

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (DECEMBER 8, 2019)

### *Saint Stanislaus Catholic Church*

516 East 13th Street  
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503  
814.452.6606  
www.ststanserie.org  
email: ststaner@outlook.com

Fr. Jason A. Glover, S.T.L., Pastor  
Msgr. Daniel Magraw, Senior Associate  
Debbie Oldenski, Secretary

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30AM - 3:00 PM  
(Closed 12:00PM - 1:00PM, Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays)

Daily Eucharistic Liturgy:  
Monday - Friday at 8:00AM

Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:  
Saturday at 4:00PM  
Sunday at 9:30AM

Holy Days of Obligation: 5:30PM (Vigil) & 8:00AM

Confessions: Saturday at 3:30PM (or by appointment)



### *Holy Trinity Catholic Church*

2220 Reed Street  
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503  
814.456.0671  
www.holytrinityrc.org  
email: parishoffice@holytrinity.org

Fr. Jason A. Glover, S.T.L., Pastor  
Msgr. Daniel Magraw, Senior Associate  
Mary Ann Merski, Office Manager

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00AM - 4:00PM  
(Closed 12:00PM - 1:00PM, Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays)

Daily Eucharistic Liturgy:  
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 8:00AM

Weekend Eucharistic Liturgy:  
Saturday at 5:00PM  
Sunday at 10:00AM

Holy Days of Obligation: 5:30PM

Confessions: Saturday at 4:30PM (or by appointment)





# Saint Stanislaus & Holy Trinity

## Partners in Faith & Mission



### Second Sunday of Advent December 8, 2019

What does it mean to be worthy?  
Today's Gospel highlights the way of the Pharisees and the way of John the Baptist. Perhaps, we "earn" our worth by adhering to the right doctrines and following the right pious practice. The Pharisees thought they were worthy. Due to their religious pedigree and proper procedures, they were self-satisfied. John the Baptist's words to them are strong. *"Do not resume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'" Of course, Jesus (and John) don't omit the responsibility for moral behavior. John gives the Pharisees quite a strong warning in that regard: "...every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

It's a question of attitude. It's a matter of the heart. If anyone would be worthy in this scenario, it's John the Baptist. Jesus himself will name him the greatest of prophets. John, however, recognizes his own lowly place in the grand scheme of things. *"I am not worthy to carry his sandals."* The Pharisees take pride in being "better" than others. John embraces humility in Christ being "better" than him. We don't self-generate our own worthiness. We receive it as a gift from God.

In a few short weeks, we'll celebrate the birth of Christ. Bishop Ven. Fulton Sheen wrote about the Nativity in his "Life of Christ": "Because [Jesus] was born in a cave, all who wish to see Him must stoop. To stoop is the mark of humility. The proud refuse to stoop and, therefore, they miss divinity." This Christmas, are you prepared to stoop?



### WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES

Readings for the week of December 8, 2019

Sunday:	Is 11:1-10/ Ps 72:1-2, 7-13, 19/Rom 15:4-9/Mt 3:1-12 [2nd Advent]
Monday:	Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38 [Immac. Conc.]
Tuesday:	Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-3, 10-13/Mt 18:12-14 [
Wednesday:	Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-4, 8-10/Mt 11:28-30 [St. Damasus]
Thursday:	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-6, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25 [O.L. of Guadalupe]
Friday:	Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-6/Mt 11:16-19 [St. Lucy]
Saturday:	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2-3, 15-19/Mt 17:9-13 [St. John of the Cross]
Next Sunday:	Is 35:1-6, 10/ Ps 146:6-10/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11 [3rd Advent]

**Sacrament of Baptism:** Sacramental preparation is required of the parents who desire to share the Catholic faith with their children and are held monthly throughout the City of Erie. Call the parish office to register to schedule your preparation. Godparents must be Confirmed and practicing Catholics with a letter of recommendation from their pastor to serve as a sacramental sponsor.

**Religious Education, First Holy Communion, and First Reconciliation** programs are hosted at Saint Luke's Church for all eastside Erie parishes. Contact their parish office for more information and to register your child (814.825.7105).

**Confirmation** preparation for all eastside Erie parishes is hosted at Saint John's Church. Contact their parish office for more information and to register your child (814.454.2873).

**Sacrament of Holy Orders:** God calls all people to holiness. Some men are called to fulfill this vocation as priests. If you are interested in the priesthood, or have questions about it, please contact a parish priest or our Diocesan Vocation Director, Fr. Michael Polenik, at 1.800.374.3723.

**Sacrament of Matrimony:** Before a date can be scheduled, a priest must be contacted at least six months in advance to complete the required documents.

**Sacrament of the Sick:** Communal celebrations of Anointing the Sick are scheduled periodically. The sacrament can also be requested by any parishioner who is seriously ill or in danger of death. *Please note:* Federal law no longer permits hospitals or nursing homes to contact churches when a parishioner is admitted. It is important that family members to notify the parish office if a loved one needs a visit, desires to receive Holy Communion, or needs Anointed.

**Leave A Legacy:** Consider Saint Stanislaus and Holy Trinity as you meet with your attorney or financial planner regarding your estate planning. Remember the needs of your parish family and leave a legacy of faith for future generations with your generous remembrance.

**Bulletin Information Deadline:** Please submit information to be included in the weekend bulletin by noon the Monday prior. Holiday bulletin announcements must be received by the parish office two weeks in advance.

*Saint Stanislaus & Holy Trinity  
Partners in Faith & Mission*

**"PRAYER, CARE, AND CONCERN" MINISTRY**

Those who participate in this ministry express the care and concern of our entire parish community to those who are ill, hospitalized, homebound, or in nursing facilities, through birthday and holiday cards, visits, and prayers. To request prayers, or to participate in this ministry, contact Rose Marie at 814.923.4438.

**"PRAYERLINE" MINISTRY**

These ministers devote themselves to prayer for any needs made known to them and any special intentions. To participate in this ministry, or to request prayers for a particular need, contact Kay (825-7328) or Shirley (452-3395) from Saint Stanislaus, or Kathy Benes (898-1091) or Kathy Smith (392-8974) from Holy Trinity.

**PCEP (Parish Catholic Education Program)**

Parishioners of Holy Trinity can receive a parish grant to assist with the cost of tuition for families who wish their primary or secondary school age children to have a Catholic education. To be eligible, families must participate in the program, attend Mass regularly, and be involved in the parish community. For more information, contact the parish office.

**"PRAYER SHAWL" MINISTRY**

The enjoyment of knitting, crocheting, and sewing are uniquely combined with prayer to offer a deeply personal and meaningful spiritual ministry. Shawls are prayerfully made and freely given away to those suffering bereavement, those recovering from illness, the elderly, homebound, and those in nursing facilities. To join us in this ministry, please contact Linda at 814.864.8476.

**THE "ZABAWA COMMITTEE"**

Held on the parish grounds of Holy Trinity, Zabawa is the largest Polish heritage celebration in the region, drawing tens of thousands of people to our neighborhood. The Zabawa Committee organizes the festival through food preparation, donation solicitation, food and beverage service, and so on. The committee always welcomes any help they receive. If you would like to offer your time, and experience hands-on learning about these rich cultural traditions, contact Ray Luniewski at 882-1032.

**LITURGICAL MINISTRIES**

Parishioners interested in serving our worshipping community as an altar server, lector, Eucharistic minister, or music minister, please let one of your priests know.

**ST. STANISLAUS / HOLY TRINITY INITIAL PARISHIONER REGISTRATION FORM**

(please circle which parish)

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Check:  New Registration  Change of Address  Change of Telephone Number

Change of E-mail  Moving out of Parish  Want Envelopes

*Place in offertory basket or mail to Parish Office. We will contact you to complete our Census Form.  
Welcome to our Parish Family!*

*A Community of Faith Built on Tradition, Where Everyone is Welcome*

# Saint Stanislaus Parish Community

## MASS INTENTIONS

December 9th, 8:00AM - Deacon Bob Walker (Jerry & Denise Sobrowski)  
 December 10th, 8:00AM - Mary Macie (Husband, Jim, & Family)  
 December 11th, 8:00AM - Carolyn McLaughlin (Jim & Barb Wnukowski)  
 December 12th, 8:00AM - Thanksgiving Intention (R. & M. Robaskiewicz)  
 December 13th, 8:00AM - Doris Inter (Catholic Charities Family)  
 December 14th, 4:00PM - Parishioners of Saint Stanislaus (Pro Populo)  
 December 15th, 9:30AM - Stephanie Budney Konopka (Family)

## LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 7th  
 Servers: C. & H. Rohrbach  
 Lector: Stephanie Wycech  
 Gifts: Pederson Family

Sunday, December 8th  
 Servers: Shane Green  
 Lector: David Kurutz  
 Gifts: Dave Lesnieski

Saturday, December 14th  
 Servers: Jack Ciecierski  
 Lector: Katherine Krainski  
 Gifts: Lombard Family

Sunday, December 15th  
 Server: J. & A. Wildfire  
 Lector: Russell Robison  
 Gifts: Holy Name Society



Our sanctuary candle burns in memory of **FLORANCE & JOSEPH KONKOL** [gifted by Tom Konkol].



## WOMANS' SOCIETY CHRISTMAS PARTY

... will be held on today, **Sunday, December 8th**, at the Polish Falcons on East Third Street. A social will begin at noon, with dinner served at 12:30PM. Also, **PLEASE NOTE:** The Women's Society *will not* have their regular monthly meetings in December or January.

**Don't forget to purchase your \$5 "31 Day Lottery" ticket!** See a Holy Name member or contact the parish office.

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS NEEDED

Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Altar Servers will be needed for Christmas and New Year's Masses. A sign-up sheet is in the vestibule if you are able to help up in these ministries.

**TRADITIONAL POLISH OPŁATKI** is available in the vestibule for a free-will donation. Enjoy sharing this custom with your loved ones!

## A NOTE FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES

We received a kind letter from Catholic Charities which reads, in part, "please extend our heart-felt gratitude to the members of your parish [for donating items to the diaper drive]... We appreciate your support."

**CLEANING TEAM B** will be cleaning the church on December 10th, starting at 9:30AM.

## WEEKLY OFFERING (NOVEMBER 17, 2019)

This Week	July 1 to date
Amount we need .... \$4,156.00	\$83,120.00
Amount Received ... \$2,687.00	\$58,959.00
Net over/under .... (\$1,469.00)	(\$24,161.00)

Mass Attendance:  
 4:00PM = 92; 9:30AM = 78

## GRANT THEM ETERNAL REST

Masses of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday, November 27th for **JEFFERY WILDES** and **ESTRELLA IGRAS**. Please keep them and their loved ones in your prayers.

## CHOIR REHEARSALS

The Choir will rehearse on December 11th and December 18th at 6:30PM. All are welcome to join as we prepare for our Christmas celebrations and beyond!



## CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Please consider joining us on Sunday, December 22nd, following the 9:30AM Mass as we "deck the halls with boughs of holly" in preparing our worship space for our Christmas celebrations.



**November 1st** Lottery Winners (#631): Chris Brocius, Loretta Koneski, and Frank Wienczkowski.

**December 1st** Lottery Winner (#754): Beth Dalton

## WEEKLY OFFERING (NOVEMBER 24, 2019)

This Week	July 1 to date
Amount we need ... \$4,156.00	\$87,276.00
Amount Received... \$2,362.00	\$61,321.00
Net over/under .... (\$1,794.00)	(\$25,955.00)

Mass Attendance:  
 4:00PM = 72; 9:30AM = 91

# Holy Trinity Parish Community

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

### 5:00PM - December 14th

**Lector:** Elizabeth Beres  
**Server:** Christopher Beres  
**EM:** Sue Carpenter & Kathy Smith

### 10:00 AM - December 15th

**Lector:** B. Lazar & R. Luniewski  
**Servers:** M. & N. Mangini  
**EM:** E. Korytowski, E. Simora, & M. Nitzczynski

## MASS INTENTIONS

December 9th, 8:00AM - Mass at Saint Stanislaus  
 December 10th, 8:00AM - Daniszewski & Gorka Families  
 December 11th, 8:00AM - Mass at Saint Stanislaus  
 December 12th, 8:00AM - The Souls in Purgatory  
 December 13th, 8:00AM - Msgr. John Daniszewski  
 December 14th, 5:00PM - Connie Schreiber (Anna, Patty, & Ed Czulewicz)  
 December 15th, 10:00AM - For the People of Holy Trinity (Pro Populo)

## A Voice in the Wilderness

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."  
 Matthew 3:1-2 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Matthew 3:1-12 (NIV).



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L L H S N R E P E N T K O L B
Z N O Y U R J Z Z M C S Z G D
O K N C I W B X N B E A G B C
Z U I A U Y E O N H O N M K Y
G B H N A S L X T E I A E E S
O W D S G Q T O Z H X E S H L
C F I J A D L S C J R T T T E
J I C L I C O A Z A E A H E A
R O T Z D I E M P H P G X T T
D H V L O R K E P N I S S F H
E L H J P D R O L A L I R K E
S J O O U P R W R T T N K L R
E L N R O P R T Y P H J Y H T
R D E F D E S O A O X O B E E
T O Y Z E K N B J H E A V E N
    
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PREPARE	STRAIGHT	CLOTHES	LOCUSTS	REPENT
PATHS	BELT	LORD	KINGDOM	PROPHET
JOHN	DESERT	BAPTIST	HONEY	LEATHER
CAMEL	HEAVEN	PREACHING	HAIR	WILD



- 12/8 - Sally Jankowski
- 12/9 - Marcia Nitzczynski
- 12/10 - Tony Jankowski
- 12/11 - Sandy Kempisty
- 12/12 Edie Luniewski
- 12/13 - Deacon Tom Matusiak
- 12/14 - Julie Slomski

**DON'T  
KEEP CALM**  
it's the  
**LAST DAY  
OF SALE**

**THIS IS THE LAST WEEKEND** to place your pre-orders for our annual Christmas Market, which will be held December 20-21. Please support PCEP and the children who benefit from this Catholic School tuition assistance program.

### THE 31 CLUB - PRAYING FOR VOCATIONS

- 12/8 Steve Rimpa; 12/9 Marcia Nitzczynski;
- 12/10 Tony Jankowski; 12/11 Sandy Kempisty;
- 12/12 Edie Luniewski; 12/13 Deacon Tom Matusiak;
- 12/14 Julie Slomski

### PLEASE OFFER PRAYERS FOR OUR PRIESTS THIS WEEK:

- 12/8 Fr. Tom Trocchio; 12/9 Msgr. Richard Stack;
- 12/10 Fr. Johnathan Schmolz;
- 12/11 Fr. George Strohmeier; 12/12 Fr. Jerry Priscaro;
- 12/13 Fr. Rocco Tito; 12/14 Bishop Donald Trautman

**Content  
NOT  
Available**

**WEEKLY OFFERING (DECEMBER 1, 2019)**  
 DUE TO THE OFFICE BEING CLOSED ON MONDAY, THIS PAST WEEK'S STEWARDSHIP REPORT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE DECEMBER 15th BULLETIN.

**THE BLESSING OF PRAYER SHAWLS** will take place at Mass on December 14th & 15th. If you know someone in need of a shawl, please contact Linda at 814.864.8476

### CHRISTMAS FLOWERS MEMORAL

Parishioners are invited to memorialize their loved ones by contributing to our Christmas flowers & decoration. Please return your envelope to the Parish Office by **December 16th** and we will include your memorial in our Christmas Remembrance bulletin insert.

### ADVENT WREATH & OFFERTORY

During the Season of Advent, individual PCEP families have volunteered to join in the opening procession and light the Advent Wreath, as well as present the offertory gifts:

- 12/14 - The Moore Family
- 12/15 - The Lubiak Family

"Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!"

- Matthew 3:2

## CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

### CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00PM - St. Stan's (Kolędy will begin at 3:15PM)  
4:30PM - Holy Trinity (Kolędy will begin at 4:00PM)

### CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30AM - St. Stan's  
10:00AM - Holy Trinity



In the Church's Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, through the ministry of the priest, it is Jesus who touches the sick to heal them from sin – and sometimes even from physical ailment. His cures were signs of the arrival of the Kingdom of God. The core message of his healing tells us of his plan to conquer sin and death by his dying and rising.

The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. A careful judgment about the serious nature of the illness is sufficient.

When the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given, the hoped-for effect is that, if it be God's will, the person be physically healed of illness. But even if there is no physical healing, the primary effect of the Sacrament is a spiritual healing by which the sick person receives the Holy Spirit's gift of peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness or the frailty of old age. Catholic canon law indicates who may receive the sacrament: "The anointing of the sick can be administered to a member of the faithful who, having reached the use of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age." ... The celebration may also take place during a Catholic Mass. **Next Sunday at the 10:00AM Mass after Communion we will offer Anointing of the Sick at Holy Trinity and in Lent at St. Stan's.**

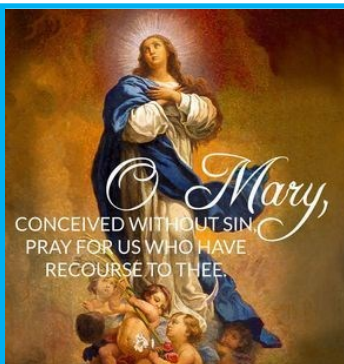
## CONFESSIONS IN POLISH OFFERED

Fr. Joe Gregorek has graciously made himself available at St. Stan's to hear confessions in Polish and English on Sunday, December 15th, starting at 3:00PM.

St. Stan's will host an afternoon of "Lessons & Carols" on **December 15th at 2:00PM**. This is a traditional Advent devotion where scripture reading are interspersed with Advent songs to help us better prepare for our celebration of Christmas. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, please considering joining us for this calming, peaceful, and prayerful devotion.

## PRO-LIFE MARCH

The annual Pro-Life March will take place of January 24th in Washington, DC. The "People for Life" organization is coordinating busses to depart Erie at 11:00PM on January 23rd and return around 1:30AM on January 25th. The cost \$55 (pay by December 21st and save \$5). For more information, call 814.882.1333.



"Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing!" December 8th is one of our feasts celebrating Mary - the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. From the beginnings of the Church, spiritual writers and theologians have acknowledged the innocence and holiness of Mary. St.

Irenaeus called her the "new Eve." Both faced with the pure freedom to accept or reject God, Mary began with work of redemption with her yes to Christ! The Church began to celebrate the feast of Mary's conception in the early Middle Ages. In 1854, Pope Pius IX infallibly declared that Mary was free of the stain of original sin from the first moment of her conception. On this feast day, we celebrate the beauty and goodness of Our Lady! The Second Sunday of Advent takes precedence over the feast day and the obligation to attend Mass is dispensed. There will be Mass at St. Stan's at 8:00AM. Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is patroness of the United States.

**Question:** With Christmas fast approaching, can you give me some practical tips to prepare myself and my family that will help us stay grounded in what this holiday is really about? With all the commercialism, it's easy to stray.

**Answer:** Happy times and events bring fond memories and a renewed sense of love and kinship with others. The anticipation is half the joy of the event itself. The coming of the Lord is that kind of event that people have been looking forward to for generations with fervent hope and desire. It gave them strength and courage as they waited for the coming of the Lord. We know that Christmas is rushed. Sales begin in August and carols blare long before the season begins. Everyone laments the commercial aspects of the season, but as Advent begins, do something to help you be more mindful of the Lord's coming. Use an Advent wreath, or enthrone the Bible prominently, or read the readings from the Bible assigned to each day. Postpone the tree and decorations until closer to Christmas. Establish new family rituals, customs and prayers that help remind everyone that we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Fasting, daily Mass, a special celebration of reconciliation, reaching out to those alienated from family or society, and visiting the homebound manifest the love of the Christ Child and the Holy Family. Resist the temptation to rush the season. In his own time and in his own way, God will come. Our task is simply to be watchful and ready.

## Sunday, Dec 08, 2019

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### Back to the garden

Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

*"The calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to lead them."*

Among the cards arriving daily are the usual crèche scenes, angels, wise men, shepherds, and Bethlehem stars like searchlights against the night. Truth be told, there are plenty of Santas and reindeer, snowfolk, and cute animals too. But somewhere is the odd pairing of a lion and a lamb snuggling Together - which never happens in Isaiah's prophecy, by the way. The lamb hosts the wolf, and the calf dines with the lion, but no matter. The idea is that the world's original harmony is achievable - if we all retract our claws and keep our teeth to ourselves. Be a peacemaker!

## Monday, Dec 09, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

### Mary was no angel

Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38

*"God chose us to be holy and unblemished."*

Since her very conception, Mary of Nazareth has been named "immaculate," "pure," "unblemished." And rightfully so for she was born without sin and remained so throughout her life. Yet because of this pristineness, we sometimes think Mary was untouched by the messiness of everyday life. But Mary was a flesh-and-blood human and a strong, loving woman. She experienced the beauty and struggles of family and village life. She faced poverty and a refugee's life, persecution and heartbreaking sorrow when her son was tortured and killed. With Mary as your companion, take time this Advent to peer into your heart and see what beautiful, messy, tender, and broken things you are holding.

## Tuesday, Dec 10, 2019

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

### Embrace the lost sheep

Isaiah 40:1-11; Matthew 18:12-14

*"... leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray?"*

In today's gospel, Jesus elevates the importance of the single "lost sheep." It's worth leaving the 99 on their own for a time because the lost one has enormous value. Catholic social teaching hinges on the idea that every single human being has infinite worth, including our own lost sheep. Today those who are "outside the fold" include addicts, the homeless, prisoners, refugees, the mentally ill - even our most unlovable relative. Who are the lost sheep in your community? Can you take one small step today to affirm their dignity and worth?

## Wednesday, Dec 11, 2019

MEMORIAL OF DAMASUS I, POPE

### Stick with a church that sticks around

Isaiah 40:25-31; Matthew 11:28-30

*"Have you not heard? The Lord is the eternal God."*

If you love singing "Adeste Fideles" and "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" at this time of year, you can probably thank Pope Damasus I for that. As the bishop of Rome during the fourth century, he championed many aspects of the faith that persist to this day - aspects that have helped ensure the cohesiveness and longevity

of Catholic practice. These include: a common language (Latin) for worship, an official list of books for the Bible, the veneration of Christian martyrs, the denunciation of certain heresies, and the primacy of the bishop of Rome as pope. His actions laid down some of the first stones of a church that Vatican II saw as having an "eternal foundation" based on Christ.

## Thursday, Dec 12, 2019

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

### Of the people and for the people

Zechariah 2:14-17 or Revelation 11:19, 12:1-6-10;

Luke 1:26-38 or 1:39-47

*"A woman clothed with the sun... and on her head a crown of twelve stars."*

Our Lady of Guadalupe is probably the most iconic image and story of Mary in North America. One reason for this overwhelming devotion is that she appeared in the form of an indigenous woman to an indigenous man—Indians being the lowest tier of Mexican society both then and now. That God's own mother could be of the poor and for the poor continues to be a powerful message with strong implications about how we treat one another. In your prayer today, reflect on whose image Mary might take on if she were to appear in your community today. What would her face look like? And what might she ask of us?

## Friday, Dec 13, 2019

MEMORIAL OF LUCY, VIRGIN, MARTYR

### See with new eyes

Isaiah 48:17-19; Matthew 11:16-19

*"I, the LORD, your God, teach you what is for your good..."*

The music of Lucinda Williams is beautiful, simple, and challenging. In 2011, she released the song "Blessed," a litany to remind us that even in the challenges of life, we are blessed. She sings, for example, "We were blessed by the blind man / Who could see for miles and miles." We have a patron saint for people who are blind, Saint Lucy. Though tortured, blinded, and martyred, she is remembered as a woman of great vision for her love of Christ and poor people. How can you see "miles and miles" through a challenge you face?

## Saturday, Dec 14, 2019

MEMORIAL OF JOHN OF THE CROSS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### The change we need

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

*"I tell you that Elijah has already come..."*

Here's a simple truth: People resist change. The greater the change, the greater the resistance, generally speaking - even when the change is long overdue and much for the better. John of the Cross embraced the Carmelite reform initiated by his spiritual sister, the visionary Carmelite Saint Teresa of Avila. However, a group of his fellow Carmelites strongly opposed the reform and went so far as to imprison John and treat him harshly. He persevered, and even wrote most of his famous *Spiritual Canticle* while jailed. Try to see unfair treatment or setbacks that come your way as an opportunity for spiritual growth.

