



St Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, Michigan www.stvincentferrer.net

JANUARY 29, 2023 † FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

From The Pastor

It is humanly impossible to understand the goodness of God in the fullness of the Divine nature. So much of our knowledge and understanding of Divine goodness comes through our human experience. Much of our God experience comes through church religion. Given the woundedness of human nature, it is a constant challenge for human beings to perceive and understand the immediacy and intimacy of God's love for us. Mostly, we are left to trust the words and rituals of religion that convey to us the mystery of how and why God loves us.

A great leap forward in the relationship between heaven and earth is realized in the Incarnation of Jesus. The Incarnation is the radical mystery that God, as a Supreme Being of transcendence and love, would become so completely one with us. God the Creator becoming one in nature and being with the created. The human nature of Jesus, united with his Divine nature is an immeasurable step forward toward understanding the nature and identity of God. To see Jesus is to see the enfleshment of the invisible God. To seek to know Jesus deeply affords us a greater understanding of who God is.

Knowing Jesus in mature faith leads one toward the mind and the heart of God. Through a relationship with Jesus, one comes to perceive God's desire to be one with all created things. This will always be an act of faith. With all the hurts, losses, tragedies, and disappointments of life, trust in a perfectly good God can be hard to embrace.

A good example of this is the unity, yet radical difference between the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes of Jesus. Both are gifts from God. Both are valid and essential foundations that guide the human heart to the heart and will of God. The Ten Commandments are laws to be obeyed for the greater good of ordered society that direct us toward God. Without the Commandments and their moral structure, how would our weak human nature ever realize the gift of Divine goodness? We need these laws, but God is infinitely more than a law giver who demands obedience. The Ten Commandments give order to the earthly realm. They are an essential first step to finding God as true relationship in the person of Jesus.

The Beatitudes of Jesus give form and shape to the spiritual/eternal realm to which we are called. The Old Testament depended on the Law to create a covenant with God. The New Testament is a relationship with God not built on Law, but on the Spirit. It is the Spirit of Jesus, which is the Spirit of God to be known and

recognized in all who believe in Him. This is the root of the Beatitudes.

Following laws is good. Being in relationship with God is infinitely better. Notice there is no tone or mood of law in the Beatitudes. Jesus is revealing to us the heart of God, through his own heart. Keeping rules out of fear or punishment will never reach the nature and meaning of the Beatitudes. If we try to keep or follow the Beatitudes as if they were laws to follow, we have missed the gift of Divine wisdom given in Jesus.

Blessed are the poor in spirit is understood as realizing and accepting our dependence on God. This just touches the surface. 'Poor in spirit' is spiritualized, not meaning those who are without. We are dependent on the Spirit of the living God. 'Ruah' is the biblical word that means wind or breath. Blessed or fortunate are those who realize and accept their dependence on the breath of the Spirit for their existence. We are dependent on God for our very breath, our life. So obvious on the one hand, yet so readily forgotten and taken for granted on the other hand. Why is such a person blessed? Because with their very breath and existence they will speak God's praise.

This attitude of praise and dependence is the mind and heart of Jesus. In perfect unity with the Father, Jesus looks for those who share the Divine mind of praise in their blessed dependence on God. Thus, they will know the Kingdom of God.

Why is this so hard to grasp? Because we are so stuck in the mind of the world, that the mind of God is resisted or scorned as foolish and a waste of time. The world denies our radical dependence as human beings in its pursuit of various forms of power and control over others. This is ignorance that is neither blessed nor happy. Without the life of the Spirit, or the breath of God, we cannot even talk.

The Beatitudes tell us what God wants for us. God wants us to know and love him in the awareness of his love for us. Jesus is the love of God given to the world. It is no accident that Jesus spent most of his time with the poor, the blind, the rejected, and with sinners. Why? Because they knew their dependence on God and could accept God's goodness in Jesus without shame or guilt. These are the blessed and the happy ones who depend on the redemptive love and salvation of Jesus. Take in a breath and let out a praise of gratitude for God. You belong to God, and you are in good hands. Give thanks and praise. Be good for others.

.....

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

Church doors open 1/2 hour before Mass begins

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm

in Adoration Chapel

Only one person allowed in chapel at a time. Persons seeking Sacrament of Reconciliation will be allowed in church to line up at 3:00pm



**Live Streaming of Mass
Monday thru Thursday
8:00am and Sunday 9:00am**

**One hour of Adoration on
Tuesday following
8am Mass**

Livestream of Rosary on Thursday following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

PARISH CONTACT INFORMATION

ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

**Monday through Thursday
9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm**

Friday - 9am to Noon - Closed Saturday & Sunday

Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

Faith Formation Office

**Hours: Monday thru Thursday Noon-3pm or
by appointment 248-398-1743**

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

**For information on Baptisms, RCIA and
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720**



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MONDAY, January 30, 2023

8:00am Mass: Mike Higgins† req. by Family

TUESDAY, January 31, 2023

8:00am Mass: Christopher Huday (Special Intention) req. by Mom

WEDNESDAY, February 1, 2023

8:00am Mass: Don Bessler† req. by Bill & Mary Beth Hochstetler

THURSDAY, February 2, 2023

8:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

SATURDAY, February 4, 2023,

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Peter Conway req. by Mom

Jerry Gutowski† req. by Conrad & Ethel Fiddler

Tina Berger† req. by Lopp Family

SUNDAY, February 5, 2023

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

Jerry Gutowski† req. by Jessie Giszczak

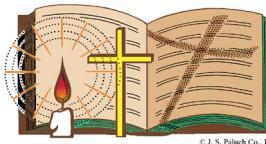
Sam Balistreri† req. by Bill & Mary Beth Hochstetler

Tina Berger† req. by Nieces

Julie Sadler Powell† req. by Giszczak Family

**World Day for
Consecrated Life**

February 2nd



**READINGS FOR
THE WEEK OF
January 29, 2023**

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Sunday: | Zep 2:3; 3:12-13; Ps 146:6-10; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a |
| Monday: | Heb 11:32-40; Ps 31:20-24; Mk 5:1-20 |
| Tuesday: | Heb 12:1-4; Ps 22:26b-28, 30-32; Mk 5:21-43 |
| Wednesday: | Heb 12:4-7, 11-15; Ps 103:1-2, 13-14, 17-18a; Mk 6:1-6 |
| Thursday: | Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 [22-32] |
| Friday: | Heb 13:1-8; Ps 27:1, 3, 5, 8b-9; Mk 6:14-29 |
| Saturday: | Heb 13:15-17, 20-21; Ps 23:1-6; Mk 6:30-34 |
| Sunday: | Is 58:7-10; Ps 112:4-9; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 5:13-16 |



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time January 29, 2023

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

— Matthew 5:3

Send in the Clones?

In St. Paul's time, the church was so new that everyone remembered how they came to the faith. That's not a bad thing. Even today, in helping with the RCIA, I like to hear how the new converts were drawn to the Lord. But it seems that some people in Paul's time actually boasted about who baptized them. They acted as if they were better Christians because of the person whose preaching first attracted them.

Paul, of course, would have no part in those rivalries. In fact, you can almost hear Paul laughing when he talks about people who consider Christ as just another leader of one of the factions. Christ should be the sign of unity for all Christians, not just one congregation. It may be even more difficult to seek unity today, with so many Christian churches and a modern view of diversity as somehow better than unity. While no one says they want to divide the body of Christ, I'm sure you know someone who thinks the only way to have a unified Church is for everyone to pray the same way they do.

Yet even Paul did not expect all believers to be clones of one another. He frequently wrote about people having many different gifts, yet all working to build up the Body of Christ. He doesn't mean that those gifts are divisive or that the Church survives in spite of them. Those differences are necessary; we need all the gifts that the Spirit gives us. So what can we do to help unify the Church?

First, do what Jesus himself did—pray for unity in the Church (John 17:20–21). Pray that you come to know what your own gifts are, have the courage to use them for the Church, and appreciate the gifts of others. Second, Paul was very aware of his own weaknesses. That's what he is talking about in the last line of the reading. Jesus had to die before he could rise from the dead. Without the cross, we would have never heard of the Resurrection. So also, without weakness, how can we experience God's strength? Instead of looking down on those with whom we disagree, look up to see what God may be revealing to you through that person's differences.

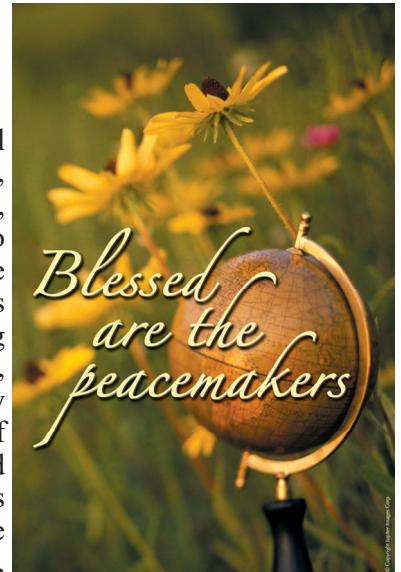
Tom Schmidt,

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THE PEOPLE OF GOD'S KINGDOM

In our Gospel reading from Matthew, we hear the Beatitudes, the stirring opening to the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is proclaiming the coming of the kingdom of God, and begins by considering what kind of people will enter and participate in this kingdom. They are the poor in spirit, the meek, the clean of heart, the peacemakers. We hear both Zephaniah and Paul echo this, as God specifically chooses the weak and the lowly to be God's agents in ushering in the reign of God. By living with humility and integrity, their hearts are open to being transformed by the grace of God. We too are called to live in this way. Jesus invites us to be people with open hearts, to receive God's blessing. And working through us, God may bless all of creation.

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SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Sunday: | Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time;
Catholic Schools Week |
| Tuesday: | St. John Bosco |
| Thursday: | The Presentation of the Lord;
World Day for Consecrated Life;
Groundhog Day |
| Friday: | St. Blase; St. Ansgar; First Friday;
Blessing of throats |
| Saturday: | Blessed Virgin Mary; First Saturday |



*...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding a peaceful resolution to the Ukraine crisis.
...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from economic hardship and from complications caused by catastrophic weather
...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.
...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually and emotionally
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.*

Lord Jesus,

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally in these difficult times. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

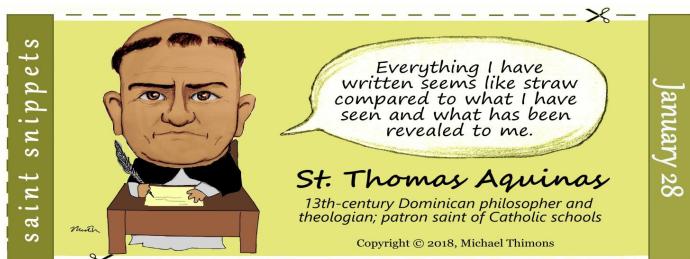


**Wednesdays February 8 to May 17
7:00pm to 8:30pm
Offered by National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica
Hosted at St. Vincent Ferrer Church
28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights 48071
Cost \$65 (assistance available)**

Surviving Divorce was created to bring hope and healing to those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage. It is for the newly separated and divorced and those still struggling years later. Developed and hosted by Rose Sweet, Surviving Divorce features experts Dr. Ray Guarendi, Ph.D., Fr. Donald Calloway, M.I.C., Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J., and more.

Come and See Open House: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 7:00 -8:30pm

For more information call 248-541-4122 or email: shrinedivorceministry@gmail.com
To register visit: <https://forms.gle/SeFGMaVek4HJUyccA>



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...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually and emotionally
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.*

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...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually and emotionally

...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.



EVANGELICAL SERVICE CORNER

FOOD PANTRY

If you are in need of food, contact the parish office for information on local food pantries.

EYEGLASSES & HEARING AID COLLECTION

We continue to collect hearing aids and eyeglasses for the Lions Club. Donation boxes are at the church entrances. Please do not leave eyeglass cases.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL MEETING TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

The St. Vincent de Paul Ministry will have a special meeting this Tuesday at 6:30pm in church

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION



You need more than water for a bath. Most family bathrooms contain an arsenal of soaps and emollients, lotions, shampoos, and conditioners to combat grime and honor the body. A bath without oil is still unthinkable. No wonder early Christians used lavish amounts of oil to "paint" the skin of people drawn dripping wet from the baptismal font on Easter. There were two oils used in baptism long ago. "Oil of exorcism" protected candidates from "evil spirits"; it strengthened their resolve and purified their purposes.

The second oil, slathered over them after baptism's bath, "sealed" them, making them like Christ, the anointed one, the priest, the prophet, the king. Chrism has always had a powerful odor; rich resinous perfumes are stirred in before it is consecrated. As the newly baptized were embraced by new brothers and sisters in Christ, the scent permeated the hall of Eucharist, a sign of our connection to Christ and to one another.

—Rev. James Field,
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AMBRY

In our Archdiocese, the holy oils are blessed at the Chrism Mass, presided by Archbishop Vigneron, on Holy Thursday. Then they are given to each parish in the diocese.

An ambry is a box in which the holy oils are kept in each church. At St. Vincent Ferrer, the ambry is a glass box located inside the church, near the Herbert Street entrance.

The Little Ones

Jim Burrows

GOD HAS SOMETHING SPECIAL
FOR EACH ONE OF US TO DO
NO MATTER HOW SMALL WE ARE



BURROWS.

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters.
Not many of you were wise by human standards,
not many were powerful,
not many were of noble birth. 1 Cor 1:26

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Scripture from *La Biblia de las Américas®* © 1986, 1995, 1997, The Lectorium Foundation. Used by permission.MEN'S FELLOWSHIP &
SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Saturday, February 4, 2023 at 9am
Faith Formation Office in School



The men's fellowship group gathers for a scripture reflection/sharing every other Saturday at 9am in the Faith Formation Office of the school building. All men are welcome. No registration is required.

OUR FASCINATING FAITH

Candlemas (February 2)

Thanks to Pope Sergius I (687–701), on February 2 we celebrate the Presentation of the Lord. On this day we also commemorate the Purification of Mary, who complied with the Jewish law (Leviticus 12:1). The law indicated that a mother should be purified forty days after giving birth to a boy child. Since the eleventh century the Purification of Mary and the Presentation of the Lord have been celebrated with the blessing of all the candles and candlesticks that are going to be used during the year. This is done with the hope that there will never be a lack of light, either material or spiritual, in the houses of the faithful. The root of the word candlemas is the Latin verb *candere* ("to shine") and from which also come the words candelabra and candlestick. This feast of candles recalls that Christians can, like Simon and the prophetess Anna in the temple, say that they also have seen salvation: Jesus the true Light who shines in the arms of Mary (Luke 2:25–38).

—Friar Gilberto Cavazos-González, OFM.
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CATHOLIC PRAYER CORNER

God Be in My Head

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.

—Attributed to *Old Sarum Primer*

Ministry Schedule

February 4/5, 2023

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	T Riley	T Karolski
Reader #1	M Kairis	A Goll
Reader #2	J McCown	P Allen
EME	M Simmons	P Allen
	M Kairis	M Black
	J McCown	M Waskowski
Greeters	L Proszkowski	D Vu
	K Heffner	B Turchin
	L Collins	J Turchin
	R Bertolini	T Lane

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

The Christian ideal has not been tried
and found wanting. It has been found
difficult and left untried.

—Gilbert K. Chesterton

Is there someone whom you believe that the Lord has placed in your path to bring to Him through the OCIA at this time? If so, be sure to pray for her/him as the Holy Spirit urges you. You may be the link between that person and the gift of the Grace of life in God for her/him. What greater gift can we share with another?

For more information, contact Mary Ann Przybysz in the Parish Office at 248-542-8720.



OCIA

A Journey In Faith

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Our readings this week all speak of the distinctive characteristics of the people God gathers to achieve God's purposes. The deep communion of love that God envisions requires a community that is humble and lowly, as Zephaniah describes. God chooses the weak and foolish to reveal God's strength and wisdom, as Paul says. And in the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches that a people who know their weakness and vulnerability can most fully place their trust in God and work for a just world. As Christians, we believe God will fully heal our world when Christ returns. But Christ also invites us to experience a foretaste of this future right now, through our life in Christian community, and in our work of peacemaking and justice-seeking in the world. Our poverty in spirit can enable us to be both recipients and instruments of the "kingdom of heaven" here and now.

THE BLESSED COMMUNITY

We turn to the first action of Jesus' public ministry described by Matthew—Jesus preaching to the crowds in what we call the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon begins with today's Gospel passage, the Beatitudes. Having just called his first disciples to form a community, Jesus begins to spell out what this community is all about. The Beatitudes lay the foundation, describing the primary values and practices, and the core identity of this community.

Jesus tells his followers, first and foremost, that they are blessed by God. The community will reveal its blessed character through its humility, meekness, and hunger for justice. Knowing they are loved as God's children, they will have open and pure hearts, free to be merciful, and they will be able to endure suffering gracefully. Listening anew to the Beatitudes, we remember how far we fall short of Jesus' vision. But we know God has gathered us, and continues to transform us, to receive the fullness of blessing.

WHOM GOD HONORS

In Jesus' time, honor and shame were key markers for who is up and who is down in their society. Typically, those with wealth and power over others were to be honored. And in our own time, often we find ourselves drawn strongly toward having more abundance, control, and options to choose from. We avoid vulnerability and limitations. But Jesus says in the Beatitudes that the poor and meek are truly blessed, that is, honorable and privileged by God. How can this be?

Perhaps Jesus is first exposing the opposites to the poor and meek, the "rich in spirit." These develop such confidence in themselves, based on achievement or inherited privilege, that they isolate themselves from God, and either ignore or exploit others. Jesus also knew that the humble in heart realize that they cannot build an illusory self-affirmation, so they can be most open to God's affirmation of them. They can then become more deeply empowered to participate in God's work. God blesses and honors the open-hearted.



OUR FAMILY - MASS SCHEDULES

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY

8:30 am and 4:30 pm (livestreamed)

SUNDAY

7:30 am, 9:30 am (livestreamed), 11:30 am

4:00 pm (Spanish-livestreamed), and 6:00 pm

WEEKDAYS (*Monday - Friday*)

6:30 am (livestreamed), 8:30 am

St. Justin, St. Mary Magdalen

1631 E. Elza Hazel Park, 48030 (St J)

50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030 (St MM)

SATURDAY - 4 pm - St. Justin

SUNDAY - 9 am & 11 am - St. Mary Magdalen

MON-WED & FRI- 9am - St. Justin

St. Mary

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30 pm

SUNDAY - 9 am, 11 am

MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30 am

WED - 12:10 pm

Weekly Offering



Offertory Env. Distributed & e-fund participants	721
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	112
Total Amount in Offertory Env. & e-funds rec'd	\$ 4,849.14
Loose Cash /Check Collection	247.00
Total	\$ 5,096.14
Budgeted Amount for Offertory	\$ 9,340.46
Energy	\$ 206.00



World Marriage Day

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Sunday, February 19, 2023

San Marino Club

1685 E Big Beaver, Troy, MI

2:30-6:30pm (doors open at 2:00pm)
Dinner at 3:00pm followed by speakers and dancing

**Emcees: Deacon Dominick Pastore
& Teresa Tomeo
Cost: \$80 per couple**

Online registration & payment:

WorldMarriageDay.org

Registration questions email:

Dan/Debbie at worldmarriageday@yahoo.com

For general questions:

For general questions:

Ricki.Wan 333-373-6732 or
waldenluv2@wowway.com



**January 29 to
February 3, 2023**

Theme: Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.

“The Catholic Schools Week logo emphasizes that the Catholic school, like the Catholic Church, is not a building or an institution, but it is the people. As the people of God, we work together to bring the Kingdom of God to Earth and raise up the next generation to do the same. The image of teachers and students forming the foundation of the school shows that they are active people of faith who serve others and God. May we all strive to live in active service of Jesus and his mission as we nationally join together during Catholic Schools Week and always.”

excerpt from ncea.org website

If you remain constant in faith in the face of trial,
the Lord will give you peace and rest for a time in
this world, and forever in the next.

—St. Jerome Emiliani

