



THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH BEGINS NOW

This week, Pope Francis declared Dec. 8, 2020 to Dec. 8, 2021, the Year of St. Joseph – beloved father, guardian of the holy family, and obedient and humble servant of God – in his letter [PATRIS CORDE](#), “With a Father’s Heart.”

The Holy Father made the announcement on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, urging all the faithful to concentrate on asking St. Joseph to intercede for us as a loving father, as we commit to welcoming the will of God in our lives as Joseph did in his.

Pope Francis encourages us to be courageous and share our values, dignity and love of God. Like Joseph we need to be present, compassionate, and “ever ready to carry out God’s will.”

He said Joseph was an ordinary man just like us. He was a humble servant, who like our essential workers give us hope.

The Holy Father said it has been 150 years since Blessed Pius IX declared Joseph as the Patron saint of the Catholic Church. Now, Pope Francis says the pandemic increased his desire to call upon the Guardian of the Redeemer.

In his words, “when we experienced, amid the crisis, how ‘our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all’. Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that



those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all.”

Pope Francis said the purpose of his Apostolic Letter is to make our love for one of the greatest saints that ever-lived flourish and “encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal.”

The faithful can obtain a plenary indulgence by meeting the usual conditions – going to confession, receiving the Eucharist, and praying for the intentions of the pope. Further Pope Francis decrees:

- Meditate on the Our Father prayer for at least 30 minutes or take part in a spiritual retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph.
- Perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy.
- Recite the rosary together as a family or couple.
- Entrust your daily work to St. Joseph and ask St. Joseph to intercede for the unemployed.
- Recite a prayer to St. Joseph for the relief of Christians persecuted both inside and outside of the Church.
- Recite “any legitimately approved prayer or act of piety in honor of St. Joseph,” with an encouragement to do so on the March 19 and May 1 feasts of St. Joseph, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Byzantine celebration of St. Joseph’s Sunday, and on the 19th of every month and on every Wednesday, which has been dedicated to St. Joseph in the Latin rite.
- For the elderly, sick, dying, and those legitimately unable to leave the house – Recite an act of piety to St. Joseph under his title of Comfort of the Sick and Patron of a happy death, and offer up your discomfort to God and fulfill the conditions for the indulgence “as soon as possible.”

Throughout the year, Pope Francis encourages all of us to pray:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

*To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life.*

*Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil.
Amen.*

GUADALUPE DEVOTION CAN BRING PLENARY INDULGENCE ~ POPE FRANCIS



December 12th is the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She is the patroness of the Americas and Mexico. She appeared to Saint Juan Diego, asking him to go tell his bishop to build in her honor. When the bishop did not believe him, Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan again and told him to gather roses in his cloak and take them to the bishop. When he opened his cloak before the bishop, the roses fell to the ground and to their great surprise the cloak had now taken the beautiful image of Mary – Our Lady of Guadalupe appearing on it.

On her feast day, Pope Francis has declared a Plenary Indulgence can be obtained.

The following was written by the Catholic News Service:

With the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe closed for her feast to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Pope Francis said Catholics still can receive a plenary indulgence Dec. 12 for their Marian devotion if they follow certain conditions.

Mexico City Cardinal Carlos Aguiar

Retes' letter announcing the indulgence was accompanied by the formal proclamation by Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, the Vatican tribunal that deals with matters of conscience and with indulgences.

To receive an indulgence, a remission of the temporal punishment one deserves for one's sins, the following conditions must be met. A person must:

~ Prepare an altar/place of prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe at home.

~ Watch a livestream Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City Dec. 12, "actively participating ... with devotion and with exclusive attention to the Eucharist." Masses could be accessed at www.youtube.com/user/BasilicadeGuadalupe at 1 a.m. or 1p.m. Eastern Time.

~ Complete the usual conditions for an indulgence by praying for the pope's intentions, going to confession, attending a full Mass and receiving Communion. Note due to the pandemic the last three conditions "can be fulfilled when public health guidance allow."

WHAT IS AN INDULGENCE?

The following was presented by Life Teen and is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC):

Catholics believe in indulgences because ultimately, we know we're all sinners and need God's mercy. When a person commits a sin, there are two kinds of punishments that they have to deal with as a result of that sin. The first is called 'eternal punishment' which means the sinner can't enter heaven because of a grave sin that is not repented from. Through Christ's sacrifice we don't have to suffer eternal punishment if we repent. The second kind of punishment is called 'temporal punishment' and every sin we commit carries a temporal punishment with it.

Temporal punishment is not God getting back at us for disobeying Him. We bring it on ourselves. It's like if you shatter your friend's iPhone screen and they don't have insurance. They'll probably forgive you (in God's case He always forgives us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) but you still have to pay for your friend to replace their phone.

Purgatory is one of the ways we make reparation for our sins and pay back our temporal punishment so that we can get to heaven. The exciting part is that we can get a head start on fulfilling our temporal punishment through indulgences.

'An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints.' (CCC 1471)

There are both 'plenary' and 'partial' indulgences. Plenary means you're released from all of the temporal punishment you need to fulfill, and partial means you're released from some, or a part of it. There are certain feasts during the year on which you can obtain an indulgence by doing the acts of devotion, penance, and charity required. The Church is trying to inspire us to do good works, while using its treasury of the graces from Christ and saints to help us get to heaven. (CCC 1478)

ENJOYING THE CHRISTMAS MANGER



For many of us one of the most cherished traditions of Advent in preparation of Christmas is setting up the nativity scene. It is a simple and effective way to share the story of the birth of Jesus with the children in the family. It's evangelizing in the most natural way.

Some families hide the Baby Jesus until Christmas morning. Some have the wise men actually travel from one point of the house each day until they reach the nativity on the feast of the Epiphany, which is Jan. 6, 2021.

In some of our churches one lucky parishioner or family is blessed to be the one to place Jesus in the manger at Christmas Eve or Christmas Day Mass.



It is believed that St. Francis of Assisi was one of the first to stage a live crèche or Nativity scene in a cave in Greccio, Italy, to showcase the characters depicting the Gospel of Luke 2:1-20 for Christmas Eve of 1223. According to *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, written by St. Bonaventure, St. Francis preached about “the babe of Bethlehem” from outside the nativity scene to his fellow friars and the people of the town.

St. Francis evangelized with this first nativity scene and we are certain he is proud this tradition continues today.

One of our favorite websites for Catholic families, Catholic Icing, shares a plethora of simple and meaningful nativity resources and activities. Find it all by [clicking here](#).

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) shares a *Blessing of the Christmas Nativity Scene* that we can do at home once the manger is set. Select someone to be the leader of the prayers and the others respond accordingly:

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R/. Who made heaven and earth.

The leader reads sacred Scripture, Luke 2:1-8 (or Isaiah 7:10-15).

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The leader prays with hands joined:

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Savior was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,

bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,
and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R/. Amen.

HELPING TO MEET BASIC NEEDS

By: Katie Hinerman Klug, Catholic Charities West Virginia Marketing Communications Specialist

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that offers nutrition assistance to individuals and families who qualify as low-income. Formerly known as food stamps, the program has a goal of helping people access nutritious food while helping them stretch their budget.



Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) is a proud recipient of grant funding from Catholic Charities USA. The funds are available through the Walmart Foundation as part of a nationwide effort to address hunger. Thanks in part to this generosity, CCWVa is able to operate a SNAP Outreach Program to educate West Virginians about SNAP and help eligible individuals and families apply for the program.

Chris Garner, CCWVa SNAP Outreach Program Director, shared the following story:

I knew Barry's family well and I never expected to see his name cross my desk for a SNAP application. You see, Barry's family was well to do. They were respected in their community and no one would ever have dreamed how life in a small town could change in the blink of an eye.

Barry started dabbling in drugs as a high school student. He thought smoking a little joint would be fun. He was the star of his high school basketball team and it was the cool thing to do. After graduation he went to college and became an RN. But by that time, he and his friends were trying harder and harder drugs and working in a hospital gave him plenty of access to what he craved. There was never a fix that left him feeling fulfilled or a high that could erase the problems of everyday-life long enough for him to get straight.

Life became a never ending obsession for that next buzz. Soon, Barry would lose his job and his nursing license because of his drug addiction. He rebounded quickly and became a barber but his habitual drug addiction didn't end. His marriage failed, and his parents were left to raise the kids.

A couple of years ago Barry's mom and older sister decided to try whatever it was that was making Barry so "carefree." They both shot up using the same needle and both ended up in the hospital with an infection that would eventually take their lives.

Fast forward to just a few months ago when Barry found himself on life support in the same hospital where his mom and sister died. He had overdosed and was in a coma. He had finally reached rock bottom and, according to him, "when you're at rock bottom you start remembering how good life used to be. You remember your life before drugs and it's sad to think how you gave all of that up for a momentary high."

Barry is now living with his father. Barry's dad has been raising his 4 grandkids for several years now. With Barry undergoing drug addiction treatment, it helps to have someone to lean on for support and

encouragement. Barry was approved for SNAP benefits, but his daily struggles are still front and center for him. He lost two respectful and rewarding careers due to his drug use and he isn't eligible for unemployment benefits. He faces an uncertain future and the prospects of potentially never having a prosperous career again. In times past when Barry found himself worried or troubled, he would quickly turn to his drug addiction, and that relentless pull is still there. He has a strong support group though, and it helps to know that others are going through the same thing he is going through.

All of the issues surrounding COVID-19 only serve to compound the problems he faces. According to Barry, "You feel cut off from everyone! It's like, I need to have people in my life but all I can see are masks. You can't see emotions behind a mask. I really want to see someone smile so I can know that it's all going to be ok. I really need that!"

Barry knows that he faces an uphill climb but his family has rallied around him to help see him through. He is thankful for the SNAP benefits and he looks forward to the day when he can once again support his family and make a positive contribution to the lives of those he loves.

Until then, Catholic Charities will be there for him.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit [CATHOLICCHARITIESWV.ORG](https://www.catholiccharitieswv.org).

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: Guided by God's love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.

Christmas Mass²⁰²⁰

ENJOY LIVE MASS OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
FROM THE CO-CATHEDRAL THIS CHRISTMAS

We hope you will join Bishop Mark Brennan as he celebrates
Mass for the Nativity of the Lord at the
Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
in Charleston at 8 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 24.

The Mass will be livestreamed on our website, DWC.ORG, and
also available on our diocesan Facebook page at
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DIOCESEOFWHEELINGCHARLESTON.

The faithful may also view the Mass on television. See below
for a list of channels broadcasting the celebration.

If you are able to attend Mass in person, please check with
your parish for Mass times and safety precautions.

May God bless you and your family as you prepare for the
coming of Christ.

**CHRISTMAS MASS WILL BE BROADCASTED
AT MIDNIGHT ON THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS**

WTRF-TV7

WHEELING

WBOY/NBC

CLARKSBURG/MORGANTOWN

WDVM

MARTINSBURG

WOWK

CHARLESTON/HUNTINGTON

WVNS

BECKLEY/BLUEFIELD

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading ISAIAH 61:1-2A, 10-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God. I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

Responsorial PSALMS LUKE 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54.

R. (Is 61:10b) My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

Second Reading 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil. May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

Alleluia ISAIAH 61:1 (cited in LK 4:18)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'*" as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that the words and actions of our religious leaders glorify the hope, love, joy, and peace found in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For world leaders, that they seek justice for captives, extend aid to the poor and abandoned, and work together for peace, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all the faithful, that we do as the Lord desires – rejoice, pray, and give thanks, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For those who have lost their way, that through our prayers and petitions the Lord and legions of angels guide them back to the Eucharist, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

LET US GO *Rejoicing* TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

PSALM 122

UPDATED GUIDELINES RELEASED

Bishop Mark E. Brennan released updated guidelines for our churches and facilities.

- New Norms for Reopening Parish Facilities for Meetings and Gatherings
- Updated Liturgical Guidelines
- Music Protocols for Liturgical Celebrations

These are available online at www.dwc.org.

Liturgy of the Hours

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.

EBREVIARY.COM [LITURGY OF THE HOURS](#)



WV CATHOLIC RADIO BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City - Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.7

~Also Streaming in WV at www.rdo.to/WL0L~

WV Catholic Radio www.WVCatholicRadio.org

A LITTLE CATHOLIC HUMOR

PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH

Panel 1: A dog on a rock asks, "MY MINISTER SAID I SHOULD KNOW 'THE WORD.' WHAT WORD IS HE TALKING ABOUT?" Another dog replies, "THE BIBLE."

Panel 2: The dog on the rock says, "I ALREADY KNOW THE WORD 'BIBLE.'" The other dog replies, "NO, THE WORD IS IN THE BIBLE. THERE ARE LOTS OF WORDS IN THE BIBLE"

Panel 3: The dog on the rock asks, "LET'S START OVER. THE BIBLE IS THE WORD AS A WHOLE. THERE'S A HOLE IN THE BIBLE NEAR THE WORD?"

Panel 4: The dog on the rock says, "THE WORD IS 'RUTABAGA.'" The other dog replies, "THANK YOU. WAS THAT REALLY SO HARD?"

Caption: "THE WORD" MEANS THE BIBLE, OR "THE WORD OF GOD." IT'S NOT A SECRET WORD YOU HAVE TO LOOK FOR.

THE LATEST AND UPCOMING NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC *Spirit*

THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT IS NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL!!

Join our e-list to receive The Catholic Spirit by e-mail. To be added, please e-mail Colleen Rowan, CROWAN@DWC.ORG, with "The Catholic Spirit e-list" in the subject line. Please provide your preference of: "E-mail only" or "E-mail and Printed Copy." Those selecting e-mail only, will no longer receive a printed copy. The Catholic Spirit is available under "Downloadable Spirit" at

THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG.

MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at DWC.ORG.

Below are four options for enriching your spirit through daily Mass online.

- EWTN airs daily Mass from Our Lady of Angels Chapel, in Irondale, Alabama, at 8am, noon, and 7pm: [HTTPS://WWW.EWTN.COM/TV/WATCH-LIVE](https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live)
- St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York has daily Mass live streamed at 7am: [HTTPS://SAINTPATRICKSCATHEDRAL.ORG/LIVE](https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/live)
- Catholic TV also streams its daily Mass: [HTTP://CATHOLICTV.ORG/MASSES/CATHOLICTV-MASS](http://catholicTV.org/masses/catholicTV-mass)
- Daily Mass Online at Notre Dame' Basilica of the Sacred Heart is live at 11:30 am Monday-Friday: [HTTPS://CAMPUSMINISTRY.ND.EDU/MASS-WORSHIP/BASILICA-OF-THE-SACRED-HEART/WATCH-MASS/SPECIAL-MASSSES/](https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/special-masses/)