy and love and hope on their son's graduation day". That is a bond of family I didn't know I would experience. But also, like real brothers, somedays I like them and some days I fight with them, but at the end of the day we are still brothers who are always connected and loved.

On this Feast of the Holy Family, reflect both up and down on the many generations on your family tree. Reflect on those families that have "adopted" you as one of their own and completely love you despite your faults and failings. And reflect on the many persons you may not even know, where you were that loving family member who showed love and interest in the life of another person and became "family" to them if even only for a short time. Take time to stretch your understanding of family and see how "large" your family grows to be.

Love and Prayers,  
Fr. Patrick

## Deacon's Corner

We're celebrating two large feasts in the same week, again. Last week it was the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas. This week it's the Feast of the Holy Family, December 28 (Sunday liturgy), and Mary, Mother of God, January 1, (Holy Day). The readings are in order: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Colossians 3:12-21; and Gospel from Mt 2:13-15, 19-23; and, Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Colossians 3:12-21; and the Gospel from Luke 2:16-21. That is a lot of reading for these two feasts. Try to meditate on the importance of Mary in the scheme of salvation. She is not the savior. She is not adored but admired and more than admired, we might use the word "venerated" which is more than admired but less than adored. She is *covered* in some of the mysteries of the rosary that give us a picture of Mary that is revealing but incomplete because we cannot fully describe her participation in the Incarnation. She is a willing servant of the Lord. She is the God-bearer. She is the Ark of the Covenant, and all the titles attributed to her in the litanies. But the mystery of Mary is impenetrable, I would say. We cannot admire her too much. In other words our admiration has no limits. I would also say that her intercession is immeasurable. If you have ever been to any Marian shrine, you will find thousands of notes and physical objects, thanking her for miracles in her name. I have visited "La Virgen del Chorrito" in southern Tamaulipas in Mexico, and we say hundreds of crutches, laying alongside the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Chorrito means little stream. It is miraculous in itself. It starts out as a little spurt of water, and it flows downhill on the side of a mountain, and it grows into a huge waterfall. It is an incredible sight! "Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgen and Mother" we say in the divine praises. Her apparitions throughout the world have come to peoples at times when there is turmoil, warfare, or injustice, and her appearances have brought

stability and conversions. When she appeared at Tepeyac, 15 million indigenous people of Mexico came to the Lord within a few years. By the time she appeared, the Spaniards had converted thousands. She converted millions. The image that she left sent a message to the indigenous people there that the child she was carrying in her womb was more powerful than their Sun god, (covering the sun), and more powerful than the gods of darkness (standing on a black moon). So, she is prominent in all the Joyous Mysteries, in the second luminous mystery, in the sorrowful mysteries as an observer of her son's condemnation and suffering and death (she's at the foot of the cross in John's Gospel only). She is also in the third, fourth and fifth glorious mysteries. If you contemplate Mary in the rosary, you will see what a prominent role she has had in the history of salvation. Meditate on how she felt when she found out Herod wanted to kill her baby, and she had to flee to Egypt. Think about how terrifying these words sound: "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Think, too, about how she felt about all the torture and deception that was heaped on her son by Pontius Pilate (who made it into our Creed), and the authority of the time, called the "Sanhedrin." And how his most trusted followers deserted him at the last when it came to his trial and judgment. Luke has it: "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." You can see that there is too much to admire about her. We can never stop or even imagine how much admiration she is entitled to, yet she is always pointing to her son. See the wedding feast at Cana in John's Gospel. I hope you're having a great Christmas season of which Jesus is the center, but of which Mary is also very, very important. God bless you. I'm looking forward to the readings for the 2026 liturgical year, of which Matthew's Gospel will be prominent.

Deacon Cavada

# Stewardship of Treasure

Week #25	COLLECTION	Totals Prior Week -	Goal	Actual	Total Annual Over / (under)	YTD Goal	TOTAL OFFERTORY
12/21/2025	Envelope Collection	\$ (6,488.78)	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,008.00	\$ (6,580.78)	\$ 52,500.00	
	Loose Collection	\$ 9,307.08	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,126.00	\$ 9,233.08	\$ 30,000.00	
	On-Line Collection	\$ 9,294.25	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 2,117.95	\$ 10,012.20	\$ 35,000.00	
	TOTAL Collection	\$ 12,112.55	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 5,251.95	\$ 12,664.50	\$ 117,500.00	\$ 130,164.50

## Parish Organizations

### PARISH COUNCIL

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 5, 2026 @ 6PM

### ALTAR SOCIETY

Monthly processional—January 4, 2026 — Liza Ochoa

#### ALTAR DUTY CLEANING SCHEDULE

Jan. 1-3—Paid Professional

Jan. 8-10—Mrs. Laura Adams, Mrs. Nicole Bunch, Mrs. Carol Broerman, Mrs. Nicole Arnold

Our Altar Society collected and delivered 700 pairs of socks to area nursing homes, including the Orange Grove Senior Apartments, La Palma Real in Mathis, and Meridian, Windsor, and Premier in Alice. Each recipient received 2 pairs of socks. Thank you So much for supporting this ministry.



### SOCIEDAD GUADALUPANA

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 19

Corporate Mass—January 19 @ 7:30AM

Rosary at 7:00AM      Leader: Jana Robinson

Offertory: Maria Miller and Frances Matheny

Roses provided to Our Lady of Guadalupe—  
by the Sociedad Guadalupana



Our Sociedad Guadalupanas packaged and delivered  
Christmas baskets to the  
Orange Grove Senior Apartments residents.



### Religious Education



Religious education classes are suspended for the Christmas holidays.  
There will be no class on Wednesday, December 24 or December 31.  
Classes will resume on Wednesday, January 7, 2026.



### Works of Mercy

The next bread and pastries distribution will be at 9AM  
at **SJoC** on **Monday, December 29 and at**  
**St. Francis** on **Saturday, January 10.**



Coastal Bend Food Bank distributions at 9AM at  
**St. John of the Cross** on **Tuesday, January 6,**  
and at **St. Francis of Assisi** on **Saturday, January 24.**

### Community

The Coastal Bend Blood Center Mobile will be at St. John on Sunday, December 28, from 8:00AM—1:00PM.  
Donors will receive a Hunting for Donors long sleeve t-shirt and a FREE McAlister's deli cookie voucher—while supplies last. Scan the  
QR code or call the Blood Center at 361-855-4943 to schedule your life-saving appointment.



# Dear Padre,

*A friend of mine took his life. He was a very staunch Catholic. His wife wanted to know if he could be buried or have a Mass in the Catholic Church.*

Yes, your friend should most certainly receive a Catholic funeral and burial. "We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives" (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2283).

A person who is suffering with a mental illness or disorder, certainly a prerequisite for suicide, may not have the necessary mental freedom to choose something that is understood as grave or mortal. In other words, he or she does not have the necessary requirements for full and free consent of the will.

Not that long ago, suicide was often misunderstood. Thankfully, today we understand the havoc and suffering of mental illness, and that a person can be a victim, even if it might look like he or she is not. The great suffering of those who take their own lives must not be dismissed or discarded. The family members and friends of a person who suffers suicide should also not be judged but should only receive compassion and understanding. They, too, are victims, in the fullest sense of the word and in the truest understanding of what it means to be a fragile human being. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org



## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



Young people of our time, like those of every age, are a volcano of life, energy, sentiments, and ideas. It can be seen from the wonderful things they are able to do, in so many fields. However, they also need help in order for this great wealth to grow in harmony and to overcome what...can still hinder their healthy development.

ADDRESS, ROME, MAY 15, 2025

## 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*.

### Monday

December 29

*Octave of Christmas*

1 Jn 2:3-11

Lk 2:22-35

### Tuesday

December 30

*Octave of Christmas*

1 Jn 2:12-17

Lk 2:36-40

### Wednesday

December 31

*Octave of Christmas*

1 Jn 2:18-21

Jn 1:1-18

### Thursday

January 1

*Solemnity of Mary,*

*the Holy Mother*

*of God*

Nm 6:22-27

Gal 4:4-7

Lk 2:16-21

### Friday

January 2

*Sts. Basil the*

*Great and Gregory*

*Nazianzen;*

*Bishops and Doctors*

*of the Church*

1 Jn 2:22-28

Jn 1:19-28

### Saturday

January 3

*Christmas Weekday*

1 Jn 2:29-3:6

Jn 1:29-34

### Sunday

January 4

*The Epiphany*

*of the Lord*

Is 60:1-6

Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6

Mt 2:1-12