

On Climbing Mountains

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The tallest mountain on earth, Mount Everest, rises 29,035 ft. above sea level along the border of Nepal & Tibet; it is a mecca for mountain climbers who ascend by one of two routes: the south (Nepal) & the north (Tibet).

Since 1922, 292 climbers have died attempting to summit; 200 frozen corpses remain on this mountain grave; some are visible along climbing routes. 1953 saw the 1st successful climb.

Currently, 500 climbers successfully reach the peak each year (including guides) which is half of those who try or who, at least, obtain the necessary permits. Yearly, an average of seven climbers die trying to summit; causes of death include: avalanche, altitude sickness, heart attack, exhaustion, exposure, ice collapse & falling. Climbers who turn back do so for reasons of health, bad weather, high winds (winds of 100 mph are common) or snow blindness; most climbers who reach the top, return with frost bitten feet & hands.

Climbers plan their final ascent within a 7-10 day window either in the spring or fall (before & after the monsoon season.) In all, it takes ~60 days to reach the summit; 3 to 5 weeks are simply spent acclimatizing to the high elevations (a process requiring climbers to go back & forth between elevation camps.) Via the south route (Nepal), a 50 mile trek leads to Base Camp (17,598 ft.); 12 miles, & four other camps, remain between Base Camp & the peak. The final ascent is from Camp IV (27,400 ft.) which begins the “death zone”; from here, most climbers need oxygen to reach the top; only 200 climbers have summited without this aid.

Climbers, men & women, of all ages, come from all over the world to tackle Mt Everest. The average age is ~35; in 2013, an 80 year-old Japanese man and in 2014, a 13 year-old Indian girl successfully reached the peak; they are the oldest & youngest persons yet to do so.

Now, why all this information about climbing Mount Everest?

Today, begins the Season of Septuagesima wherein the Church prepares us to climb another mountain, Mt. Lent, *the mountain of holiness*, or self conquest! Indeed, year-round we climb this mountain, but Lent is that “window” when, with more effort, we strive for the peak.

In our climb, we should be edified, maybe ashamed, seeing the risks taken, fatigued endured, energy spent by Everest climbers who have much less to gain by their climb than ours.

Again, one pioneer Everest climber, George Mallory, died in 1924 while attempting to summit Everest from the north side; his body was found in 1999 where it had fallen. Once asked why he wished to climb Everest, George famously responded: “Because it’s there.”

Ah! If we could expend ourselves like that Everest climber but for heaven, compelled by the awesome truth: “Because there is a heaven!”

Now our 40-day climb up Mt. Lent nears; there is no putting it off; no turning back. Now is the time to “gird up our loins,” plan our route, get our supplies, muster our courage.

What will we do this Lent for our God, for heaven, for eternal life. A 13 year-old girl climbed Everest & what was hardest for her? Not cold, nor fatigue, nor danger; no, she said, “It was the food!” She tired of eating freeze dried goods & longed for mom’s home cooking! A lesson: Lent need not be the same for all; each has a weakness, albeit “food” is a general one. In 2017, an 84 year-old man died climbing (he had summited at 71 years of age); before his 2nd climb, he was asked why he wanted to climb Everest again. He said, “To give old people an example “to live” for something. A lesson: Old or young, our Lent is meant to show the world, & prove to ourselves, that we are truly living for heaven. Will we be convincing?

Finally, no Gospel parable begins, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mountain climber who...” but it fits; and, lest it be missed, the reward for reaching the peak of holiness far surpasses that of any who conquered Everest which is, *really*, just a big heap of rock & snow anyway.



St Francis de Sales Catholic Church

An apostolate of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter in the Archdiocese of Atlanta preaching the Gospel & sanctifying souls according to the liturgical books of 1962.

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Septuagesima Sunday

February 1st, 2026, A.D.

Pastor: Fr Chris Hathaway, FssP – pastor@fsspatl.com

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Joseph Favole, FssP – assistant@fsspatl.com

Fr. Brian Austin, FssP, - in residence

Rev. Mr. Doug Anderson, Deacon

Office Manager: Mrs. Leslie Riney – secretary@fsspatl.com

Director of Religious Education: Thomas Cole- DRE@fsspatl.com

Church Office Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday

Bookstore – open Sundays after the 8 am & 10:30 am Masses and 1st Saturdays after the 9 am Mass.

Baptism: Contact the parish at least three months before birth.

Marriage: Contact the parish at least six months before the wedding.

Inquiring about the Catholic Faith? Call the office.

Daily Mass Times

Mon. & Wed.: 6:30 am & 9 am.

Tues. & Thurs.: 6:30 am & 12 noon.

Fri.: 6:30 am & 7 pm (followed by Holy Hour).

Sat.: 7 am & 9 am.

Sunday Mass Times

7 am low Mass (at the church)

8 am low Mass (at the gym)

10:30 am high Mass (at the gym)

1 pm low Mass (at the church)

Confessions are heard in the confessional box ½ hour before each Mass.

Church Hours

Mon.-Thurs.: 6 am - 7 pm

Fri.: 6 am - 9 pm

Sat.: 6:30 am - 7 pm

Sun.: 7 am - 7 pm

Office Hours

Mon. - Fri.: 8 am - 4 pm.

Closed on Holy Days

Liturgical Calendar for the Upcoming Week

DATE	FEAST	CLASS/COLOR	COMMEMORATION
Sun 02-01	Septuagesima Sunday	2/V	
Mon 02-02	The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary	2/W	
Tues 02-03	Feria St. Blaise, <i>Bishop & Martyr</i>	4/R	
Wed 02-04	St. Andrew Corsini, <i>Bishop</i>	3/W	
Thu 02-05	St. Agatha, <i>Virgin & Martyr</i>	3/R	
Fri 02-06	Sacred Heart of Jesus	3/W	St. Dorothy, St. Titus
Sat 02-07	Immaculate Heart of Mary	3/W	St. Romuald
Sun 02-08	Sexagesima Sunday	2/V	

Mass Intentions for the Upcoming Week

Sun 02-01	(7 am) <i>Pro-populo</i> (frh) (Not at SFdS) (8 am) Ok Soon Lee (frf) (10:30 am) Fr Austin's intention (fra) (1 pm) Fr Favole's intention (frf)	rb M Choi
Mon 02-02	(6:30 am) †† Charlie & Phyllis Sargent(frh) (9 am) No Mass (7:30 pm) Michael Moroney	rb J Kidd rb B Moroney
Tues 02-03	(6:30 am) No Mass. Blessing of throats only! (Noon Mass & blessing throats) † Russ Carolla	rb A Cole
Wed 02-04	(6:30 am) Andrew Markich family (9:00 am) Carl Giuffre	rb T Kinsella rb C Giuffre
Thu 02-05	(6:30 am) Graciela Pujals (12 noon) Scott & Cathy Calta	rb L Hernandez rb S Calta
Fri 02-06	(6:30 am) Special Intention (7 pm) Ashley Mary Moorman	rb L Le rb A Haskin
Sat 02-07	(7 am) Rocael Gostao & family (9 am)†† William & Kthryn Shegda	rb M Salinas rb N Shegda
Sun 02-08	(7 am) <i>Pro-populo</i> (frh) (8 am) Fr Austin's intention (fra) (10:30 am) TLM & FssP(frf) (1 pm) The Hathaway family	rb L Riney

This week, Fr Hathaway remains away until, God willing, February 3; he takes those Mass intentions with him as seen above.

We now have a CCD class for special needs students, Cupertino Family Circle. The next meeting will be Feb 8 in room 13.

Last week's collection: cash \$2,703.00; online \$4,768.00 total: \$7,471.00
Attendance: 7 am-0; 8 am- 17 ; 10:30 am- 97 ; 1 pm-51; 165 total souls.

Bring old palms to church & place in the bin in the vestibule. They will be burned and returned to you on Ash Wednesday. Thank you.

Up-coming: Monday, February 2, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is a feast of the Lord of the 2nd class. Before Mass, there is the blessing of candles and a procession. (The blessing & procession will occur at the 7:30 pm Mass; we will process once around the building.) The celebrant wears a white cope. After the procession, Mass begins immediately with the incensing of the altar and Introit, omitting the Prayers at the Foot of the altar. Candles are lit and held during the procession, the Gospel, and throughout the Canon. (Please, no candles to children or to those who are fascinated by fire or curious about dripping wax.) **Also**, beginning February 2, the Marian antiphon is *Ave Regina Caelorum* is said until Wednesday of Holy Week, inclusive. **If you would like your candles to be blessed** on Feb. 2, please bring them on Sunday or Monday, and place them outside the sanctuary before the St Joseph altar. Identify them as yours; St Francis de Sales catholic Church is not responsible for any lost candles.

A Prayer for Confidence

by St. Padre Pio (a true mountaineer)

“O Lord, we ask for a boundless confidence & trust in Your divine mercy, and the courage to accept the crosses & sufferings which bring immense goodness to our souls and that of Your Church.

Help us to love You with a pure & contrite heart, and to humble ourselves beneath Your cross, **as we climb the mountain of holiness**, carrying our cross that leads to heavenly glory.

May we receive You with great faith & love in Holy Communion, and allow You to act in us, as You desire, for Your greater glory.

O Jesus, most adorable Heart & eternal fountain of Divine Love, may our prayer find favor before the Divine Majesty of Your heavenly Father. Amen.”

Maxim of St Francis de Sales

Never think you have attained the purity of heart which you owe to God until your will is freely and joyfully resigned to His holy will in all things, even in the most repugnant.