

## ***Notes from Fr. Sean***

### **In Today's Gospel**

This week, we begin the second week of Ordinary Time. Having celebrated the Baptism of the Lord last week, this is the Sunday on which we begin our journey through Ordinary Time. Because we are in year A of our three-year cycle of readings, most of the readings this year will come from the Gospel of Matthew.

In the synoptic Gospels (i.e., Matthew, Mark, and Luke), the divinity of Jesus Christ is revealed slowly throughout the story. The Gospel of John is different. John begins with a bold proclamation of the divinity of Jesus Christ: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In today's gospel, we see John the Baptist proclaim, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John is making it clear that Jesus is the one that they have been waiting for; Jesus is the Messiah.

The Church puts this bold proclamation before us as we begin our journey through the Gospel of Matthew. At the start of our journey, we are shown our destination so that we may keep our eyes on that destination as we follow the path set out before us.

### **Congratulations!**

This week I received a letter from the principal at Divine Child High School. He wrote to inform me that several students from St. Mary had earned academic honors for the first semester of the 2019-2020 school year. Earning a minimum GPA of 3.5, these students have shown their commitment to academic excellence. Please congratulate the following students for their hard work:

Gabrielle Cvetanovski  
Steven Lorenz  
Manuel Reyes  
Ira Velasco  
Colleen Verla  
Elizabeth Vincent  
Dylan Yanit

### **St. Mary and St. Richard Mass Club**

Working with the Notre Dame Council of the Knights of Columbus since last October, we have been running the St. Mary and St. Richard Mass Club. Each week, children of all ages who come to Mass can get their Mass Club cards punched at both St. Mary and St. Richard. In addition to attending Mass, punches are also available for attending certain special events at either St. Mary, St. Richard, or the Notre Dame Council Knights of Columbus Hall on Wayne Road. When you fill your Mass Club card with ten punches for Masses and two punches for special events, you can turn your cards in to receive a small prize. For every card that you turn in by October of this year, you will have an entry into a drawing for a Nintendo Switch.

We have been running the Mass Club for several months now, and several people have filled up their cards. We now have the prizes available for you to turn in your completed cards. Make sure your name and phone number are written on the card and turn it in at the end of Mass. There will be a box with a selection of prizes that you may choose. You may receive one prize for each Mass Club card submitted.

### **Because You Asked**

Question: "When praying the Liturgy of the Hours, we go from Baptism of the Lord (Sunday 1/12) to Second Sunday of Ordinary Time (Sunday 1/19). Why do we skip the 1st Sunday of Ordinary Time?"

**Answer:** The Liturgy of the Hours (LOTH) is the official prayer of the Church. It is found in a four-volume set of books referred to as the *Breviary*. The LOTH is prayed by priests, deacons, religious (i.e., nuns, brothers, and monks), and any of the faithful who would like to join in the prayer. The prayers of the LOTH are prayed throughout the day. The word "Hours" does not refer to how long it takes to pray, but rather the times, or Hours of day that they are prayed. The day is divided into seven hours, Morning Prayer (a.k.a. Lauds), three Daytime hours (Terce, Sext, and None), Evening Prayer (Vespers), Night Prayer (Compline), and Office of Readings (Matins). Depending on the length and style of prayer, it may take anywhere from five minutes to half an hour to pray a particular hour. In religious communities (e.g., monasteries, convents, and seminaries), it is common to chant the Psalms and Canticles.

The LOTH follows the same liturgical calendar as the Mass. The Liturgical Calendar defines the season of Christmas as running from "First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of the Nativity of the Lord up to and including the Sunday after the Epiphany or after January 6." It goes on to say that "Ordinary Time begins on the Monday which follows the Sunday occurring after January 6."

As you read this description, you will notice the Christmas season ends on a Sunday, and Ordinary Time begins on a Monday. We number the Sundays of the year based on the week that they start. So although this is our first Sunday in Ordinary Time, because it is the start of the second week of Ordinary Time, we refer to it as the Second Sunday of Ordinary Time.

If you are interested in praying the LOTH but do not want to invest \$150 in the four-volume *Breviary*, or even the \$32 in the abridged one-volume version called *Christian Prayer*, there are many apps available for free. The most common app, and the app that I use, is *iBreviary*, which is available from Apple, Google Play, or Amazon. In addition to the *Breviary*, it contains the full text of the Roman Missal, the readings for Mass and a library of prayers and rituals.