

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

December 13th/December 14th: Third Sunday of Advent



**1460 Pearson Avenue SW
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Pastor

Rev. Jim W. Booth

SACRAMENTS and LITURGY

English Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.

English Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.

Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

English Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Latin Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30 p.m. on First Friday

First Saturday Latin Mass: 8:30 a.m. with confessions beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Holy Day Mass: As Announced

Confessions: Saturday 3:30-3:55 p.m., Sunday 7:00-7:25, 8:30-8:55, and 10:15-10:40 a.m.

Baptisms: By Appointment

Marriage Arrangements must be made with the Pastor at least 6 months before the date of the wedding. Talk to the Pastor before making any firm wedding plans. No destination weddings.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, MASS & DEVOTIONS: We have an additional Sunday Latin Mass at 7:30 a.m., to aid in social distancing, and continues on a provisional basis.

NOTE ON CONFESSIONS: If there is a significant line for confession, Fr Booth might say part of the formula of absolution while the penitent recites the act of contrition. The full formula of absolution is always said, but the first part might be said softly during the act of contrition. Thus, you might only hear “and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

WELCOME to all of our visitors: We are glad you have attended Mass with us. To join Blessed Sacrament, please pick up a parish census form in the vestibule at the back of the church.

NOTICE ON CHECKS: Please make out all checks to Blessed Sacrament or Blessed Sacrament Church.

IN MEMORIAM: For Edward Von Hagel, Jr., the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from December 14th to December 20th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Catherine & Joseph Kelly from December 21st until December 27th.

ADVENT ANGEL TREE: We have an Advent Angel Tree this year that will benefit a number of truly needy families in our local community. If you take a tag from the Angel Tree, please bring the wrapped gift items back with the angel tag attached on the outside by Sunday, December 21st.

MORNING WITH MARY: Due to the proximity of Christmas, there will be no Morning With Mary devotions or Mass next Saturday, December 20th.

THIRD SUNDAY: December 21st is the Third Sunday of the month. We will have vocations prayers following the 10:45 a.m. Mass but we will not have a potluck lunch.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES FOR 2026: Contribution envelopes are located in the back vestibule. If yours are not there, let Fr Booth know.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Deacon John Paul Stepnowski, Deacon Andrew Vickery, John Gardiner, Collins Hess, Hunter Limbaugh, Francisco Rodriguez, Justin Brouillette, Cameron Huhlein, Patrick Letterle, Wilson Moin, Joshua Callahan, Franz Mercado, Thomas Rogers, Nick Smith, Benjamin Caruna, Matthew Pickard, Maximilian Waldron, Fernando Casillas, Jack Lyons, Jorge Martinez, Jonathan Ruscoe, Dominic Rumore, Matthew Gagnon, Friar Apollo, and Owen Sederstrand.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES: You should have received a Pledge Card in the mail, if not you also can enter your annual pledge or recurring gift any time at catholiccharitiesbhm.org. Our pledge goal for this year is \$29,000. As of December 12th, we have \$21,575 pledged.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last week was \$11,299 and \$1760 was given for the Preservation Fund. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is large backlog on Mass Intentions. Therefore, until further notice, Mass Intentions will only be accepted on a one Mass per family per week basis. No exceptions. The Mass Intentions for this week date from March 23rd.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Wed, Dec 24:	3:30 p.m.	Carols
	4:00 p.m.	Christmas Vigil Mass in English
Thur, Dec 25:	7:30 a.m.	Christmas Dawn Low Mass in Latin with hymns
	9:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass in English
	10:45 a.m.	Christmas Day High Mass in Latin

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (*Masses in the Rectory Chapel)

Sat, Dec 13:	4:00 p.m.	† Nikki Mitchell (by the Bryant Family)
Sun, Dec 14:	7:30 a.m.	Special intention for Paula Pinter (by the Hahn Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special intention for Julie Sabri (by the Hahn Family)
Mon, Dec 15	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Georgia Caparos (by the Hahn Family)
Tues, Dec 16:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Jenny Caparos (by the Hahn Family)
Wed, Dec 17:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Lena Cook (by the Donellan Family)
Thur, Dec 18:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Lynn Irwin (by the Donellan Family)
Fri, Dec 19:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Andrew & Abby Rumore (by the Donellan Family)
Sat, Dec 20:	4:00 p.m.	Special intention for Adrienne Price (by the Donellan Family)
Sun, Dec 21:	7:30 a.m.	Special intention for Jonathan & Nicole Zaucha (by the Donellan Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special intention for Jeremy DiPiazza (by the Donellan Family)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially for Daniel Flemming, Fr Timothy Gahan, George Sampedro, Jesse Hernandez, Jose Mariano Hernández Avila, Stan Hartdegen, Kent Graeve, Justin Meadows, Rachel Maxwell, John Minjares, Sr., Virginia Elmer, Diane Norton, Pedro Antonio Triana, John Davis, Chorbishop Richard Saad, Deb Rankin, Paul Trussel, Paul Caruso, Jeff Brown, Mary Simmons, Linda Henry, Lisa DeKam Nicholls, Ronnie Buchanan, Barbara Williams, Bob Wiseman, Eve Moore, Carol Brandley, Eddie Hunter, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Beryl Curtis, Linda Cooper, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, Lamar Smith, Wayne Little, Andrea Little, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, and Stephanie Perry.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent	Isa 7:10-14, Rom 1:1-7, Mt 1:18-24
7:30 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent	1Cor 4:1-5, Lk 3:1-6
9:00 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent	Isa 7:10-14, Rom 1:1-7, Mt 1:18-24
10:45 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent	1Cor 4:1-5, Lk 3:1-6

Hope of a Better Destination

As a kid I remember watching a documentary called *Scared Straight*. The idea behind this film was that wayward youth would get a taste of prison life before they stray into serious crime. Five juvenile delinquents were brought into a prison and were shown what might lie in their futures if they don't go on the straight and narrow. If they did get sent to prison, they were convinced that they were tough enough to handle it. Their confidence and bravado evaporated when they saw the convicts. These felons were tougher, stronger, and smarter than the youths who were once so cocky. The felons were honest enough to tell the juvenile delinquents that there was no honor in being in jail. Deprived of their freedoms, the felons longed for a chance to start over and take a different, a better path.

We might assume that John the Baptist had second thoughts too. Was it worth wasting away in prison to speak out for the truth? It is not as if John was committing a crime or leaving the straight and narrow path by calling King Herod and Herodias to end their adulterous and incestuous relationship. He was unjustly arrested and imprisoned for speaking the truth. It was also in his own power to be freed from jail. All he had to do was retract his accusation, affirm their marriage, and freedom would be his. John could not do this, he could not approve of the evil that Herod and Herodias had embraced. In doing right, he was jailed, but he could not do wrong in order to regain his freedom. Yet, it must have been a great temptation to just give in and apologize to the King and Herodias.

Many of those felons in prison in *Scared Straight* would do anything to get out of jail. Compared with John's imprisonment they had it pretty easy. The modern felon lives in the lap of luxury compared to what John went through. They have plumbing, they have three hot meals a day, they get to see the sun, they breathe fresh air, they have regularly laundered clothes, and they have beds with sheets, blankets, and pillows. Some even have access to libraries, radio, the internet, and TV. John, however, was literally rotting in prison. Is it any wonder he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He is indeed the Messiah. But, is John really having a crisis of faith? Is he wavering, is he thinking about throwing in the towel? Is he mistaken about Jesus? No.

All we have to do is consider what prompted John to send his disciples to Jesus. "*When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus*" (Mt 11:2). John hears what Jesus does, and then he asks the question of Jesus "*Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?*" (Mt 11:3) And Jesus' answer is to point to the works He had done for the blind, the lame, the deaf, lepers, the dead and the poor. So, if John already knows that Jesus is the Messiah because he had heard the works that Jesus was doing, then why does he send his disciples to Jesus asking if He is the One Who is to come? It is because John is still doing his job as the voice of one crying out in the desert, but he is doing so from a prison cell. He is still preparing the way of the Lord. He is not doing this by baptizing people for repentance, but by pointing people to Jesus. He is leading his own disciples to Jesus by sending them to ask the question of whether or not Jesus is the Messiah. John knows that his days are numbered, and John knows that none of his disciples will be able to take his place. The only one who can replace John is Jesus and no one can take Jesus' place.

John, from the depths of a prison nastier than we can imagine, gives hope to his disciples by pointing them to Jesus. When a priest raises the host after the Lamb of God is said or sung, the priest uses John's own words: "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who takes away the sins of the world.*" That John leads them to Jesus even from the depths of a dungeon tells us that we who receive Jesus in the Eucharist can do the same no matter how good or how bad our circumstances might be.

We really can't lead people to Jesus by using *Scared Straight* methods. Fire and brimstone usually works poorly. Scaring someone away from something horrible like prison or hell is ineffective unless we can offer them a hope of a better destination. If we can have joyful hope at all times and under all circumstances, we will be like John leading the hopeless to Jesus, and Jesus can offer them the eternal destination that every human heart longs for.

- Fr Booth