



St. Simon of Cyrene Catholic Parish
December 10, 2023
Second Sunday of Advent



**Getting to Know
Our Parish Patron
St. Simon of Cyrene**

St. Simon of Cyrene, among other things He is patron of, has been considered the Patron Saint of Bystanders. He may well have been just observing the brutal treatment of Jesus as He made His way up the Mount of Calvary. I'm sure Simon didn't want to get involved, but at one point he is drafted by the Roman soldiers to help Jesus carry His cross to His ultimate death - and Resurrection. Simon perhaps challenges us to not stand by when someone is suffering outwardly or inwardly, but to respond with compassion, a listening ear and whatever other support we can offer to get someone through their particular cross. Perhaps we need to listen more closely to those calling us to move out of our complacency and to fully engage life in care for others. Advent is a great time to reflect and ask: "Who is God asking me to respond to, someone who in this holiday season, is carrying a heavy burden."

"Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." Mark 1:2-3

St. Simon of Cyrene Catholic Parish

Fr. Larry Dowling, Pastor
denispadre@aol.com

Fr. Thadeo Mгимба, Associate Pastor
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Deacon Couples: Rev. Mr. William & Gayle Pouncy, Rev. Mr. Greg & Carolyn Shumpert

Operations Director: Cynthia Smith csmith@archchicago.org

Website: www.stsimonofcyrene.org

St. Martin de Porres Church
Church of Record

5112 W. Washington Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60644 Ph: (773) 287-0206

Office Hours Mon. - Fri 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

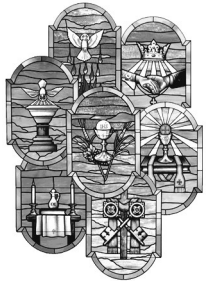
Masses: Sunday: 11:00 am; Tuesday: 9:00 am
Thurs: 9 am (Service w/Adoration)

St. Agatha Church

3147 W. Douglas Boulevard

Chicago, IL 60623 Ph: (773) 522-3050
Office Hours Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Masses: Sunday: 9:00 a.m Thursday 7:30 a.m.



Sacramental Information

Baptism: Please call the church office for appointment at least two months prior to date. A prep class is required. Parents should contact Den Pouncy.

RCIA: Adults Seeking Baptism and/or Making a Profession in the Catholic Christian Faith should contact Deacon Greg Shumpert.

Marriage: Please contact the parish office before setting your date. The Church asks that couples be parish members for at least 6 months before setting a date. Participation in Pre-Cana and a Premarital Inventory required.

Funerals: Please contact the parish office before going to see a Funeral Director. We will accommodate the needs of your family to help you through the loss and healing.

Ministry to Sick and Shut-In/ Anointing of the Sick/ Home Visitation/Receiving Communion at Home: If you or a loved one is in need of a minister from St. Agatha-St. Martin de Porres to visit for Communion, Anointing of the Sick or any other pastoral need, please contact the church office as soon as the need arises. Fr. Larry, Fr. Thad or one of the Care Ministers will gladly visit in a time of need.

Hospital Stays: If you or a loved one is going into the hospital, please notify the office in order that a priest or care minister can call or visit the patient and be support to the family.

Your Stewardship of Treasure for the Mission of Jesus Christ Sunday, December 3, 2023

St. Simon of Cyrene at St. Agatha - St. Martin de Porres

Mass Offering	\$3,991.50
GiveCentral	1501.00
*Kolbe House-Special	<u>23.50</u>
Total:	\$5,516.50

Thank you for your Generosity!



For whom shall we pray...

Walter Adams, Susie Aldrich, Bertha Anderson, Jewel Austin, Kyle Becnel, Hildegard Bezdicek, Hazel Bills, Diondee Brown-Whitfield, Margaret Brown, Christopher Browne, DiMarkco Chandler, Frank Clark, Sandra Coffey, William Crown, Jermaine Curtis, Natalie Davis, Tylesia Day, Shelma Dillon, Ana Garcia, Elnora Dorsey, Carter Evans, Joyce Evans, Norene Evans, Virginia Evans, Diana Foster, Hildred Fuller, Zenobia Fuller, Danny Gardner, Shea Gardner, Callie Gee, Pamela D. Gee, Yvonne Gibson, Marian Graham, Kia Gray, Stan Gruszczeni, Bill Hainey, Nathaniel W. Hall, Mary Harrell, Diane Harris, Jasmine Harris, Jennifer Harris, Lejerrion Harris, Leutrice Harris, Maryann Harris, Tony Harris, Darryl Hicks, Veronica Hicks, Gwendolyn Hicks, Elia Hinogosa-Cangey, Joesaya Henderson, Kesiea & Melinda, Kim Henderson, Leonard Henderson, Annetta Lewis, Jerron Johns Jr., Sr., Julius Jones, Ashanti Kelly, Jacqueline Kelly, Stanley King, Brian Lares, Jimmy Lee, Sayyid Lestrade, Anthony Lyons, Alexander Madden, Mannette, Larry Mapp Jr., Arelys Marquez, Catherine Martin, Patrick McAnany, Melik McCloud, Latrice McGee, Carmella Miller, Connie Montoya, Arlene Moore, LaVita Norris, Clara Orlando, Mariano Palacios, Michael Parham, Luvenia Parker, Emma Peradas, Gordon Perry, Jan F. Peters, Sylvia Peters, Essie Pledage, Queenie Randle, Elberta Raschke, Imogene Rhodes, Marvin Register, Sommer Reynolds, Aquila Rogers, Deborah Rutledge, Lorraine Sanford, Eunice Scripp, Rosa Solano, Brenda D. Taylor, Clarice Thomas, Michael Triplett Sr., Richard Spearman, Terri Triplett, Deano Tretter, Joseph Tretter Sr, Charese Troupe, Clarence Walker, Shirley West, Walter Whitlow, Natoya Williams, Armonie Witherspoon, Beverly Wright, Flora Yancy

From the Desk of Fr. Larry...

My sisters and brothers, the message of today's readings comes from John the Baptist, cousin of Jesus and wild man in the desert. John attracts people from everywhere because he, unlike other prophets, claims to be THE prophet announcing that the long-awaited Messiah, the Messiah foretold by all the ancient prophets, will soon be presenting himself to God's chosen people. Keep in mind that, in the eyes of God, to be Chosen is to not be superior to others, but to have the unique responsibility for caring for all others. To prepare for the Messiah, John calls everyone to repent from their sins and selfishness and turn toward God with their whole being. In doing so, they are then ready to take a different route, a road that reflects a life lived in love for others.

This is no small ask of any of us, is it? Turn away from our selfishness and need for status, control and power over others, instead channeling our gifts fully in service to God and others in need of our unique gifts?

I like to sum this up in one simple phrase: "Our lives were not created to be our own!" Let me say it again: "Our lives were not created to be our own!" The Season of Advent, like John the Baptist to the people of his time, beckons us into the wilderness of silence and reflection, self-examination and letting go of old destructive and unproductive ways, emerging refreshed and ready to reengage life in new ways. The image of the wilderness can be scary for us. It is traveling to a place – or a state of mind – where we must depend on nature to survive. In our case, both Mother Nature and Divine Nature.

John the Baptist called people into the wilderness because he knew it would force them to look around, to look down at the earth and to look up at the sky, to take in all of God's creation around them. In the wilderness we realize how small we really are, especially when we ponder the night skies and the immensity of our universe. But meeting God in the wilderness invites us to realize how precious our lives are, how special each and every human being and every living thing is simply because it is all Gift from God. Without the familiar comforts of home, those who came to John the Baptist had to open all their physical, emotional and spiritual senses to the world around them. Some came because they were curious. Most came because they were looking for, longing for something more in life. Every year Advent God calls us to immerse ourselves more deeply into this holy mystery and, in the process, be surprised where God leads us if we are willing to follow Him wholeheartedly. I am reminded of a time when my family decided to go to a local peach orchard and pick fresh peaches. On arriving at the orchard, an old fellow who was tending the place said, 'If you want the best fruit, go deeper into the orchard; the peaches on the fringes are picked over, but deeper in, you'll find the best fruit.' The old man watched us as we made our way into the orchard and whenever we decided to stop to pick the fruit, he yelled at us 'Go deeper.' Eventually we reached a point where the old man smiled and said, "There!" And he was right. The finest, plumpest peaches were untouched and waiting for us." Have you gone deep enough into your spiritual journey? Now is the time. John the Baptist – and Jesus – beckons you and me.

Gentle Peace! Fr. Larry

Next Sunday, December 17, 2023
Third Sunday of Advent
Readings: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Celebrant Mass Schedule
St. Agatha St. Martin de Porres

12/10/23	Fr. Tom Walsh	Fr. Thad
12/17/23	Fr. Thad	Fr. Mike Knotek
12/24/23 (One Mass)	10:00am - St. A, Fr. Larry	
12/24/23	Christmas Eve Mass - St. M de Porres	
	4:00pm Christmas Carols and Nativity Play	
	5:00pm Christmas Proclamation and Mass	
12/25/23 (One Mass)	10:00am - St. A, Fr. Larry	
12/31/23	Fr. Thad	Fr. Larry



Mass Intentions for this Week
Sunday, Dec. 10, 2023



- † In Loving Memory of Samuel Dillion and his Three Son's
From the Dillion Family
- † In Loving Memory of Lillian LeCoure and Raymond Waters
From the LeCoure Family
- † In Loving Memory of Victor Guarino
from wife, Jean Guarino

Prayers for Nicole Morris and Elnora Dorsey

We encourage our parishioners to pray for their loved ones, living and deceased, by offering a Mass intention. Donation \$10

St. Martin de Porres Credit Union
Located in Purcell Hall

4300 W. Washington Blvd. - 773-626-0776
 Open Saturdays: 10:30a.m.-1:30p.m.

Purcell Hall Rental Information

Contact the Parish Office

Charitable Hands Ministry

Deacon William Pouncy and Liz Becnel
 Call Deacon Pouncy (312) 841-3974

Church Staff

Reception/Pantry (StA): Refoncia McGowan
Parish Secretary (SMdeP): Carol Johnson
Building Engineer: Roger Lozano
Maintenance: Andrew Griffin
Interim DRE: Marvin McCurry
Custodian: Frank Clark
Housekeeper SMdeP: Scarlett Evans-Perez
Music Director: Dennis Smith
Choir Director: Antonio Anderson
Website/ Social Media: Emily Dillon, Kevin Dillon

The Apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe



On December 9, 1531, only a decade after Spanish troops had conquered and supplanted the Aztec empire, a newly converted native Nahua man, Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, was walking near a hill known as Tepeyac, on the outskirts of Mexico City. He was on his way to catechism classes when he heard beautiful sounds from atop the hill. Following the sound, he came upon a vision of a beautiful woman floating in the air. She told him, in Nahuatl, that she was the Mother of the true God, and that he should tell the bishop that she wanted a church built there in her honor. Juan Diego went to the bishop to do so, but was not granted an audience, so he returned to Tepeyac. She appeared again and asked him to return to the bishop. The bishop received him, but doubted the claims and asked for a sign. Juan Diego returned to Tepeyac, and the lady promised to send a sign the next day. Juan Diego was not actually able to return that day because his uncle fell gravely sick, but on December 12, he met her again. She reassured him and told him not to fear, describing herself as his mother, one who would care for him. She assured him that his uncle was cured, and told him to go to the hilltop and gather the flowers growing there to bring to the bishop. Though it was December, he found roses and other flowers growing, and bundled the flowers in his tilma, or cloak, carrying them back to Bishop Zumárraga. When he unfurled the tilma, the image of the Virgin—the same image venerated above the altar at the basilica today—appeared to the bishop. When Juan Diego returned to his uncle, he learned that the Virgin had also appeared to the uncle, and had called herself by the name Guadalupe. According to tradition, a small chapel was built there almost immediately, and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was placed there.