



# A WINTER'S JOURNEY INTO LIFE

*Rediscovering Baptism as our Identity and our Bond  
November 1, 2021–April 17, 2022*

The following is an outline of the pastoral plan we are implementing from November through April of this year. Many of the early November pieces you have already encountered, and we are enjoying rich fruits both in our prayer and in our community life! This is meant by way of a global view of our plan. We will unpack the details with you over the coming months.

## **I. SETTING OUT ON NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>, FEAST OF ALL SAINTS: "HOLY FRIENDSHIP" PROJECT**

- Online "synodal" process of reflecting on the devotional life of the parish
- Selection of four images above the candle stands in our Church

## **II. KEEPING THE FEASTS OF NOVEMBER (PRAYING TOGETHER THROUGH THE DARKENING DAYS THAT POINT US INTO LIGHT)**

- **Sunday, October 31:** The Haiti Arts Fair & Thank You/Retirement Party for Melanie Bninski
- **Monday, November 1:** The Solemnity of All Saints, Solemn Mass at 5:15PM
- **Tuesday, November 2:** The Commemoration of All Souls, Rosary from 9AM to 9PM in the Columbarium; Parish Requiem at 5:15PM; Organ Recital at 7:30PM
- **Wednesday, November 3:** St. Martin de Porres, Mass for those who serve the poor at 5:15PM
- **Thursday, November 11:** St. Martin of Tours (Veterans Day), Military Mass at 5:15PM
- **Monday, November 15:** St. Albert the Great, Gold Mass for Scientists at 5:15PM
- **Sunday, November 21:** The Solemnity of Christ the King, Introducing our four Sainly Friends

- **Thursday, November 25:** Thanksgiving Day, Sung Mass at 9 AM

## **III. ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE FOR GOD IN ADVENT**

- **Sunday, November 28:** The First Sunday of Advent, Blessing of the Advent Wreath
- **November 28–December 5:** Advent Repentance with St. John the Baptist (see back of this page); hour-long time of reflection offered multiple times—for everyone who wants to participate—and on video.
- **Thursday, December 2:** "Awake in Hope" (Advent Music Evening Event)

## **IV. YES! GOD CAN DO A NEW THING! WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

- On the Vigil, Mass of the Vigil at 5:15PM, Festive Concert & Organ Recital (featuring the St. Thomas Aquinas Choir) at 7:30PM
- On the Day, Eucharistic Exposition to support our students taking exams, Masses at 8AM and Noon, 5:15PM Mass & Holy Hour cancelled, Solemn Mass at 7PM

## **V. RESTING IN THE TRADITIONS OF CHRISTMAS: SAVORING THE RESTORED FAMILIARITY OF OUR PARISH TRADITIONS.**

- Christmas Mass Schedule coming soon!

## VI. "JORDAN'S WATER IS DEEP AND WIDE, BUT I HAVE A HOME ON THE OTHER SIDE"; LETTING THE LORD SHOW US OUR OWN BAPTISM DURING THE WEEKS OF THE EPIPHANY

- Reclaiming Baptism as our common identity, Weekly hour-long presentation, in person and on video.
  - Original Sin
  - Grace of Adoption
  - The Gift of the Holy Spirit
  - The Theological Virtues
  - Priest, Prophet, and King: The Munera Christi
- **Sunday, January 2:** The Solemnity of the Epiphany, with Parish brunch after the 9AM Mass
- **Thursday/Friday January 27–28:** The Solemnity of St. Thomas Aquinas, Festival of Eucharistic Exposition (getting all of our groups in on the action!), Solemn Mass at 5:15PM on Friday (Parish Party to follow?)
- **Thursday, February 2:** Candlemas Celebration: Crowning the Epiphany, Presenting our Baptized Selves

## VII. CONVERSATION IN MID-WINTER: WHY AM I A CHRISTIAN?

- Gathering in Small Groups to ponder how baptism has actually molded our identity and our fellowship
- Being amazed at how baptized we really are

## VIII. RETREATS IN THE SEASON OF LENT:

- The Elements of the Lay Apostolate
- Witness of Life
- Works of Mercy and Charity
- Renewing the Temporal Order
- Testifying to Jesus

## MY PART IN IT

*A Program of Advent Repentance  
with St. John the Baptist*

*For those who seek peace within,  
so as to be of service in our times.*

We have designed this examination of conscience for the Faithful to use prayerfully this Advent. We encourage all to sign up for one of our hour-long Advent retreat opportunities (watch the bulletin for full details). The post-pandemic era will be a time of mission for the Church. We will need to:

- Reach out to those who have become isolated during these long months.
- Invite people to resume the practice of their faith.
- Testify to the Lord's promise of life, and to the whole faith which has sustained us through a difficult period—especially to those who are exhausted and fearful.

The question for us is: are we ready spiritually for this shared challenge?

During the last five years, unique political, social, and health factors have exerted great pressure on us. Many of us realize that our moral and spiritual lives have been affected. As individuals and as groups we have behaved, spoken, and thought in ways not consistent with the Gospel. As a result we are far from each other and from ourselves. We seek to resume the disciplines of life in family and Church, in society and politics, but our first step must be to take stock of ourselves. First, a prayer:

*Lord, by the gift of your Holy Spirit make me attentive to myself with openness to your truth and confidence in your mercy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### And so we ask ourselves:

- Who has offended or hurt me in these years that I now need to unbind, knowing that as I have struggled so have they?
- Have I demonized any person or group?



- Have I wished evil upon any person or group?
  - Do I perceive the humanity of those who disagree with me?
  - Have I made fervent convictions out of other people's opinions, giving these automatic credence, in the way of a false Gospel.
  - Is my conversation constructive?
  - Have my patterns of speech deteriorated during this time?
  - In the pressures of these times, how have I treated those closest to me?
  - Is my Christian identity paramount, or do I see myself more readily as part of a political or social group? Have I made victimhood my primary identity, assuming that others are prejudiced against me?
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- Have I accorded hero status to anyone apart from Christ, the only Savior and Messiah?
  - Have I dealt with the restrictions of COVID in a patient and charitable fashion?
  - During the time of the pandemic have I given due respect to the decisions of legitimate authority, even when my personal opinion differs?
  - Am I committed to pursuing the virtue of justice as regards God, my family, my church, my government, my employer, and myself, considered bodily and spiritually?
  - Have I over-consumed news and opinion media in ways that have left me angry and suspicious of the world around me, so that I cannot testify to the victory of Christ?
  - Have I cut myself off from all news such that I do not play my proper part in society?
  - During this period how have I been a good steward of my body and mind? Does my personal appearance reflect my baptismal dignity and my proper love of the body God gave me.?
  - During these challenging years have I coped with tension by resorting to drugs, alcohol, or pornography? Do I now want to experience the serene joy of the virtue of temperance?
  - To whom do I owe an apology?
  - In what ways have I used the pandemic as an excuse not to meet my obligations?

Once again, we invite each of you to sign up for an hour-long Advent retreat with this instrument. Ultimately we hope that you can bring the fruits of this examination to your Advent Confession. We will offer extended hours for Confessions throughout the Season of Advent. Please know that you are also welcome to speak personally to each one of us. May the Lord use these days to renew your hope. Advent Peace!

— THE FRIARS