

Pastoral Reflection

The Nativity of the Lord

On Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the coming of God into our earthly lives. In Christmas Day's Gospel, we once again find ourselves with baby Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in the manger. Each Christmas when confronted with this scene and, simultaneously, the mystery of the Incarnation, I find myself wondering anew how exactly to understand this God who became human. Who is it exactly who comes to us in Jesus?

When I was discerning conversion to Catholicism, Christ was explained to me as the part of God that so yearns for us that God entered into the world and becomes enfleshed to be in greater communion with us. And we are given further glimpses into the nature of Christ in the opening lines of John:

“In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.”

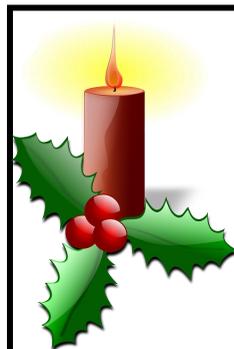
This verse with its cryptic clues as to the nature of Christ mystifies me as much as the Incarnation does. I cannot say that I have any firm grasp of what is meant by Christ as Word, but I can intimate some of the implications by reflecting on what words mean to me.

Words provide shape to experiences within us that, if it weren't for language,

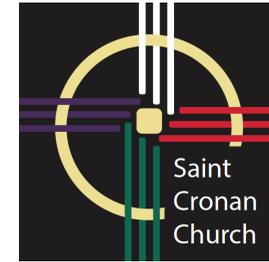
could remain unknown even to ourselves. It is through words that we reveal ourselves, and in so doing, we simultaneously give ourselves shape. The act of linguistic expression is an act of self-creation—the more we allow ourselves to speak freely, the more we come to not only know ourselves, but to be ourselves more fully. The more we are ourselves, the more fully we can bring ourselves into communion with others.

There is a paradoxical nature to a love so immense and overflowing that it limits itself to a finite body. This is the paradoxical love we celebrate on Christmas Day and are called to participate in every day. We are called to embrace the beautiful particularities of our own self-creation, and in so doing, to embrace the particularities of our unique relationships with God and with others. As Christ did when born as Jesus, we are called to participate in the transcendent by entering deeply into the individual.

—Loren Barnes Gaillardetz



**St. Cronan's Staff
wishes you and
yours a very merry,
peaceful and bright
Christmas and a New
Year filled with God's
blessings.**



St. Cronan Catholic Church

The Nativity of the Lord

December 24/25, 2022



Mass Information

SUNDAY – 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

SATURDAY VIGIL – 5:00 pm.

Wednesdays – 8:00 am.

Sacrament of Reconciliation by appointment

Masks are suggested for all Masses



Masses for Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 : Masses for the first Sunday of each month are available on <https://www.stcronan.org/> at 5pm the first Saturday of each month.

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Tree: The Christmas Tree containing cards for donations to St. Vincent de Paul is in the Chapel in Church. Please consider taking one of the cards, placing your donation in the envelope enclosed, and returning it through the collection basket or to the church office. This is the SVdP biggest fund-raiser of the year and it helps to finance all of the many clients that they help with rent, utilities, and other expenses. Please be generous.



Reflections from the St. Cronan Community:

Hard copies of the St. Cronan Advent Reflection

Booklet are still available in church. A digital copy of the reflection booklet is available on the St. Cronan website homepage.

Black Lives Matter Vigil, takes place the third Friday of the Month at the corner of Manchester and Kingshighway, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. The next vigil will take place on Friday, January 20. Please join us!

Parish Ministries: If you would like to add your talents to any of our ministries, and meet a great bunch of people, please call the church office or visit our website www.stcronan.org for information. *You are always welcome!*



Prayers Please: Kathy Bayless; Trish Curtis' brother; David Gaillardetz' father, Richard; Nick and Shirley Ambrose's daughter, Brigid Costello; Varrietta Anthony; Fr. Jack's brother, Mike; Natalie Johnson and the Johnson family; Diane Calcaterra; Sr. Lynne's friend, Jan Berberich, SSND; Barb Sopp's friend, Joe Sinibaldi; Bob Barnicle; Tim and Else Hirtzel's great nephew, Cameron Russell; Carolyn Coyne's daughter, Molly Maryan; Kathy Hunn's niece, Lisa; Sr. Cathy's friends, Inga Casillo, Don Costello, Mike Bowen, Michelle O'Rourke, Kate Genovese; Judy Gallagher; Sharon Orlet; Bonnie and Warren Wimmer's daughter, Anne; Barry Buchek's friends, Jim Bruno and Jim's daughter Courtney; Mary Truetkin; Marie and Roland Martir's granddaughters, Carrie and Maddie, and friend, Craig; Janice Shayne's cousin, Jane Torretta; Jacob Whitworth; John Gozdziwski. *Please let the church office know if your loved one should be removed from the prayer list, or if you would like us to add anyone who needs our prayers.*

Rosaries Needed: The Marianist Retreat & Conference Center in Eureka is looking for non-plastic rosaries for their "Rosary Wall" that they've created to provide rosaries for folks who are on retreat. If you have any rosaries that you are not using and would like to donate to a good cause, they would be very grateful. There will be a designated box in the back of Church for the month of November and will take them to the Retreat Center the first of December. If you have any questions, contact Kathy Hunn at kmhunn@aol.com.

Hello from your Hospitality Committee. We now have pronoun stickers for your name tags, thanks to Erin O'Connell. Please pick the pronouns you prefer and put them on your name tag. We'd also love to see more people use their name tags at mass so we can all get to know each other by name. If you don't have one on the board in the back of church, contact Mary Ward at mary@stcronan.org and she'll have one made for you. Questions, contact Christine Lakey at 314-239-2204 or christine.lakey@yahoo.com.

Assisi House Opportunities: As many of you know, we are currently working to open an Assisi House on Spring Ave. in North St. Louis. We are aiming to open the house in January or February, 2023. Spring House needs a lot of work, and we intend to have volunteer workers there every Wednesday and Saturday for the foreseeable future. If you have questions or are interested in cleaning, painting, scraping, carpentry, drywall work, etc., send an email to our volunteer director, Megan, at megan@assisihouse.org and let her know how you can help. It is very exciting to see this house transforming into a warm, safe living space again. Please consider helping us.

City Greens Market (<https://www.stlcitygreens.org/>) reached out to ask for help with volunteer shifts around the upcoming holidays. Shifts are two hours on Wednesday-Sunday and include help with stocking, inventory, data entry, cleaning, gardening, and staffing community events. They are especially looking for help on Wednesdays! If you are interested, you can sign up here: volunteersignup.org/Q97J7. City Greens is located on Manchester near Tower Grove Ave. Mariah Byrne and Cathy Hartrich have been volunteering with City Greens regularly and love it there. The market has o all sorts of native produce and has super high quality local ingredients. Bonus--if you volunteer at least four hours a month, you qualify for a membership and get to buy food at cost! If you have any questions, please contact Mariah at mariah.e.byrne@gmail.com.



All Things New Survey: By Now, anyone who attended a listening session should have received a link for the newest survey emailed to the email address you used for registration. If you attended a listening session and did not receive a link to the survey, please contact Mary Ward in the church office and she will email the link to you. You have until Dec. 31 to complete the survey.

Advent Poem: This Advent, we are focusing on the poem "An Ode We Owe" by Amanda Gorman. Each week we will look at one stanza of the poem in light of the readings, and reflect on what we are called to embrace. The Advent meditation for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is attached. Also attached is the full version of Amanda Gorman's poem. You may take home the copies of the poem that are in the pews after the Christmas Masses.

MEALS PROGRAM AT STS. PETER & PAUL Service Opportunity

The Meals Program at Sts. Peter & Paul serves the homeless & needy from the 2nd through the 21st of each month. We currently have 2 days a month needing coverage. This service includes preparing and serving the meal to those in need. For more information please contact Rachel Schoenberger at 314-231-9923 or office@stspeterandpaulstl.org.

Parish Center Offices

Mon-Fri 9am-3pm
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Music Director: David Dickey
Food Pantry Director: Kathy Hunn
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